

REPORT FORM

Transforming Education Summit – Public Consultations Report  
Federated States of Micronesia

This report records the outcomes of public consultations with youth, educators, and community members in preparation for the 2022 Transforming Education Summit.

**1. TES NATIONAL CONSULTATION PROCESS**

Convenor’s Name: National Department of Education, Federated States of Micronesia

Number of consultations (if more than one): 3

Basic information on the consultation convened:

Dates	August 14 - 19 2022
Titles	TES Youth Summit Public Consultations with Educators Public Consultations with Community Members
Types (e.g., National/Subnational)	National
Number of Participants for each consultation	Youth - 27 Educators - 36 Community Members - 13 Facilitators - 12
Languages used	English and Pohnpeian

Total number of participants: 88

Age range of participants:	
0-17	25
18-29	4
30-59	57
60+	2

Gender of participants:	
Male	47
Female	41
Prefer not to say	0

Number of Participants from each sector:			
Education	77	Information technology	
Child Protection	1	Social Protection	
Health		Water, Sanitation & Hygiene	
Labour		Other: Local Municipal Govt	1
Environment		Other: External Partner (UNICEF)	2
Finance		Other: FSM Dept. of Resources & Development	2
Nutrition		Other: Govt, State Senator	1
Communication	1	Other: Pohnpei State Personnel Office	1
		Other: Pohnpei State Social Affairs	2

Number of Participants from each Stakeholder group:	
32	Teachers, educators, facilitators, and professors
27	Youth and students (including children and adolescents)
18	School leaders
4	City and local government representatives
	Parents and caregivers
	Small/ medium enterprises/ unions
	Large national businesses
1	Members of Parliament (State Senator)
	Multi-national corporations
	Local authorities
3	Government and national institutions
	Public servants
	Regional economic community
	Local Non-Governmental organizations
	International and/ or Regional financial institutions
2	International Non-Governmental organizations (UNICEF)
<i>(Note 84 of 88 participants are indigenous FSM islanders)</i>	Indigenous people/community leaders
	Scientific community, academic, universities and research institutes
1	Media
	Other:

2. PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT

How did you organize the consultation to ensure the following principles of national consultations?

X

**A whole-of-government approach**

The consultation process has been led by the Government of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) under the leadership of the National Department of Education (NDOE), closely supported by the United Nations Resident Coordinator (UN RC) Office in the FSM and the UNICEF North Pacific Office.

Planning for the consultation processes began in May 2022, bringing together a team of National and State Department of Education leaders, international advisors, and national specialists working in education in FSM. A focus on currently prioritized education topics and an assessment of progress towards existing Education Sector Strategic Development Plan (ESSDP) goals and SDG-4 was at the core of the initial planning meetings taking place in May.

To ensure that national public consultations had cross-sectoral and inclusive representation, the planned events aimed to mobilize engagement of stakeholders across the FSM National and State governments, and the wider community. A range of FSM government representatives participated and supported facilitation of the public consultations event including: representation from the FSM Department of Resources and Development (SDGs), the FSM Department of Health and Social Affairs – Child Protection, the National Division of Special Services (with a dedicated focus on special education and inclusivity), local Municipal Government, Pohnpei State Personnel Office and Pohnpei State Social Affairs, well as the Pohnpei State Department of Education and National Department of Education. It was the original intention to travel to conduct consultations in each of the four states however, with the outbreak of COVID-19 reaching the FSM for the first time in mid-July 2022, this was no longer safely feasible.

X	<p><b>Inclusion and equality</b></p> <p>The principles of inclusion and equality have been core to the design of the activities organized. Invitations of government officials, including the National Division of Special Services (with a dedicated focus on special education and inclusivity), key international and national partners, and most importantly, youth, educator, and the wider community participation are indicators of the intentionally inclusive process.</p> <p>Youth, educators and community members were invited to the consultations to support inclusion of diverse voices across unique cultural and linguistic island contexts. As noted above, the recent and ongoing outbreak of COVID-19 in the FSM limited the range of travel, though participants still represented a range of ethnic/cultural island backgrounds from across states.</p>
X	<p><b>Focusing on youth as ‘agents of change’</b></p> <p>Given the importance of amplifying youth voices as an agent of change, two of the four days of the public consultations were dedicated exclusively to a Youth Summit featuring youth delegates with cultural backgrounds representing the majority of FSM states (3 of 4).</p> <p>The outcome of the Youth Summit was a Youth Declaration document, in which students shared their vision for the future of education and called upon education leaders to take action in key areas. The Declaration has informed the drafting of the National Commitment Statement and explorations are underway to identify opportunities to disseminate the Declaration via media and broadcasting streams.</p>

**3. CONSULTATION FOCUS AND OUTCOMES**

- A. What was/were the main area(s) of focus of the national consultation(s), based on the TES five thematic action tracks\* and the issues outlined in the Discussion Papers and the Futures of Education Briefing Notes?

**Focus areas and key trends**

### Inclusive, equitable, safe and healthy schools

Youth delegates highlighted the need for increased commitment to investing funds in high quality education, specifically:

- a. School physical infrastructure & resources: A key issue identified by youth was a lack of adequate school infrastructure accessible to all students. Youth delegates detailed the need for improved basic facilities, including sufficient bathroom facilities, as well as provision of improved classroom resources and materials. Resources included access to textbooks, teaching supplies, and technology.
- b. Inclusive education and mental health resources: After review of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the youth consultations yielded demand for ensuring that “every child in the FSM is granted all of their rights and is not discriminated against.” In addition, they called for improvements to the existing healthcare system in the FSM, particularly to include adequate access and provision of mental health supports.
- c. Transportation access: Transportation access currently poses an inclusivity problem for many students, with no standard form of free or consistent and affordable public transportation available in country. Anecdotally, students shared the need for some to take paid taxis to work, posing a cost-prohibitive barrier to entry for some, in addition to accessibility challenges for students with disabilities.

### Learning and skills for life, work and sustainable development

- a. Access to Cultural/Traditional Teaching: Expressing an appreciation for the unique culture and traditions in the FSM, youth in several groups among the delegates shared a desire for cultural teachers incorporated into the school setting. Cultural teachers are currently in practice in some of the states but could be supported on a national and state level to be more consistently in place. This would require increased investment in dedicated streams of funding for cultural teachers and clear, consistent requirements for teacher certification of this unique group.
- b. Improved job opportunities and economic prosperity: Both youth and adult participants advocated for increased investment in the education system more

broadly to support better job prospects and equal job opportunity for all citizens in the FSM. In discussion with the adult educators and community leaders, several targeted solutions were suggested:

- increased technical and vocational (TVET) programming for job skills development
- increased extracurricular programming for youth
- auxiliary programming within schools to support wraparound supports

### Teachers, teaching and the teaching profession

- a. Skilled, knowledgeable and well-trained teachers: Youth delegates called on the government to improve the number and quality of trained teachers in order to better prepare the nation's future leaders, with requests for teachers to possess full qualifications of Bachelor's degrees in Education.
- b. Teacher salary: Youth interestingly also identified a need to increase the salaries of teachers to better support recruitment and retention of passionate, qualified teachers. When asked what career they would want to pursue when they grew up, none of the youth expressed a desire to become teachers. This may inform the present challenges of teacher recruitment, now and potentially in the future.

Responses from both educators and adult community members included surprise at the depth of knowledge and motivation of students to enact broader change.

### Broader system transformation

As noted above, youth also made calls for broader improvements to public sector services, including:

- a. Medical care: The youth delegates called upon their leaders to ensure their right to high-quality health care, including access to mental health services.
- b. Transportation: Highlighting the issue of inequity in access to school, youth requested increased investment in public transportation.
- c. Compact spending: In their group dialogues, the young adults requested that government Compact funding be spent more wisely, to ensure adequate investment in public sector services such as education and public health.

## **Educator and Community Member Consultations**

In the days that followed the Youth Summit, educators and community members were invited to engage in discussions exploring the youth perspectives, in addition to progress made toward the Education Sector Strategic Development Plan (ESSDP) and SDG-4 Goals.

### Best Parts of the ESSDP

After receiving an overview of the ESSDP components, adult participants shared their views on the most important parts of the ESSDP to continue investment in. These included, ranked in order of support:

1. Quality Teachers & Teaching
2. Community Participation in the Management of Schools
3. Performance Monitoring and Data-based Decision Making

### Missing from the ESSDP

When asked what was missing from the ESSDP, adult participants shared their views through a series of exercises involving individual sticky-note brainstorming, small group sharing, and large group dialogue. Aspects missing from the ESSDP, ranked in order of support, include:

1. Salary increases for teachers
2. Implementation strategies/mechanisms to implement the ESSDP sub-goals
3. More extracurricular programs for students in schools

### What else would you include?

When presented with the opportunity to imagine what else may be prioritized or included under future transformational education plans, educators and community members showed support for the following:

1. More activities, training, and services for youth (including youth rallies, youth-to-youth community awards, programs in arts, music, traditional crafts, and a proposed Student Takeover Day).
  - a. Related suggestions included strengthening student leadership capacity and training opportunities.

This sentiment outnumbered other suggestions for additions to future ESSDP plans by far.

## **Sustainable Development Goal 4 Attainment**

As part of the series of public consultations, educators and community members were guided through a presentation and discussion of the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 targets. After review, participants were asked to share what targets they found most important for future focus. Ranked in order of support, these include:

### Most important SDG-4 Targets:

1. Tied - Advancing investment in ECE (31% of responses)
2. Tied - Addressing gender disparities (31% of responses)
3. Upgrading facilities (12.5% of responses)

Adult participants then listed their ideas of the least important SDG-4 targets. Interestingly, it should be noted that were instances of overlap in subsets of participants ranking the same topic as highest or lowest. The outcomes of their opinions are listed below, ranked in order of support:

### Least important SDG-4 Targets:

1. Adult literacy (68% of responses)
2. Addressing gender disparities (21% of responses)
3. Advancing investment in ECE (7% of responses)

Finally, in closing the sessions on the final days of the adult consultations, participants were asked to reflect and share their top "A-ha Moments." Themes of the top takeaways are shared below:

- Students have the right to high-quality education
- Students and community members should be actively engaged in the development of SIPs (school improvement plans)
- Youth have an astute understanding of country needs in education, including teacher salaries
- The Youth Declaration showed that "youth are willing to join the future of our young nation."
- Increased funding (via National/State Govt., and/ or Donors) for comprehensive classes and programs supporting culture and life skills are necessary.
- Better educators = Better community
- Young people have the power to make change
- Next step needed is to take action on the Youth Declaration, to make progress for the FSM



## What are the main outcomes regarding the four key components of the national consultations?

Transformational Education Takeaways:  
Medium-to-longer term goals

1. Invest in the education system, including changes to facilities, resources, materials and teacher training. Prioritize improved salary compensation of teachers and school leaders in order to better prepare the future leaders of the country.
2. Invest in public sector services more broadly, including improved transportation services and medical care, including access to mental health supports, and labor and job market opportunities.
3. Make intentional efforts to engage youth and communities in education system design and opportunities for leadership.

### Quotes from the Public Consultation Sessions

#### *Themes*

##### Culture

"As youth from the FSM, we are different from other youth in the world because we are culturally motivated, we respect our elders, and we are family-oriented."

##### Contribution of Youth

"I appreciate how the community is asking for help from us young children, since they know that every person's opinion matters, and have given us a chance to prove ourselves as citizens."

##### Investment in Education

"As a kid in Pohnpei State, one thing that makes me different from other youths is that me and other kids here have limited resources, and that can lead to limited experiences. For example, most of our schools don't have science labs with advanced equipment such as microscopes. We don't have big museums or large aquariums. We don't have as much resources as some other kids in the world and that can lead us to not experience some things."

"The more educated the population is, the more advanced the society becomes. Education decreases unemployment and can increase income for families to get out of poverty."

"Education will help us achieve the best future for the FSM because it can help create equal job opportunities."

#### Mental Health

"I appreciate how my elders notice that we children are focused on and are realizing how unsettling it is to have mental health issues."

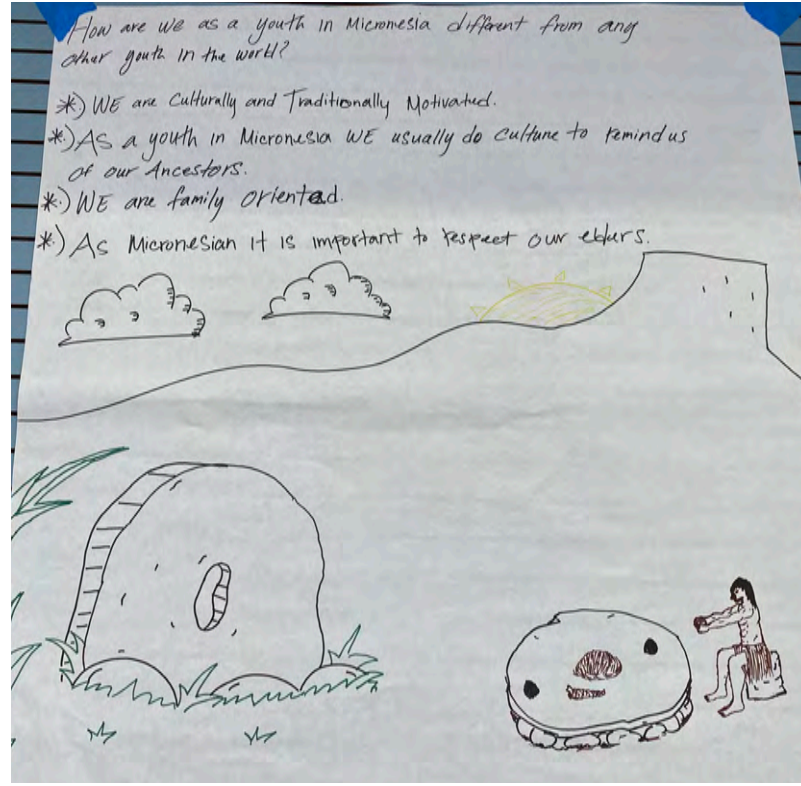
#### The Future

"Without education, our country will not progress because education is what helps us learn the necessary skills to develop our country."

"The voice of the youth holds the power of change."



Transforming Education Youth Summit, Federated States of Micronesia  
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# FSM Youth Declaration

We, the Youth of the Federated States of Micronesia make this Declaration to support every youth across the nation to realize their right to high quality education.

## OUR VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF THE FSM

To become a fully independent nation, rooted in our culture, with a commitment to: financial stability; high-quality education; improved medical care with an emphasis on mental health supports; investment in a clean environment; growing economic and job opportunities; and active engagement with international partners.

## WHY EDUCATION IS IMPORTANT

Education helps us to achieve our vision and goals to make FSM a better place in the future. The more educated our population is, the more advanced our society becomes. With education, our nation is given hard workers and creative thinkers who can help improve the FSM. Where there is good education, we are able to become better citizens for a better community.

## HOW EDUCATION WILL HELP US ACHIEVE THE BEST FUTURE FOR THE FSM

The voice of the youngest citizens holds the power of change. Education will help us to build a better future by preparing the next generation of FSM citizens to develop the necessary skills to meet the needs of our nation. This will help families to get out of poverty and create a more equal workplace and society. FSM will become a stronger nation that has more recognition for its achievements and status in the world.

## WE CALL ON FSM LEADERS TO

1. Hear our voices by working harder to get youth's perspectives
2. Make sure every child in the FSM is granted all of their rights and is not discriminated against
3. Commit to investing funds in high-quality education
  - Increase access to better school facilities
  - Increase the number of skilled, knowledgeable and educated teachers to better prepare our future leaders
  - Increase teacher salaries so they can be more motivated to teach students
  - Provide resources to schools such as textbooks, supplies, and technology
  - Provide reliable transportation for students
4. Provide for our rights to high-quality healthcare
5. Spend the Compact money more wisely such as using it to fund our country's educational and medical infrastructure
6. Increase the minimum wage to help families out of poverty

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