



Key Policy Areas for Student Assessment

1. Classroom Assessment

In the Solomon Islands, several official documents are used to inform and guide classroom assessment. For example, the “Solomon Islands Policy Statement and Guidelines for Learners’ Assessment in Schools” includes guidelines for classroom assessment and its use. In general, classroom assessment practices are viewed as being of moderate quality. At the same time, there are few resources available to teachers for conducting classroom assessment activities, and limited formal mechanisms, such as pre- and in-service teacher training options, to ensure that teachers develop competencies in classroom assessment.

Status

Emerging



2. Examinations

The Solomon Islands National Form Six Certificate examination is administered annually to Year 12 students in English, Mathematics, and optional subjects. There is regular funding for the examination, allocated at the discretion of the government and partners. Students are also required to pay a fee to take the examination. The National Examinations and Standards Unit (NESU) has been in charge of the examination since 2012. While NESU has up-to-date computers and top-level security, it does not have adequate storage facilities, computer servers, or communication tools. Some formal mechanisms are in place to ensure the quality of the examination, including a standardized manual that provides instructions for examination administration and data processing.

Emerging



3. National Large-Scale Assessment (NLSA)

The Solomon Islands Standardized Tests of Achievement (SISTA) was first introduced in 2003, and has been implemented every three years since then to all students in Years 4 and 6. Funding for SISTA comes from internal sources as well as donor agencies. SISTA is directly based on the national curriculum and well-aligned with official learning goals. While there is a common understanding that the assessment will take place every three years, there is no formal policy document that authorizes SISTA. In addition, the team working on the assessment is inadequately staffed.

Emerging



4. International Large-Scale Assessment (ILSA)

In 2012, the Solomon Islands took part for the first time in the Pacific Islands Literacy and Numeracy Assessment (PILNA). 14 countries in the Pacific region participated. There were minimal quality problems with the administration of PILNA in the Solomon Islands. The country complied with all required technical standards; therefore, it is expected that the country’s results will be presented in the main section of the final international report.

Emerging



Introduction

The Solomon Islands has focused on increasing student learning outcomes by improving the quality of education in the country. An effective student assessment system is an important component of efforts to improve education quality and learning outcomes because it provides the necessary information to meet stakeholders' decision-making needs. In order to gain a better understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of its existing assessment system, the Solomon Islands decided to benchmark this system using standardized tools developed under The World Bank's Systems Approach for Better Education Results (SABER) program. SABER is an evidence-based program to help countries systematically examine and strengthen the performance of different aspects of their education systems.

What is SABER-Student Assessment?

SABER-Student Assessment is a component of the SABER program that focuses specifically on benchmarking student assessment policies and systems. The goal of SABER-Student Assessment is to promote stronger assessment systems that contribute to improved education quality and learning for all.

National governments and international agencies are increasingly recognizing the key role that assessment of student learning plays in an effective education system. The importance of assessment is linked to its role in:

- (i) providing information on levels of student learning and achievement in the system;
- (ii) monitoring trends in education quality over time;
- (iii) supporting educators and students with real-time information to improve teaching and learning; and
- (iv) holding stakeholders accountable for results.

SABER-Student Assessment methodology

The SABER-Student Assessment framework is built on the available evidence base for what an effective assessment system looks like. The framework provides guidance on how countries can build more effective student assessment systems. The framework is structured around two main dimensions of assessment systems: the types/purposes of assessment activities and the quality of those activities.

Assessment types and purposes

Assessment systems tend to be comprised of three main types of assessment activities, each of which serves a different purpose and addresses different information needs. These three main types are: classroom assessment, examinations, and large-scale, system level assessments.

Classroom assessment provides real-time information to support ongoing teaching and learning in individual classrooms. Classroom assessments use a variety of formats, including observation, questioning, and paper-and-pencil tests, to evaluate student learning, generally on a daily basis.

Examinations provide a basis for selecting or certifying students as they move from one level of the education system to the next (or into the workforce). All eligible students are tested on an annual basis (or more often if the system allows for repeat testing). Examinations cover the main subject areas in the curriculum and usually involve essays and multiple-choice questions.

Large-scale, system-level assessments provide feedback on the overall performance of the education system at particular grades or age levels. These assessments typically cover a few subjects on a regular basis (such as every 3 to 5 years), are often sample based, and use multiple-choice and short-answer formats. They may be national or international in scope.

Appendix 1 summarizes the key features of these main types of assessment activities.

Quality drivers of an assessment system

The key considerations when evaluating a student assessment system are the individual and combined quality of assessment activities in terms of the adequacy of the information generated to support decision making. There are three main drivers of information quality in an assessment system: enabling context, system alignment, and assessment quality.

Enabling context refers to the broader context in which the assessment activity takes place and the extent to which that context is conducive to, or supportive of, the assessment. It covers issues such as the legislative or policy framework for assessment activities; institutional and organizational structures for designing, carrying out, or using results from the assessment; the availability of sufficient and stable sources of funding; and the presence of trained assessment staff.

System alignment refers to the extent to which the assessment is aligned with the rest of the education system. This includes the degree of congruence between assessment activities and system learning goals, standards, curriculum, and pre- and in-service teacher training.

Assessment quality refers to the psychometric quality of the instruments, processes, and procedures for the assessment activity. It covers issues such as design and implementation of assessment activities, analysis and interpretation of student responses to those activities, and the appropriateness of how assessment results are reported and used.

Crossing the quality drivers with the different assessment types/purposes provides the framework and broad indicator areas shown in Table 1. This framework is a starting point for identifying indicators that can be used to review assessment systems and plan for their improvement.

Table 1: Framework for building an effective assessment system, with indicator areas

	Assessment types/purposes		
	Classroom assessment	Examinations	Large-scale, system-level assessment
Enabling context	Policies Leadership and public engagement Funding Institutional arrangements Human resources		
System alignment	Learning/quality goals Curriculum Pre- and in-service teacher training opportunities		
Assessment quality	Ensuring quality (design, administration, analysis) Ensuring effective uses		

Source: World Bank.

The indicators are identified based on a combination of criteria, including:

- professional standards for assessment;
- empirical research on the characteristics of effective assessment systems, including analysis of the characteristics that differentiate between the assessment systems of low- versus high-performing nations; and
- theory — that is, general consensus among experts that it contributes to effective assessment.

Levels of development

The World Bank has developed a set of standardized questionnaires and rubrics for collecting and evaluating data on the three assessment types and related quality drivers.

The questionnaires are used to collect data on the characteristics of the assessment system in a particular country. The information from the questionnaires is then applied to the rubrics in order to judge the development level of the country’s assessment system in different areas.

The basic structure of the rubrics for evaluating data collected using the standardized questionnaires is summarized in Appendix 2. The goal of the rubrics is to provide a country with some sense of the development level of its assessment activities compared to best or recommended practice in each area. For each indicator, the rubric displays four development levels—*Latent*,

Emerging, Established, and Advanced. These levels are artificially constructed categories chosen to represent key stages on the underlying continuum for each indicator. Each level is accompanied by a description of what performance on the indicator looks like at that level.

- *Latent* is the lowest level of performance; it represents absence of, or deviation from, the desired attribute.
- *Emerging* is the next level; it represents partial presence of the attribute.
- *Established* represents the acceptable minimum standard.
- *Advanced* represents the ideal or current best practice.

A summary of the development levels for each assessment type is presented in Appendix 3.

In reality, assessment systems are likely to be at different levels of development in different areas. For example, a system may be *Established* in the area of examinations, but *Emerging* in the area of large-scale, system-level assessment, and vice versa. While intuition suggests that it is probably better to be further along in as many areas as possible, the evidence is unclear as to whether it is necessary to be functioning at *Advanced* levels in all areas. Therefore, one might view the *Established* level as a desirable minimum outcome to achieve in all areas, but only aspire beyond that in those areas that most contribute to the national vision or priorities for education. In line with these considerations, the ratings generated by the rubrics are not meant to be additive across assessment types (that is, they are not meant to be added to create an overall rating for an assessment system; they are only meant to produce an overall rating for each assessment type). The methodology for assigning development levels is summarized in Appendix 4.

Education in Solomon Islands

The Solomon Islands is a lower-middle-income country consisting of a large number of islands situated in the southwest Pacific. GDP per capita is \$1,835, with annual growth of almost 4 percent in 2012. The Solomon Islands faces significant challenges due to geographic dispersion, a largely rural population, and its vulnerability to natural hazards. Delivering adequate education services in such

a context is both challenging and costly. Despite these challenges, the Solomon Islands has made significant progress in education, allocating 20 to 30 percent of government expenditure to education every year, which is higher than most countries at comparable income levels. Over the last decade, the net primary enrolment rate increased from 75 to 93 percent and the secondary enrollment rate increased from 20 percent to more than 40 percent. However, access remains an issue, particularly in isolated areas, for females, and for secondary students from poor households.

The Solomon Islands also faces significant challenges related to the quality of education. The education system suffers from a lack of qualified teachers, overcrowded classrooms in urban areas, low enrolment in rural areas, and shortages of materials and textbooks. In addition, high rates of youth unemployment occur alongside a lack of development in work and life skills.

The Education Strategic Framework 2007-2015 provides the long-term strategic direction and oversight for the Solomon Islands' education system. The principal goals of this framework are to: (i) provide equitable access to quality basic education for all children in the Solomon Islands; (ii) provide access to community, technical, vocational, and tertiary education that will meet individual, regional, and national needs for a knowledgeable, skilled, competent, and complete people; and (iii) manage resources in an efficient, effective, and transparent manner.

Detailed information was collected on the Solomon Islands' student assessment system using the SABER-Student Assessment questionnaires and rubrics in 2014. It is important to remember that these tools primarily focus on benchmarking a country's policies and arrangements for assessment activities at the system or macro level. Additional data would need to be collected to determine actual, on-the-ground practices in the Solomon Islands, particularly by teachers and students in schools. The following sections discuss the findings for each assessment type, accompanied by suggested policy options. The suggested policy options were determined in collaboration with key local stakeholders based on the Solomon Islands' immediate interests and needs. Detailed, completed rubrics for each assessment type in Solomon Islands are provided in Appendix 5.

Classroom Assessment

Level of development



In the Solomon Islands, there is no one specific document that provides comprehensive guidelines for classroom assessment. Instead, there are several official documents authorized by the Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development (MEHRD), which are used to inform and guide classroom assessment. The *Solomon Islands Policy Statement and Guidelines for Learners' Assessment in Schools* (2010) provides information on the general functions and types of assessments used in the classroom. It is not specific to classroom assessment, but rather covers all forms of assessment. The *National Curriculum Statement, Solomon Islands* (2011) and the *National Assessment & Reporting Policy* (2010) documents provide in-depth information on the national curriculum standards as well as guidance on competency-based classroom assessment approaches and effective recording, monitoring, and reporting systems.

For both primary and secondary education, the *National Curriculum Statement* document outlines the subjects to be taught at different levels and the expected learning outcomes for each subject. The national syllabus provides suggested assessment exercises that correspond to these specified learning outcomes. In addition, each subject is accompanied by a Learner's Book that contains classroom assessment activities for each chapter.

In the Solomon Islands, classroom assessment is required for diagnosing student learning issues, providing feedback to students on their learning, informing parents about their child's learning, planning next steps in instruction, and reviewing school programs of learning.

There are minimal formal mechanisms in place in the Solomon Islands to ensure that teachers develop competencies in classroom assessment. While a "Curriculum and Assessment" course is offered as part of pre-service teacher training, it is not specific to classroom assessment and instead focuses on all types of assessments. The Solomon Islands National University (SINU) and other providers, such as the University of the

South Pacific, offer in-service teacher training courses, which address competencies in assessment.

The *National Curriculum Statement* document notes that teachers must calculate a progressive achievement level for individual learners. Student performance in all subject areas must be reported on school report cards and during teacher-parent meetings. During their visits to schools, school inspectors ensure that students have received their results and reports from classroom assessment activities, that reports are saved in the students' portfolios, and that parents receive a copy of the report.

Overall, classroom assessment practices are known to be of moderate quality. Parents tend to be well informed about their children's grades. However, it is common for classroom assessment activities to be mainly about recalling information and to rely on multiple-choice/selection-type questions. Few mechanisms are in place to monitor the quality of classroom assessment practices. While classroom assessment is a required component of a teacher's performance evaluation and of school inspection, there is no external moderation system that reviews the difficulty of classroom assessment activities, appropriateness of scoring criteria, etc. There is also no government funding for research on the quality of classroom assessment activities and how to improve them.

Suggested policy options:

1. Ensure that teachers develop competencies in classroom assessment. For example, work with teacher training programs to include classroom assessment topics and courses in their curriculum.
2. Improve the quality of classroom assessment practices by training teachers to use assessment methodologies that go beyond the multiple-choice format and the recall of information. For example, train teachers to assess student competencies using open-ended questions and scoring rubrics.
3. Introduce mechanisms to monitor the quality of classroom assessment practices. For example, form moderation panels of teachers that review the difficulty of classroom assessment activities and the appropriateness of scoring criteria.

Examinations

Level of development



The Solomon Islands National Form Six Certificate (SINF6C) has been carried out since 1989. Until 2012, it was called the Pacific Senior Secondary Certificate. The SINF6C is administered annually to Year 12 students in English and Mathematics as well as a number of optional subject areas, which include Accounting, Economics, Agriculture, Chemistry, Biology, Physics, Computer Studies, Design Technology, Development Studies, Geography, and History. The examination is used for certification of secondary school completion and student selection for tertiary education. The examination is also used for informing teachers and pedagogical practices, and for monitoring education quality.

While there is no specific policy on SINF6C, the *Policy Guidelines for Learner's Assessment in Schools*, authorized in 2010 by the Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development (MEHRD), includes guidelines for SINF6C. The National Examinations and Standards Unit (NESU) within the MEHRD provides leadership for the examination.

Regular funding for the examination is provided through the Ministry of Education budget and is allocated at the discretion of the government and partners. Students are also required to pay a fee to take the examination. Funding covers examination design, administration, data analysis, and data reporting.

The examination is fully standardized. A variety of procedures are in place to ensure that assessment design, administration, scoring, and reporting are the same for all students taking the examination. Examination papers are the same or equivalent for all students, examination administrators are trained to ensure all students take the examinations under the same conditions, and the same scoring criteria are used to correct the examination papers.

Other formal mechanisms in place to ensure the quality of the examination include the numbering of all test booklets, double data scoring, and training of scorers to ensure high inter-rater reliability. A comprehensive

technical report is circulated to all schools and is available to parents and other stakeholders upon request.

There are some opportunities for teachers to learn about the examinations. In recent years, NESU staff have visited schools to facilitate trainings and workshops on the examinations. Furthermore, teachers who are part of the grading panel have the opportunity to learn about marking the examination, and are required to review the marking rubrics and answer schemes. Teachers are actively involved in some examination-related tasks, such as administering and scoring the examination. They are not involved in selecting the questions or creating the scoring guides, in part due to concerns that teachers who know the exam questions will teach to those questions.

All students in Year 12 are eligible to take the examination. Results are perceived as credible and are internationally recognized. There is no national policy or requirements to make preparation material on the examinations available to students; however, all schools have electronic copies of past years' examination papers. Subject teachers are expected to provide students with copies of past years' examination papers and students can request past years' examination papers from NESU. In addition, information on how to prepare for the examination, the framework document explaining what is measured on the examination, and a report on past student performance on the examination are available to students. While students who do not perform well on the examination may opt for less selective tertiary education institutions, they do not have the option of retaking the examination.

Suggested policy options:

1. Ensure greater opportunities for teachers to learn about the examination by, for example, involving teachers in the design of the examination. Teachers could also be contracted to perform specific examination-related tasks.
2. Introduce options for students who do not perform well on the examination, including the ability to retake the examination (if a student did not perform well) and the option of attending remedial courses.

National Large-Scale Assessment (NLSA)

Level of development



The Solomon Islands Standardized Tests of Achievement (SISTA) was first introduced in 2004 and has been implemented every three years since then to all students in Years 4 and 6. The assessment is administered to monitor education quality at the country level, support schools and teachers, and inform policy design, evaluation, and decision making.

There is no policy document specific to SISTA; however, the *Policy and Guide to Learner's Assessment in Schools (2010)* and the *National Curriculum Statement (2011)* both describe SISTA and its purpose.

Funding for SISTA comes primarily from the country's internal funding sources, including the Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development (MEHRD) as well as donor agencies, including the New Zealand Aid Programme and Australian Aid Programme. Funding for SISTA covers assessment design, administration, data analysis, and data reporting.

SISTA is developed directly from the Years 4 and 6 curricula and is thus sufficiently aligned with the content, skill areas, and pedagogical approaches of the official learning goals. In addition, there is a regular internal review to ensure alignment between SISTA and the curriculum. Textbooks and other learning resources, as well as teacher lessons, provide students with sufficient exposure to the type of content and skills measured by SISTA.

The National Examinations and Standards Unit (NESU) within the MEHRD is nationally recognized as an authority in student assessment in the Solomon Islands and has been in charge of SISTA since 2004. Although the NESU lacks sufficient staff to carry out SISTA, no quality problems have been identified with the performance of the team.

The Solomon Islands offers few regular opportunities to learn about the SISTA. There are university courses offered by the Solomon Islands National University (SINU) on assessment. As part of pre-service training, all

students take a "Curriculum and Assessment" course. In addition, education authorities have organized workshops for teachers during which NESU staff present SISTA results. Furthermore, based on SISTA reports, the NESU has organized provincially-based workshops on ARTTLe (Assessment Resource Tools for Teaching and Learning) for teachers in all 10 provinces.

There are various formal mechanisms in place to ensure the quality of the NLSA, including training scorers to ensure high inter-rater reliability, carrying out a pilot before the main data collection, training all proctors according to protocol, providing a standardized manual for SISTA administrators, double scoring and processing data, and introducing internal and external reviewers. However, other mechanisms, such as numbering all booklets and conducting an external certification or audit are not in place.

While SISTA reports are available to stakeholders upon request, at the time of data collection, SISTA results had not been actively disseminated. However, SISTA results have informed decision making at the country level; for example, they have been used to establish the Literacy Project Management Unit (LPMU) which manages several literacy projects focusing on current practices in literacy and vernacular in the early grades.

Suggested policy options:

1. Introduce a formal policy document that provides authorization for SISTA and make it publicly available online.
2. Ensure the availability of a variety of opportunities in the Solomon Islands to learn about SISTA, especially for incoming and existing NESU staff. For example, provide funding for attending international programs or workshops on student assessment and introduce professional development courses on student assessment. Additionally, establish internships or short-term employment opportunities in assessment units, such as the NESU, in order to develop expertise for carrying out the SISTA.

International Large-Scale Assessment (ILSA)

Level of development



In 2012, the Solomon Islands took part for the first time in the Pacific Islands Literacy and Numeracy Assessment (PILNA), in which 14 countries in the Pacific region participate. There is currently no country-level policy document that addresses participation in PILNA, although the importance of ILSAs is noted as priority Number 7 of the National Assessment Policy. However, in 2006, the South Pacific Board for Educational Assessment (SPBEA; now known as the Education Quality and Assessment Programme, or EQAP), a regional body to which the Solomon Islands belongs, received a mandate from the Pacific Forum Education Ministers Meeting (FEEdMM) to develop PILNA.

Funding for PILNA was allocated by the Australian Aid Programme and SPBEA, and covered some core activities, including implementation of PILNA and processing and analyzing data collected from its administration. Funding also covered attendance at international meetings.

In order to implement PILNA, a national coordinator was appointed. A school coordinator was identified to manage the administration at the school level for selected schools, and test supervisors (teachers) administered the assessment at the classroom level in the selected schools. For each assessment area - literacy and numeracy - a panel was responsible for marking the assessment results. Although the 2012 PILNA administration was the first time that the PILNA team was in charge of an ILSA, there were no quality problems identified with the carrying out of PILNA in the Solomon Islands.

The NESU held presentations on PILNA for ILSA team members and assessment specialists. Key personnel also participated in workshops organized by SPBEA for all PILNA-participating countries. In addition, SPBEA provided in-country training to scorers.

PILNA was sufficiently aligned with the Solomon Island's learning goals. Classroom lessons, textbooks, and learning resources cover content similar to the content covered by PILNA. As a result, students had extensive previous exposure to the type of content and skills measured by PILNA. PILNA was also consistent with the national large-scale assessment (SISTA) in the Solomon Islands.

The Solomon Islands has complied with all technical standards for PILNA, and it is expected that its results will be presented in the main section of the international report, *"Solomon Islands PaBER-PILNA Report, 31st July 2013."*

Suggested policy options:

1. Establish and make widely available a variety of opportunities to learn about PILNA in the Solomon Islands. For example, organize workshops or meetings on using PILNA databases, which are available to staff directly involved in implementing PILNA, assessment specialists, university teachers, students, and other educators.

Appendix 1: Assessment Types and Their Key Differences

	Classroom	Large-scale assessment Surveys		Examinations	
		National	International	Exit	Entrance
Purpose	To provide immediate feedback to inform classroom instruction	To provide feedback on overall health of the system at particular grade/age level(s), and to monitor trends in learning	To provide feedback on the comparative performance of the education system at particular grade/age level(s)	To certify students as they move from one level of the education system to the next (or into the workforce)	To select students for further educational opportunities
Frequency	Daily	For individual subjects offered on a regular basis (such as every 3-5 years)	For individual subjects offered on a regular basis (such as every 3-5 years)	Annually and more often where the system allows for repeats	Annually and more often where the system allows for repeats
Who is tested?	All students	Sample or census of students at a particular grade or age level(s)	A sample of students at a particular grade or age level(s)	All eligible students	All eligible students
Format	Varies from observation to questioning to paper-and-pencil tests to student performances	Usually multiple choice and short answer	Usually multiple choice and short answer	Usually essay and multiple choice	Usually essay and multiple choice
Coverage of curriculum	All subject areas	Generally confined to a few subjects	Generally confined to one or two subjects	Covers main subject areas	Covers main subject areas
Additional information collected from students?	Yes, as part of the teaching process	Frequently	Yes	Seldom	Seldom
Scoring	Usually informal and simple	Varies from simple to more statistically sophisticated techniques	Usually involves statistically sophisticated techniques	Varies from simple to more statistically sophisticated techniques	Varies from simple to more statistically sophisticated techniques

Appendix 2: Basic Structure of Rubrics for Evaluating Data Collected on a Student Assessment System

Dimension	Development Level				
	LATENT (Absence of, or deviation from, attribute)	EMERGING (On way to meeting minimum standard)	ESTABLISHED (Acceptable minimum standard)	ADVANCED (Best practice)	Justification
EC—ENABLING CONTEXT					
EC1—Policies					
EC2—Leadership, public engagement					
EC3—Funding					
EC4—Institutional arrangements					
EC5—Human resources					
SA—SYSTEM ALIGNMENT					
SA1—Learning/quality goals					
SA2—Curriculum					
SA3—Pre-, in-service teacher training					
AQ—ASSESSMENT QUALITY					
AQ1—Ensuring quality (design, administration, analysis)					
AQ2—Ensuring effective uses					

Appendix 3: Summary of the Development Levels for Each Assessment Type

Assessment Type	LATENT	EMERGING	ESTABLISHED	ADVANCED
	<i>Absence of, or deviation from, the attribute</i>	<i>On way to meeting minimum standard</i>	<i>Acceptable minimum standard</i>	<i>Best practice</i>
CLASSROOM ASSESSMENT	There is no system-wide institutional capacity to support and ensure the quality of classroom assessment practices.	There is weak system-wide institutional capacity to support and ensure the quality of classroom assessment practices.	There is sufficient system-wide institutional capacity to support and ensure the quality of classroom assessment practices.	There is strong system-wide institutional capacity to support and ensure the quality of classroom assessment practices.
EXAMINATIONS	There is no standardized examination in place for key decisions.	There is a partially stable standardized examination in place, and a need to develop institutional capacity to run the examination. The examination typically is of poor quality and is perceived as unfair or corrupt.	There is a stable standardized examination in place. There is institutional capacity and some limited mechanisms to monitor it. The examination is of acceptable quality and is perceived as fair for most students and free from corruption.	There is a stable standardized examination in place and institutional capacity and strong mechanisms to monitor it. The examination is of high quality and is perceived as fair and free from corruption.
NATIONAL (OR SYSTEM-LEVEL) LARGE-SCALE ASSESSMENT	There is no NLSA in place.	There is an unstable NLSA in place and a need to develop institutional capacity to run the NLSA. Assessment quality and impact are weak.	There is a stable NLSA in place. There is institutional capacity and some limited mechanisms to monitor it. The NLSA is of moderate quality and its information is disseminated, but not always used in effective ways.	There is a stable NLSA in place and institutional capacity and strong mechanisms to monitor it. The NLSA is of high quality and its information is effectively used to improve education.
INTERNATIONAL LARGE-SCALE ASSESSMENT	There is no history of participation in an ILSA nor plans to participate in one.	Participation in an ILSA has been initiated, but there still is need to develop institutional capacity to carry out the ILSA.	There is more or less stable participation in an ILSA. There is institutional capacity to carry out the ILSA. The information from the ILSA is disseminated, but not always used in effective ways.	There is stable participation in an ILSA and institutional capacity to run the ILSA. The information from the ILSA is effectively used to improve education.

Appendix 4: Methodology for Assigning Development Levels

1. The country team or consultant collects information about the assessment system in the country.

2. Based on the collected information, a level of development and score is assigned to each dimension in the rubrics:

- Latent = 1 score point
- Emerging = 2 score points
- Established = 3 score points
- Advanced = 4 score points

3. The score for each quality driver is computed by aggregating the scores for each of its constituent dimensions. For example:

The quality driver, 'Enabling Context,' in the case of ILSA, has 3 dimensions on which a hypothetical country receives the following scores: Dimension A = 2 points; Dimension B = 2 points; Dimension C = 3 points. The hypothetical country's overall score for this quality driver would be: $(2+2+3)/3 = 2.33$

4. A preliminary level of development is assigned to each quality driver.

5. The preliminary development level is validated using expert judgment in cooperation with the country team and The World Bank Task Team Leader.

For scores that allow a margin of discretion (i.e., to choose between two levels of development), a final decision has to be made based on expert judgment. For example, the aforementioned hypothetical country has an 'Enabling Context' score of 2.33, corresponding to a preliminary level of development of 'Emerging or Established.' Based on qualitative information not captured in the rubric, along with expert judgment, the country team chooses 'Emerging' as the most appropriate level.

6. Scores for certain key dimensions under 'Enabling Context' (in the case of EXAM, NLSA, and ILSA) and under 'System Alignment' (in the case of CLASS) were set as ceiling scores, i.e., the overall mean score for the particular assessment type cannot be greater than the score for these key dimensions. These key variables include formal policy, regular funding, having a permanent assessment unit, and the quality of assessment practices.

Appendix 5: SABER-Student Assessment Rubrics for the Solomon Islands





In each row of the rubric, the relevant selection is indicated by blue color highlighting. The selection may include a superscript number that refers to the justification or explanation for the selection. The explanation or justification text can be located in the “Development-level rating justifications” section at the end of each rubric. If a row includes a superscript, but not blue color highlighting, this means that insufficient information was available to determine the relevant selection in the row.

SOLOMON ISLANDS

Classroom Assessment

ENABLING CONTEXT AND SYSTEM ALIGNMENT

Overall policy and resource framework within which classroom assessment activity takes place in a country or system, and the degree to which classroom assessment activity is coherent with other components of the education system.

LATENT 	EMERGING 	ESTABLISHED 	ADVANCED 
ENABLING CONTEXT AND SYSTEM ALIGNMENT 1: <i>Setting clear guidelines for classroom assessment</i>			
There is no country-level document that provides guidelines for classroom assessment.	There is an informal or draft country-level document that provides guidelines for classroom assessment.	There is a formal country-level document that provides guidelines for classroom assessment, but the document is not available online to anybody interested. ¹	There is a formal country-level document that provides guidelines for classroom assessment, publicly available online to anybody interested.
ENABLING CONTEXT AND SYSTEM ALIGNMENT 2: <i>Aligning classroom assessment with country learning goals</i>			
There are no country-wide resources for teachers for classroom assessment.	There are very few country-wide resources for teachers for classroom assessment. ²	There are some country-wide resources for teachers for classroom assessment.	There are a variety of country-wide resources for teachers for classroom assessment.
There is no official curriculum or standards document.	There is an official curriculum or standards document, but it is not clear what students are expected to learn.	There is an official curriculum or standards document that specifies what students are expected to learn, but the desired level of performance is not clear.	There is an official curriculum or standards document that specifies what students are expected to learn and the desired level of performance. ³
ENABLING CONTEXT AND SYSTEM ALIGNMENT 3: <i>Having effective human resources to carry out classroom assessment activities</i>			
There are no formal country-level mechanisms to ensure that teachers develop competencies in classroom assessment.	There are very minimal formal country-level mechanisms to ensure that teachers develop competencies in classroom assessment. ⁴	There are some formal country-level mechanisms to ensure that teachers develop competencies in classroom assessment.	There are a variety of formal country-level mechanisms to ensure that teachers develop competencies in classroom assessment.

ASSESSMENT QUALITY
Quality of classroom assessment design, administration, analysis and use.

<p>LATENT ● ○ ○ ○</p>	<p>EMERGING ● ● ○ ○</p>	<p>ESTABLISHED ● ● ● ○</p>	<p>ADVANCED ● ● ● ●</p>
<p>ASSESSMENT QUALITY 1: <i>Ensuring the quality of classroom assessment</i></p>			
<p>Classroom assessment practices are very weak, or there is no information available on classroom assessment practices.</p>	<p>Classroom assessment practices are known to be weak.</p>	<p>Classroom assessment practices are known to be of moderate quality.⁵</p>	<p>Classroom assessment practices are known to be of high quality.</p>
<p>There are no formal country-level mechanisms to monitor the quality of classroom assessment practices.</p>	<p>There are minimal formal country-level mechanisms to monitor the quality of classroom assessment practices.⁶</p>	<p>There are some formal country-level mechanisms to monitor the quality of classroom assessment practices.</p>	<p>There are varied formal country-level mechanisms to monitor the quality of classroom assessment practices.</p>
<p>ASSESSMENT QUALITY 2: <i>Ensuring effective uses of classroom assessment</i></p>			
<p>There are no required uses of classroom assessment.</p>	<p>There are minimal required uses of classroom assessment.</p>	<p>There are varied required uses of classroom assessment.⁷</p>	<p>There are varied required uses of classroom assessment, including its use as an input for selection or certification.</p>
<p>Schools are not required to report information on individual student performance.</p>	<p>At least some schools are required to report information on individual student performance.</p>	<p>All schools are required to report information on individual student performance to parents.⁸</p>	<p>All schools are required to report information on individual student performance to parents and other key stakeholders.</p>
<p>Information on student performance is not required to be reported.</p>	<p>Minimal information on student performance is required to be reported.</p>	<p>Some information on student performance is required to be reported in school report cards.⁹</p>	<p>A variety of information about student performance is required to be reported in school report cards.</p>

Classroom Assessment: *Development-level rating justifications*

1. In Solomon Islands, the Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development (MEHRD) is the authorizing body for all documents providing guidelines for classroom assessment. There is not one specific document that provides comprehensive guidelines for classroom assessment. Rather, there are several documents used to inform and guide classroom assessment. The *Solomon Islands Policy Statement and Guidelines for Learners' Assessment in Schools* (2010) provides general functions and types of assessment which underscores the formative and diagnostic assessments in the classroom. However, this document is not specific to classroom assessment, but rather covers all types of assessment.

The *National Curriculum Statement, Solomon Islands* (2011) complements the *National Assessment & Reporting Policy* (2010) and provides an overview of the requirements of the national curriculum of Solomon Islands. The Policy document informs teachers, instructors and education providers of the standards of the national curriculum. The Statement focuses on achievement and competency-based assessment approaches and effective recording, monitoring and reporting system. The Statement also provides teachers with guidance and examples on: assessing student achievement; recording student achievement; making judgment about student achievement; and reporting to parents and guardians.

All documents/policies noted above are available to key stakeholders, but not online. Hard copies are provided to Education Authorities (who manage and operate schools), and to school leaders and teachers. A large percentage of schools do not have access to the internet and as such online is not an effective distribution method.

2. Documents which outline what students are expected to learn and to what level of performance in different subject areas at different grade levels are available to teachers in Solomon Islands. For example, the *National Curriculum Statement* outlines the subjects to be taught at different levels and the expected outcomes for each subject. More specifically, there is a syllabus for each subject for both primary and secondary levels. The national syllabus provides suggested assessment exercises that correspond to the specific learning outcomes. Associated with each syllabus is a Teacher's Guide, which details the learning outcomes and expectations. Each subject is also accompanied by Learner's Book that contains classroom assessment activities for each chapter.

3. The National Curriculum Statement, the national syllabus and the Teacher's Guide specify what students are expected to learn and the desired level of performance for each subject area.

4. Solomon Islands National University (SINU) offers in-service teacher training courses in Teacher Education which addresses competencies in assessment. As part of the pre-service training, all teachers take a "Curriculum and Assessment" course, however the course is not specific to classroom assessment, but rather focuses on all types of assessment.

5. Classroom assessment practices are known to be of moderate quality. In practice, parents are usually well informed about students' grades. However, the use of multiple-choice/selection-type questions is common and classroom assessment activities are mainly about recalling information.

6. Classroom assessment is a required component of a teacher's performance evaluation and of school inspection. As part of teacher evaluation, the school inspection instrument includes a component which focuses on formative classroom assessment. In addition, at the secondary level, the Head of Subject Department (HoD) coordinates an assessment program that includes an annual assessment cycle/schedule.
7. The National Curriculum Statement spells out the purpose and required uses of classroom assessment information. In Solomon Islands, classroom assessment is required to be used in diagnosing student learning issues, providing feedback to students on their learning, informing parents about their child's learning, planning next steps in instruction and reviewing of school programs of learning.
8. In Solomon Islands, all schools are required to report on individual student performance. The National Curriculum Statement (2011) states that teachers must calculate a progressive achievement level for individual learners. School Inspection visits ensure that students have received their results/reports, the reports are saved in the student's portfolios, and that parents have a copy.
9. Student performance in Mathematics, Language and in all other subject areas is required to be reported in school report cards and during teacher-parent meetings.

SOLOMON ISLANDS





Examinations

ENABLING CONTEXT





Overall framework of policies, leadership, institutional arrangements, fiscal and human resources in which the assessment activity takes place in a country, and the extent to which that framework is directly conducive to, or supportive of, the assessment activity.

<p>LATENT ● ○ ○ ○</p>	<p>EMERGING ● ● ○ ○</p>	<p>ESTABLISHED ● ● ● ○</p>	<p>ADVANCED ● ● ● ●</p>
<p>ENABLING CONTEXT 1: <i>Setting clear policies for the examination</i></p>			
<p>There is no examination.</p>	<p>The examination has been operating on an irregular basis.</p>	<p>The examination has been operating regularly.¹</p>	<p>This option does not apply to this dimension</p>
<p>There is no examination, or there is no policy pertaining to the examination.</p>	<p>There is an informal or draft policy that authorizes the examination; or there is a formal policy that is not available.²</p>	<p>There is a formal policy that authorizes the examination, available upon request or with restricted access.</p>	<p>There is a formal policy that authorizes the examination, publicly available online to anyone interested.</p>
<p>There is no examination, or the examination is not standardized.</p>	<p>The examination is partially standardized.</p>	<p>The examination is fully or partially standardized, with at least some procedures in place to ensure standardization.</p>	<p>The examination is fully standardized, and a variety of procedures are in place to ensure standardization.³</p>
<p>ENABLING CONTEXT 2: <i>Having leadership for the examination</i></p>			
<p>There is no examination, or the country does not have leadership for the examination.</p>	<p>The country has weak leadership for the examination.</p>	<p>The country has strong leadership for the examination, from an individual person or from a stakeholder body.</p>	<p>The country has strong leadership for the examination from both an individual person and a permanent stakeholder body.⁴</p>

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<p>LATENT</p> 	<p>EMERGING</p> 	<p>ESTABLISHED</p> 	<p>ADVANCED</p> 
<p>ENABLING CONTEXT 3: <i>Having regular funding for the examination</i></p>			
<p>There is no examination, or there is no funding allocated for the examination.</p>	<p>There is irregular funding for the examination, or the funding is not allocated by law or regulation.⁵</p>	<p>There is regular funding for the examination that is allocated by law or regulation.</p>	<p>This option does not apply to this dimension.</p>
<p>There is no examination, or there is no funding coming from the government, student fees, or donors.</p>	<p>The funding for the examination comes primarily from donors or loans.</p>	<p>The funding for the examination comes primarily from the government or student fees.⁶</p>	<p>This option does not apply to this dimension.</p>
<p>There is no examination, or there is no funding to cover activities.</p>	<p>There is funding to cover at least some of the core activities.</p>	<p>There is funding to cover all or most core activities.⁷</p>	<p>There is funding to cover all core activities, plus research and development.</p>
<p>ENABLING CONTEXT 4: <i>Having institutional capacity for the examination</i></p>			
<p>There is no examination, or there is no examination unit.</p>	<p>There is a temporary unit, or a unit with minimum experience, in charge of the examination.</p>	<p>There is a permanent unit with some experience in charge of the examination.⁸</p>	<p>There is a permanent unit with vast experience in charge of the examination.</p>
<p>There is no examination, or it is not clear to which body the examination unit is accountable.</p>	<p>This option does not apply to this dimension.</p>	<p>The examination unit is accountable to a clearly recognized body.⁹</p>	<p>This option does not apply to this dimension.</p>
<p>There is no examination, or the examination unit does not have facilities to carry out the examination.</p>	<p>The examination unit has only a few of the required facilities to carry out the examination.¹⁰</p>	<p>The examination unit has all of the required facilities to carry out the examination.</p>	<p>The examination unit has up-to-date versions of all required facilities to carry out the examination.</p>

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<p>LATENT</p> 	<p>EMERGING</p> 	<p>ESTABLISHED</p> 	<p>ADVANCED</p> 
<p>ENABLING CONTEXT 5: <i>Having human resources for the examination</i></p>			
<p>There is no examination, or there is no staff allocated to the examination unit.</p>	<p>The examination unit has an inadequate number of staff to carry out the examination.¹¹</p>	<p>The examination unit has an adequate number of staff to carry out the examination, with some quality problems.</p>	<p>The examination unit has an adequate number of staff to carry out the examination, with no quality problems.</p>
<p>There is no examination, or the country offers no annual opportunities to learn about the examinations.</p>	<p>The country offers very few annual opportunities to learn about the examinations.</p>	<p>The country offers some annual opportunities to learn about examinations to the examination staff.¹²</p>	<p>The country offers a wide range of annual opportunities to learn about examinations. These opportunities are available to a broad audience, including the examination staff.</p>
<p>There is no examination, or teachers have no opportunities to learn about the examination, and are not involved in examination-related tasks.</p>	<p>Teachers have at least some opportunities to learn about the examination, or are involved in at least some examination-related tasks.</p>	<p>Teachers have at least some opportunities to learn about the examination, and are involved in at least some examination-related tasks.¹³</p>	<p>Teachers have opportunities to learn about different aspects of the examination, and are involved in most examination-related tasks.</p>





SYSTEM ALIGNMENT

Degree to which the assessment is coherent with other components of the education system.

<p>LATENT ● ○ ○ ○</p>	<p>EMERGING ● ● ○ ○</p>	<p>ESTABLISHED ● ● ● ○</p>	<p>ADVANCED ● ● ● ●</p>
<p>SYSTEM ALIGNMENT 1: <i>Aligning the examination with learning goals</i></p>			
<p>There is no examination, or the examination is not aligned with official learning goals or curriculum.</p>	<p>The examination is weakly aligned with official learning goals or curriculum, or there are no regular reviews to ensure alignment.¹⁴</p>	<p>The examination is at least sufficiently aligned with official learning goals or curriculum, and there are regular reviews of the examination take place to ensure alignment.</p>	<p>The examination is fully aligned with official learning goals or curriculum, and regular external reviews take place to ensure alignment.</p>
<p>There is no examination, or there the material to prepare for the examinations is available to a small number of students at most.</p>	<p>The material to prepare for the examinations is accessible to at least some students.</p>	<p>There is comprehensive material to prepare for the examination that is accessible to most students.</p>	<p>There is comprehensive material to prepare for the examination that is widely accessible to all or almost all students.¹⁵</p>
<p>There is no examination, or the examination is not consistent with other assessment activities.¹⁶</p>	<p>The examination is minimally consistent with other assessment activities.</p>	<p>The examination is sufficiently consistent with other assessment activities.</p>	<p>The examination is fully consistent with other assessment activities.</p>

ASSESSMENT QUALITY

Degree to which the assessment meets technical standards, is fair, and is used in an effective way.

LATENT 	EMERGING 	ESTABLISHED 	ADVANCED 
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ASSESSMENT QUALITY 1:
Ensuring the quality of the examination

There is no examination, or there are no formal mechanisms in place to ensure the quality of the examination.	There are minimal formal mechanisms in place to ensure the quality of the examination.	There are some formal mechanisms in place to ensure the quality of the examination. ¹⁷	There are a variety of formal mechanisms in place to ensure the quality of the examination.
There is no examination, or there is no documentation about the technical aspects of the examination.	There is some documentation about the technical aspects of the examination.	There is a comprehensive technical report about the examination available upon request or with restricted access. ¹⁸	There is a comprehensive technical report about the examination publicly available online.

ASSESSMENT QUALITY 2:
Ensuring fairness

There is no examination, or the majority of the students may not take the examination because of language, gender, or other equivalent barriers.	A significant proportion of students may not take the examination because of language, gender, or other equivalent barriers.	A small proportion of students may not take the examination because of language, gender, or other equivalent barriers.	All students can take the examination; there are no language, gender or other equivalent barriers. ¹⁹
There is no examination, or student results are not confidential, or inappropriate behavior surrounding the examination is high.	Student results are confidential.	Student results are confidential, and inappropriate behavior surrounding the examination is low. ²⁰	Student results are confidential, and there is no inappropriate behavior surrounding the examination.

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<p>LATENT</p> 	<p>EMERGING</p> 	<p>ESTABLISHED</p> 	<p>ADVANCED</p> 
<p>ASSESSMENT QUALITY 3: <i>Ensuring appropriate uses of the examination</i></p>			
<p>There is no examination, or student results are not perceived as credible, or are not recognized by any broader certification or selection system.</p>	<p>Student results are perceived as credible by at least some stakeholders.</p>	<p>Student results are perceived as credible by most stakeholders, and are nationally recognized.</p>	<p>Students' results are perceived as credible by most stakeholders, and are internationally recognized.²¹</p>
<p>There is no examination, or there are no options in the education system for students who do not perform well on the examination.</p>	<p>There are very few options in the education system for students who do not perform well on the examination.²²</p>	<p>There are some options in the education system for students who do not perform well on the examination.</p>	<p>There are a variety of options in the education system for students who do not perform well on the examination.</p>
<p>There is no examination, or there are no mechanisms in place to monitor the examination.</p>	<p>This option does not apply to this dimension.</p>	<p>There are some mechanisms in place to monitor the examination.²³</p>	<p>There are a variety of mechanisms in place to monitor the examination.</p>

Examinations: [Development-level rating justifications](#)

1. The Solomon Islands National Form Six Certificate (SINF6C) was first implemented as the Pacific Senior Secondary Certificate in 1989 and became a national examination and known as the SINF6C in 2012. It is administered every year to Year 12 students in English and Mathematics and other optional subjects which include: Accounting, Economics, Agriculture, Chemistry, Biology, Physics, Computer studies, Design Technology, Development Studies, Geography, and History. It is used for purposes such as student certification for grade completion and student selection for tertiary education.
2. There is no specific policy on SINF6C, however the Policy Guidelines for Learner's Assessment in Schools, authorized in 2010 by the Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development outlines the SINF6C. This document is distributed to schools and is also available to the public and other stakeholders upon request.
3. The examination is fully standardized. Assessment design, administration, scoring and reporting are the same for all students taking the examination. In addition, there are a variety of procedures in place to ensure the standardization. For example, examination papers or tasks are the same or are equivalent for all students, examination administrators are trained to ensure all students take the examinations under the same conditions, and the same scoring criteria are used to correct the examination papers and tasks.
4. The MEHRD, which consists of a permanent body of stakeholders, provides leadership for the examination. The MEHRD has pushed for the development of the examination and has influence and power in determining the examination agenda in the country.
5. Funding for the examination allocated at the discretion of the government and partners.
6. There is regular funding for the examination is provided through Ministry of Education budget. Students are also required to pay a fee to take the examination.
7. Funding allocated for the examination covers examination design and administration, and data analysis and reporting.
8. The National Examination and Standard Unit (NESU) has been in charge of the SINF6C since 2012. However, it has carried out a number of key examination responsibilities since 1978 related to marking, sample moderation, mark processing, and release of results to schools and Education authorities.
9. The NESU is directly accountable to The National Examination and Assessment Board.
10. The examination unit has up-to-date computers and top-level security for the building. However, it does not have adequate storage facilities, computer servers or communication tools.
11. The NESU team has an inadequate number of staff to carry out the SINF6C. The Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) recently conducted an "Institutional Capacity Analysis for National Education Assessment System" (Solomon Islands) and found that the NESU requires a higher number of staff to

- manage the workload. Several quality problems have been identified with the performance of the NESU including errors in test design and examination questions, and delays in administering the examination. .
12. The Solomon Islands National University (SINU) offers courses in Teacher Education and pre-service training includes a "Curriculum and Assessment" course. The NESU also hosts annual workshops for teachers, examiners and moderators which focus on the examinations.
 13. There are some opportunities for teachers to learn about the examinations. In recent years, NESU staff have conducted school visits to facilitate trainings and conduct workshops for teachers about the examinations. Furthermore, teachers who are part of the grading panel have the opportunity to learn about marking and grading the examination, and are required to review the marking rubrics and answer schemes prior to the examination. Teachers are involved in some examination-related tasks, such as in administering and scoring the examination. They are not involved in selecting the questions, creating the scoring guides or supervising examination procedures, in part due to concerns that teachers who know the exam questions will teach to these questions.
 14. There is currently no national curriculum in the Solomon Islands for Year 12. Prior to 2012, Solomon Islands were part of the Pacific Senior Secondary Certificate (PSSC), which has its own subject prescriptions that apply to all participating countries, and are not country-specific. The SINF6C, implemented for the first time in 2012, still relies on the PSSC content as there is still no national curriculum for Year 12.
 15. There is no national policy or set of requirements to make material on examinations available to students; however, all schools have electronic copies of past years' examination papers. Subject teachers are expected to provide students with copies of past years' examination papers and students can request past years' examination papers from NESU. In addition, information on how to prepare for the examination, the framework document explaining what is measured on the examination, and a report on past student performance on the examination are available to almost all students.
 16. It is not possible to tell whether the SINF6C is fully consistent with the large-scale assessments in the country because the examination is administered at the secondary level, which the large-scale assessments are administered at the primary level. At the same time, since classroom assessment practices are varied across schools, it is unclear whether the examination is consistent with such practices.
 17. There are some formal mechanisms in place to ensure the quality of the examination. For example, all proctors or administrators are trained according to protocol. In addition, the SPBEA developed a standardized manual for examination administrators. All booklets are numbered, there is double data scoring and scorers are trained to ensure high inter-rater reliability.
 18. There is a comprehensive technical report which is circulated to all schools and Education Authorities and is available to parents and other stakeholders upon request.
 19. All students in Year 12 are eligible to sit SINF6C examination but results are withheld for students who did not pay examination fees.

20. Only the student and persons with a legitimate, professional interest in the test taker can know the results. There are some inappropriate behaviors that diminish the credibility of the examination include copying, using unauthorized materials such as prepared answers and notes, and issuing of forged certificates or altering results information.
21. Results are perceived as credible by most stakeholder groups and are internationally recognized.
22. While students who do not perform well on the examination may opt for less selective schools, universities, or tracks, they do not have the option of retaking the examination or attend remedial education.
23. The National Examination and Assessment Board is in place to monitor the examination in terms of impact, acceptance and credibility. In addition, SPBEA provides continuous technical support to NESU in dealing with capacity constraints. However, there are no expert review groups or funding for independent review and audit of the examination.





SOLOMON ISLANDS
National (or System-Level) Large-Scale Assessment (NLSA)

ENABLING CONTEXT

Overall framework of policies, leadership, institutional arrangements, fiscal and human resources in which the assessment takes place in a country, and the extent to which that framework is directly conducive to, or supportive of, the assessment activity.

<p>LATENT ● ○ ○ ○</p>	<p>EMERGING ● ● ○ ○</p>	<p>ESTABLISHED ● ● ● ○</p>	<p>ADVANCED ● ● ● ●</p>
<p>ENABLING CONTEXT 1: <i>Setting clear policies for the NLSA</i></p>			
<p>No NLSA has taken place in the country.</p>	<p>The NLSA has been operating on an irregular basis.</p>	<p>The NLSA has been operating regularly.¹</p>	<p>This option does not apply to this dimension.</p>
<p>There was no NLSA, or there was no policy document pertaining to NLSA.²</p>	<p>There was an informal or draft policy document that authorized the NLSA.</p>	<p>There was a formal policy document that authorized the NLSA, available upon request or with restricted access.</p>	<p>There was a formal policy document that authorized the NLSA that is publicly available online to anyone interested.</p>
<p>There was no NLSA, or there was no assessment schedule for future NLSAs.</p>	<p>There was a common, informal understanding that there would be an NLSA in the future.³</p>	<p>There was an official assessment schedule for future NLSAs, albeit lacking in details.</p>	<p>There was a publicly available official assessment schedule for future NLSAs, specifying when (year), who (grade level) and what (subject areas) would be assessed.</p>
<p>ENABLING CONTEXT 2: <i>Having leadership for the NLSA</i></p>			
<p>There was no NLSA, or the country did not have leadership for the NLSA.</p>	<p>The country had weak leadership for the NLSA.</p>	<p>The country had leadership for the NLSA from an individual person or from a stakeholder body.⁴</p>	<p>The country had leadership for the NLSA from both an individual person and a permanent stakeholder body.</p>

(CONTINUED)

<p>LATENT</p> 	<p>EMERGING</p> 	<p>ESTABLISHED</p> 	<p>ADVANCED</p> 
<p>ENABLING CONTEXT 3: <i>Having regular funding for the NLSA</i></p>			
<p>There was no NLSA, or there was no funding for the NLSA.</p>	<p>There was funding for the NLSA.⁵</p>	<p>There was regular funding for the NLSA that was allocated by law or regulation.</p>	<p>This option does not apply to this dimension.</p>
<p>There was no NLSA, or there was no funding for the NLSA from internal or external sources.</p>	<p>The funding for the NLSA came only or primarily from loans or external donors.</p>	<p>The funding for the NLSA came primarily or only from the country's internal funding sources.⁶</p>	<p>This option does not apply to this dimension.</p>
<p>There was no NLSA, or there was no funding.</p>	<p>There was funding to cover at least some minimum core activities of the NLSA.</p>	<p>There was funding to cover all or most core activities of the NLSA.⁷</p>	<p>There was funding to cover all core activities, plus research and development.</p>
<p>ENABLING CONTEXT 4: <i>Having institutional capacity for the NLSA</i></p>			
<p>There was no NLSA, or there was no NLSA team.</p>	<p>There was a unit or team with at least one person in charge of the NLSA.</p>	<p>There was a permanent team, at least nationally recognized, with at least some experience in NLSA.⁸</p>	<p>There was a permanent team, internationally recognized, with vast experience in NLSA.</p>
<p>There was no NLSA, or it is unclear to which body the NLSA unit was accountable.</p>	<p>This option does not apply to this dimension.</p>	<p>The NLSA unit was accountable to a clearly recognized body.⁹</p>	<p>This option does not apply to this dimension.</p>
<p>There was no NLSA, or the NLSA unit did not have facilities to carry out the assessment.¹⁰</p>	<p>The NLSA unit had only a few of the required facilities to carry out the assessment.¹⁰</p>	<p>The NLSA unit had all of the required facilities to carry out the assessment.</p>	<p>The NLSA unit had up-to-date versions of all required facilities to carry out the assessment.</p>

(CONTINUED)

<p>LATENT</p> <p>● ○ ○ ○</p>	<p>EMERGING</p> <p>● ● ○ ○</p>	<p>ESTABLISHED</p> <p>● ● ● ○</p>	<p>ADVANCED</p> <p>● ● ● ●</p>
<p>ENABLING CONTEXT 5: <i>Having human resources for the NLSA</i></p>			
<p>There was no NLSA, or there was no NLSA staff.</p>	<p>The NLSA team had an inadequate number of staff to carry out the NLSA.¹¹</p>	<p>The NLSA team had an adequate number of staff to carry out the NLSA, with some quality problems.</p>	<p>The NLSA team had an adequate number of staff to carry out the NLSA, without quality problems.</p>
<p>There was no NLSA, or the country did not offer annual opportunities to learn about NLSA.</p>	<p>The country offered very few annual opportunities to learn about NLSA.¹²</p>	<p>The country offered some annual opportunities to learn about NLSA, albeit only to the NLSA team members.</p>	<p>The country offered a wide range of annual opportunities to learn about NLSA. These opportunities were available to a broad audience, including the NLSA team members.</p>
<p>There was no NLSA, or teachers did not have annual opportunities to learn about the NLSA.¹³</p>	<p>This option does not apply to this dimension.</p>	<p>Teachers had annual opportunities to learn about the content and skills measured by the NLSA.</p>	<p>Teachers had annual opportunities to learn about different aspects of the NLSA.</p>

SYSTEM ALIGNMENT

Degree to which the assessment is coherent with other components of the education system.

<p>LATENT ● ○ ○ ○</p>	<p>EMERGING ● ● ○ ○</p>	<p>ESTABLISHED ● ● ● ○</p>	<p>ADVANCED ● ● ● ●</p>
<p>SYSTEM ALIGNMENT 1: <i>Aligning the NLSA with learning goals</i></p>			
<p>There was no NLSA, or the country did not have official learning goals or curriculum, or the NLSA was not aligned with the official learning goals or curriculum.</p>	<p>The NLSA was minimally aligned with official learning goals or curriculum.</p>	<p>The NLSA was sufficiently aligned with official learning goals or curriculum, and a regular internal review took place to ensure alignment.¹⁴</p>	<p>The NLSA was fully aligned with official learning goals or curriculum, and a regular external review took place to ensure alignment.</p>
<p>There was no NLSA, or students had no previous exposure to the type of content and skills measured by the NLSA.</p>	<p>Students had limited previous exposure to the type of content and skills measured by the NLSA.</p>	<p>Students had sufficient previous exposure to the type of content and skills measured by the NLSA.¹⁵</p>	<p>Students had extensive previous exposure to the type of content and skills measured by the NLSA.</p>
<p>There was no NLSA, or the NLSA was not consistent with other assessment activities.</p>	<p>The NLSA was minimally consistent with other assessment activities.</p>	<p>The NLSA was sufficiently consistent with other assessment activities.¹⁶</p>	<p>The NLSA was fully consistent with other assessment activities.</p>

ASSESSMENT QUALITY

Degree to which the assessment meets technical standards, is fair and is used in an effective way.

<p>LATENT ● ○ ○ ○</p>	<p>EMERGING ● ● ○ ○</p>	<p>ESTABLISHED ● ● ● ○</p>	<p>ADVANCED ● ● ● ●</p>
<p>ASSESSMENT QUALITY 1: <i>Ensuring the quality of the NLSA</i></p>			
<p>There was no NLSA, or there were no mechanisms to include all student groups in the NLSA.</p>	<p>There were informal or ad hoc mechanisms to include all student groups in the NLSA.</p>	<p>There were some formal mechanisms to include all student groups in the NLSA.¹⁷</p>	<p>There were a variety of formal mechanisms to include all student groups in the NLSA.</p>
<p>There was no NLSA, or there were no formal mechanisms in place to ensure the quality of the NLSA.</p>	<p>There were very few formal mechanisms in place to ensure the quality of the NLSA.</p>	<p>There were some formal mechanisms in place to ensure the quality of the NLSA.</p>	<p>There were a variety of formal mechanisms in place to ensure the quality of the NLSA.¹⁸</p>
<p>There was no NLSA, or there was no technical documentation about the NLSA.</p>	<p>There was some documentation about the technical aspects of the NLSA.</p>	<p>There was a comprehensive technical report for the NLSA, available upon request or with restricted access.¹⁹</p>	<p>There was a comprehensive technical report for the NLSA, publicly available online.</p>

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ASSESSMENT QUALITY 2:
Ensuring effective uses of the NLSA

There was no NLSA, or country results and information were not disseminated.	Country results and information were disseminated using some communication strategy. ²⁰	Country results and information were disseminated using a variety of communication strategies, including dissemination to most schools.	Country results and information were disseminated using a variety of communication strategies, including dissemination to most schools.
There was no NLSA, or NLSA results and information were not covered by the media.	NLSA results and information had hardly any coverage in the media. ²¹	NLSA results and information were covered by some media outlets.	NLSA results and information were covered by a wide variety of media.
There was no NLSA, or results from the NLSA were not used to inform decision making in the country.	Results from the NLSA were minimally used to inform decision making in the country.	Results from the NLSA were used in some ways to inform decision making in the country. ²²	Results from the NLSA were used in a variety of ways to inform decision making in the country.
There was no NLSA, or there were no mechanisms in place to monitor the NLSA.	This option does not apply to this dimension.	There were some formal mechanisms in place to monitor the NLSA. ²³	There were a variety of formal mechanisms in place to monitor the NLSA.
There was no NLSA, or there is no clear evidence or consensus about the positive impact of the NLSA on education quality. ²⁴	This option does not apply to this dimension.	There is a general consensus about the positive impact of the NLSA on education quality.	There is evidence of the positive impact of the NLSA on education quality.

National (of System-Level) Large Scale Assessment (NLSA): Development-level rating justifications





1. The Solomon Islands Standardized Tests of Achievement (SISTA) was first introduced in 2003 and is implemented every three years to all students in years 4 and 6. The assessment is administered to monitor education quality at the country level, support schools and teachers, and inform policy design, evaluation, or decision making.
2. There is no formal policy document pertaining to the SISTA.
3. While there is no official statement for future administration of SISTA, there is a common understanding that the assessment will take place in the future.
4. The Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development (MEHRD) and particularly the National Examinations and Standards Unit (NESU), represent the recognized leaders for SISTA.
5. There was funding for SISTA.
6. Funding for SISTA came primarily from the country's internal funding sources, including the MEHRD as well as donor agencies, including the New Zealand Aid Programme and Australian Aid Programme.
7. Funding for SISTA covers assessment design, administration, data analysis, and data reporting.
8. The National Examinations and Standards Unit (NESU) within the MEHRD, which is nationally recognized as an authority in student assessment in Solomon Islands, has been in charge of the SISTA since 2003.
9. The NESU is directly accountable to The National Examination and Assessment Board.
10. The NLSA unit has up-to-date computers for all technical staff, top-level security for its facilities, and up-to-date computer servers. It does not have adequate storage facilities or communication tools.
11. The NLSA team has an inadequate number of staff to carry out the SISTA. The Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) recently conducted an "Institutional Capacity Analysis for National Education Assessment System" (Solomon Islands) and found that the NESU requires a higher number of staff to manage the workload. However, there have been no quality problems identified related to the performance of the NESU in carrying out the SISTA, such as errors or delays in the printing of the test booklets.
12. There are university courses offered by the Solomon Islands National University (SINU) on assessment. As part of the pre-service training, all students take "Curriculum and Assessment" course. In addition, education authorities have organized workshops for teachers to which NESU staff are invited to present SISTA results.

13. There are no opportunities available for teachers to learn about the content and skills measured by the SISTA.
14. The SISTA is developed directly from Year 4 and Year 6 curriculum. It is aligned with the content and skill areas, and pedagogical approaches of the official learning goals or curriculum. In addition, there is a regular internal review to ensure alignment between the SISTA and the curriculum.
15. Textbooks or other learning resources covered similar content and skills to those covered by the NLSA. In addition, teachers covered similar content and skills in their classes to those covered by the NLSA, and students were exposed to more advanced content and skills than those covered by the NLSA.
16. The SISTA is consistent with ILSAs in Solomon Islands. However, it is unclear whether the SISTA is consistent with classroom assessment since classroom assessment is diversely practiced across schools. The SISTA is consistent with the Solomon Islands Secondary (SISE) examination administered at Year 6.
17. Special plans were made to ensure that the NLSA was administered to students in hard-to-reach areas and the NLSA was offered in the language of instruction for almost all student groups.
18. There are several formal mechanisms in place to ensure the quality of the NLSA, including training scorers to ensure high inter-rater reliability, carrying out a pilot before the main data collection takes place, training all proctors according to a protocol, providing a standardized manual for SISTA administrators, double scoring and processing of data, and introducing internal and external reviewers or observers. However, other mechanisms, such as numbering all booklets and conducting an external certification or audit, are not in place.
19. There was a comprehensive technical report available on the SISTA, although access to the report is available on request by stakeholders.
20. SISTA results were released by the Solomon Star media outlet and were also communicated through a radio broadcast.
21. Results received limited media coverage.
22. Results were used to inform decision making at the country level, including tracking the impact of reforms on student achievement levels, and informing curriculum improvement, teacher training programs, other assessment activities in the system, and resource allocation. SISTA results influenced the establishment of the Literacy Project Management Unit (LPMU) which manages literacy projects in the Solomon Islands focused on the early grades and vernacular.
23. There is a permanent oversight committee, the National Examination and Assessment Board, to monitor the SISTA.
24. Since the SISTA was updated in 2013 and baseline data was collected at that time, it is too early to assess the impact of the assessment on education quality in the Solomon Islands.





SOLOMON ISLANDS
International Large-Scale Assessment (ILSA)

ENABLING CONTEXT

Overall framework of policies, leadership, institutional arrangements, fiscal and human resources in which the assessment takes place in a country, and the extent to which that framework is directly conducive to, or supportive of, the assessment activity.

LATENT 	EMERGING 	ESTABLISHED 	ADVANCED 
ENABLING CONTEXT 1: <i>Setting clear policies for the ILSA</i>			
The country has not participated in an ILSA in the last 10 years.	The country has participated in, but not completed, an ILSA in the last 10 years. ¹	The country has completed one ILSA in the last 10 years.	The country has completed two or more ILSAs in the last 10 years.
The country is not currently participating in an ILSA or has not taken concrete steps to participate in an ILSA in the next 5 years.	This option does not apply to this dimension.	The country is currently participating in an ILSA or has taken concrete steps to participate in at least one ILSA in the next 5 years. ²	This option does not apply to this dimension.
There was no country-level policy document that addressed participation in the ILSA. ³	There was an informal or draft country-level policy document that addressed participation in the ILSA.	There was a formal country-level policy document that addressed participation in the ILSA that was available upon request or with restricted access.	There was a formal country-level policy document that addressed participation in the ILSA that was publicly available online to anyone interested.
ENABLING CONTEXT 2: <i>Having sufficient funding for the ILSA</i>			
There was no funding for participation in the ILSA, discretionary or otherwise. ⁴	Funding for the ILSA activities was primarily allocated at the discretion of the country's government.	Funding for the ILSA activities was primarily allocated by law or regulation.	This option does not apply to this dimension.
There was no funding from loans, external donors, or internal sources.	There was funding only or primarily from loans or external donors. ⁵	There was funding primarily from the country's internal funding sources.	There was funding only from the country's internal sources.
There was no funding for core items or research and development.	The ILSA funding covered at least minimum core items of the ILSA. ⁶	The ILSA funding covered most core items.	The ILSA funding covered most core items, plus research and development.

(CONTINUED)

<p>LATENT</p> 	<p>EMERGING</p> 	<p>ESTABLISHED</p> 	<p>ADVANCED</p> 
<p>ENABLING CONTEXT 3: <i>Having effective institutional and human capacity for the ILSA</i></p>			
<p>There was no ILSA unit or team.</p>	<p>There was at least one person in charge of the ILSA. ⁷</p>	<p>There was a recognized unit or team with at least some experience in international assessments that carried out the ILSA in an effective way.</p>	<p>There was an internationally-recognized unit or team with vast experience in international assessments that carried out the ILSA in an effective way.</p>
<p>There was no ILSA unit, or the unit did not have the required facilities to carry out the ILSA.</p>	<p>The ILSA unit had only a few of the required facilities to carry out the ILSA. ⁸</p>	<p>The ILSA unit had all of the required facilities to carry out the ILSA.</p>	<p>The ILSA unit had up-to-date versions of all of the required facilities to carry out the ILSA.</p>
<p>The country offered no opportunities to learn about ILSAs.</p>	<p>The country offered minimal opportunities to learn about ILSA. ⁹</p>	<p>The country offered adequate opportunities to learn about ILSA.</p>	<p>The country offered adequate opportunities to learn about ILSA to a broad audience, including the ILSA team and educators.</p>





SYSTEM ALIGNMENT

Degree to which the assessment is coherent with other components of the education system.

<p>LATENT ● ○ ○ ○</p>	<p>EMERGING ● ● ○ ○</p>	<p>ESTABLISHED ● ● ● ○</p>	<p>ADVANCED ● ● ● ●</p>
<p>SYSTEM ALIGNMENT 1: <i>Aligning the ILSA with learning goals for the country</i></p>			
<p>The ILSA was not aligned with the country's official learning goals, or the country did not have official learning goals.</p>	<p>The ILSA was partially aligned with the country's official learning goals.</p>	<p>The ILSA was sufficiently aligned with the country's official learning goals.¹⁰</p>	<p>The ILSA was fully aligned with the country's official learning goals.</p>
<p>Students were not previously exposed to the type of content and skills measured by the ILSA.</p>	<p>Students had limited previous exposure to the type of content and skills measured by the ILSA.</p>	<p>Students had sufficient previous exposure to the type of content and skills measured by the ILSA.¹¹</p>	<p>Students had extensive previous exposure to the type of content and skills measured by the ILSA.</p>
<p>The ILSA was not consistent with the country's other assessment activities.</p>	<p>The ILSA was minimally consistent with the country's other assessment activities.¹²</p>	<p>The ILSA was generally consistent with the country's other assessment activities.</p>	<p>The ILSA was fully consistent with the country's other assessment activities.</p>

ASSESSMENT QUALITY

Degree to which the assessment meets technical quality standards, is fair and is used in an effective way.

LATENT 	EMERGING 	ESTABLISHED 	ADVANCED 
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ASSESSMENT QUALITY 1:
Ensuring the technical quality of the ILSA

The country did not meet sufficient technical standards to have its data presented in the international report or an annex.	The country met sufficient technical standards to have its data presented beneath the main display of the international report or in an annex.	The country met all technical standards required to have its data presented in the main displays of the international report. ¹³	This option does not apply to this dimension.
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ASSESSMENT QUALITY 2:
Ensuring effective uses of ILSA

Country results and information were not disseminated in the country. ¹⁴	Country results and information were disseminated using at least one communication strategy.	Country results and information were disseminated using some communication strategies.	Country results and information were disseminated using a variety of communication strategies, including dissemination to most schools.
Country results and information were not covered by media in the country.	Country results and information were covered by one media outlet in the country.	Country results and information were covered by some media outlets in the country.	Country results and information were covered by a variety of media outlets in the country.
Results from the ILSA have not been used to inform decision making.	Results from the ILSA have been used in a very limited way to inform decision making in the country.	Results from the ILSA have been used in some ways to inform decision making in the country.	Results from the ILSA have been used in a variety of ways to inform decision making in the country.
There is no clear evidence or consensus about the positive impact of the ILSA on education quality.	This option does not apply to this dimension.	There is a general consensus about the positive impact of the ILSA on education quality.	There is evidence of the positive impact of the ILSA on education quality.

International Large Scale Assessment (ILSA): Development-level rating justifications

1. Solomon Islands has participated in, but not completed, an ILSA in the past 10 years
2. Solomon Islands is currently participating in the Pacific Islands Literacy and Numeracy Assessment (PILNA) for 2012, in which 14 countries in the Pacific region participate.
3. There was no country-level policy document in Solomon Islands that addressed participation in the ILSA; however, the Secretariat of the Pacific Board for Educational Assessment (SPBEA), a regional body, received a regional mandate from the Pacific Forum Education Ministers Meetings (FEdMM) in 2006 to develop the PILNA.
4. There was funding allocated by donors.
5. Funding was allocated by the Australian Aid Programme and Secretariat of the Pacific Board for Educational Assessment (SPBEA).
6. The ILSA funding covered some core items, including implementation of the assessment exercise in the country, and processing and analyzing data collected from implementation. In addition, funding covered attendance at international meetings. ILSA funding did not cover reporting and disseminating the results in the country, international participation fees, research and development, or staff salaries.
7. There was a national coordinator for the PILNA in Solomon Islands who is located in NESU, a school coordinator who managed the administration at the school level for selected schools, and test supervisors who administer the assessment at the classroom level in select schools. In addition, for each assessment area, literacy and numeracy, there was a panel responsible for marking the assessments. Although this was the first time that this team was in charge of the ILSA, there were no quality problems identified with carrying out the PILNA in Solomon Islands.
8. The ILSA unit has up-to-date computers for all technical staff, sufficient computer servers, and top-level security for building. It does not have adequate storage facilities or communication tools.
9. ILSA team members and teachers involved in the scoring of the assessment were able to benefit from some opportunities to learn about PILNA during presentations conducted by NESU. Key personnel also participated in workshops organized by SPBEA for all PILNA participating countries. In addition, the SPBEA provided in-country training on scoring, data collection methodology, and quality assurance protocol to panel leaders and panel members.
10. The PILNA was aligned with the content and skills areas of Solomon Island's official learning goals or curriculum. In addition, the PILNA was aligned with pedagogical approaches or activities compatible with the Solomon Island's official learning goals or curriculum.
11. In Solomon Islands, textbooks and learning resources, as well as teachers, cover similar content and skills to those covered by the PILNA. Furthermore, students are exposed to more basic content and skills than those covered by the PILNA.

12. It is unclear whether the ILSA is consistent with classroom assessment since classroom assessments are conducted at the school level and can be diverse across schools. The ILSA is consistent with examinations, particularly the Solomon Islands Secondary Entrance (SISE) examination administered at Year 6, at which level the PILNA is also administered. The ILSA is also fully consistent with the national large-scale assessment (SISTA) in Solomon Islands.
13. Solomon Islands has complied with all technical standards, and it is expected that its results will be presented in the main section of the international report.
14. Since PILNA results have not yet been approved by the FEEdMM, they have not been disseminated in the Solomon Islands.

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This report focuses specifically on policies in the area of **student assessment**.

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