Review of the Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) worker pilot training programme

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Contents

Executive summary

This report presents the findings of a review of the Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) worker pilot training programme. The purpose of the review was to assess whether the pilot had achieved the intended outcomes and, if it had (at least in part), identify if any changes are required to ensure strong future performance. The review objectives were to:

- assess the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of the pilot programme, and to

- recommend if there should be a second phase of the programme, and if so, identify the parameters of the possible size and scope of the programme.

Table A provides an overall assessment for the dimensions identified by MFAT as being critical to the success of the programme. The evidence behind each rating is in the Findings section. The methodology for evaluative rubrics is explained in Appendix A and each rating is described in Appendix B. It should be noted that 'management of pilot programme' relates to both MFAT and the provider.

Relevance	Rating
Curriculum	Performance exceeded
Teaching methods	Met MFAT expectations
Learning environment / engagement	Performance exceeded
Assessment of learners	Substandard performance

Effectiveness	Rating
Attainment of new competencies	Met MFAT expectations
Outcomes	Met MFAT expectations

Efficiency	Rating
Completion of modules	Substandard performance
Targeting	Performance exceeded
Media coverage	Met MFAT expectations
Management of pilot programme	Substandard performance
Value for money	Not able to be assessed

The assessment suggests the programme is of immense value to workers and should continue. The programme should be available to all RSE workers. It could be targeted to those who have returned to New Zealand for a second or subsequent season of employment to acknowledge these workers have returned, and are likely to return again.

It is suggested that MFAT engage an ESOL expert to provide advice on the overall course curriculum, resource requirements and what can realistically be achieved in a 20 hour programme.

The programme requires a high level of relationship management with employers, tutors and other stakeholders in a region. For this reason, it is suggested that the programme be expanded only if the provider has the capacity and capability to deliver a programme of this scale.

MFAT should explore part-funding the programme, with employers picking up some of the costs.

Introduction

This report presents the findings of a review of the Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) worker pilot training programme. The review was conducted by an independent evaluator in November – December 2010. The purpose of the review was to assess whether the pilot had achieved the intended outcomes and, if it had (at least in part), identify if any changes are required to ensure strong future performance. The review objectives were to:

- assess the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of the pilot programme, and to
- recommend if there should be a second phase of the programme, and if so, to identify the parameters of the possible size and scope of the programme.

Methodology

The review is based on:

- qualitative interviews with Pacific RSE workers (20); employers / managers /other staff members (7); Vakameasina directors (2); tutors (2); tutor / manager (1); a Tongan government liaison person (1); Department of Labour and Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade staff (4) and an accommodation provider (1).
- a review of government and McGirr/Fruition documents.

Evaluative rubrics were developed with input from MFAT staff and the Vakameasina directors. This involved developing standards, for example what constitutes 'all round excellent performance' through to 'unacceptable performance' in relation to aspects of the Vakameasina programme. Three rubrics were developed for the following dimensions:

- Relevance: curriculum, teaching methods, learning environment/engagement, assessment
- Effectiveness: attainment of new competencies, intermediate outcomes
- Efficiency: completion of modules, targeting, media coverage, management of pilot programme and value for money.

To assess the pilot programme, the standards were applied across the data sources. More detailed information about the methodology is in Appendix 1.

Report structure and terms used in the report

The findings are structured in three sections:

- Relevance
- Effectiveness
- Efficiency

This is followed by a discussion of the findings and proposed recommendations.

In this report, the term 'Pacific RSE workers' refers to the RSE workers from the Pacific States with whom New Zealand has agreed facilitative arrangements ie Kiribati, Samoa, Tonga, Tuvalu,

Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands. The term 'participants' refers to those RSE workers who participated in the RSE pilot worker training programme (referred to as 'Vakameasina'[1]).

Unless otherwise stated, the interviews referred to in the report have been conducted by the evaluator.

Background

Recognised Seasonal Employer policy

The Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) policy was introduced in April 2007 to allow for the temporary entry of offshore workers to work in the New Zealand horticulture and viticulture industries. Preference is given to workers from the Pacific Islands Forum (with the current exception of Fiji). To help kickstart the scheme facilitative arrangments were initially agreed with five Pacific states, Kiribati, Samoa, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu. Facilitative arrangments have subsequently also been agreed with the Solomon Islands. All six countries have had workers in New Zealand under RSE.

The RSE policy has multiple aims, including to:

- Create a sustainable seasonal labour supply

- Transform the horticulture and viticulture industries from low cost industries to industries based on quality, productivity, and high value through improved business practices

- Protect New Zealand's access to seasonal employment

- Minimise immigration risk, and

- Contribute to New Zealand's broad objectives in the region with regard to encouraging Pacific economic development, regional integration, and stability.

RSE and development

There is an excess supply of low-skilled workers in Pacific Island countries and only limited opportunities domestically for formal employment. The RSE policy has deliberately focused on recruiting low skilled and unskilled workers from rural areas where there are limited opportunities for employment.

A number of strategies to enhance the development gains of RSE have been identified by the New Zealand government, the original five kick start states, and employers. These include:

- maximising the flow of remittances (through increasing earnings, increasing the number of RSE workers, or the amount remitted, including by reducing the cost of remittances)

- encouraging more productive use of remittances (e.g. for entrepreneurial or investment activities, not just consumption

- work-specific training to make workers more productive and / or enable them to move into higher paying jobs (e.g. supervisors, forklift drivers)

- other training to provide skills to workers that have broader relevance

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[1] 'Vakameasina' incorporates the word 'Vaka' which is a boat / canoe and 'measina' is a Samoan word meaning valuables (thus, a boat of valuables for the family). McGirr and Fruition (2009). Design document: Vakameasina – learning for Pacific growth.

- encouraging New Zealand RSEs to explore investment opportunities in the islands (perhaps as joint ventures with workers) and

- leveraging increased tourism off RSE (e.g. by raising awareness in New Zealand communities of the islands; linking the islands into backpacker tourism to a greater extent).

The RSE worker pilot training programme

During 'Kick Start State' Forums involving participating Pacific states, New Zealand industry and Government, it became clear that there was wide interest in initiatives to help increase the development benefits associated with RSE. For example, the Pacific Island Trade and Investment Commission Auckland office (PITIC, now known as Pacific Trade and Invest, who are fully funded from the New Zealand Aid Programme), ran a financial literacy project for a group of RSE workers. The 2008 Office of the Minister of Immigration 'One Year Review' of the RSE policy recommended that induction and relevant training courses should be provided to RSE workers. From these discussions the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (then NZAID) identified several different strategies for enhancing development gains. These included maximising the flow of remittances (eg reducing the cost of sending remittances home), encouraging more productive use of remittances, and training opportunities.

As temporary migrants, RSE workers are not eligible for publicly funded industry training programmes. Some employers have provided training opportunities for workers, such as computer skills and welding[2]. At a Pacific Leaders Forum in Niue in 2009, the New Zealand Prime Minister announced that New Zealand would establish a pilot training scheme for RSE workers from the Pacific, funded from the New Zealand Aid Programme. The training would complement existing training offered by employers and community groups and focus on basic English literacy, numeracy and financial literacy. The training programme would be aligned with New Zealand's strategy for aid in the Pacific. Due to the nature of the RSE programme, the training would effectively target Pacific people from rural communities and those who often had relatively limited formal education. This approach to improving education is aligned with the key strategies and outcomes sought under New Zealand's Pacific Strategy 2007 – 2015.

The programme that was announced by the New Zealand Prime Minister had the following goal: to "increase opportunities and choices for Pacific RSE workers through skills development, by providing them with access to English literacy, numeracy and financial literacy training during their time in New Zealand".

McGirr Associates (in partnership with Fruition Horticulture) were selected through an open tender process to design and deliver the programme. The agreed Key Performance Indicators between MFAT and McGirr / Fruition were as follows:

- 300 RSE workers to be enrolled in the training

- a mix of workers from at least 4 of the possible countries of origin

- a mix of at least 30 percent female participants

- all learners are assessed and mapped on the TEC's Learning Progressions framework

- individual learning plans are developed for each learner

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[2] Cabinet paper dated 6 August 2008.

- all learners gain at least 2 measurable competencies (learning objectives) per module as evident in comparison of pre- and post-assessment

- 90 percent will complete at least 2 modules and 75 percent will complete all 5 modules (completion is measured by the achievement of 2 measurable competencies).

- positive feedback is received from the learners on their engagement throughout the programme

- any negative feedback is addressed in an appropriate timeframe

- all those enrolled in the programme undertake a formal evaluative interview when they leave the programme (either through withdrawal or completion)

- successful engagement with all stakeholders in the project

- positive media coverage of the pilot

The successful contractor, McGirr Associates, in partnership with Fruition Horticulture, submitted a Design Document for the programme (named 'Vakameasina – Learning for Pacific Growth') in September 2009. Twenty five courses (with 312 enrolments) were delivered in Hawke's Bay and the Bay of Plenty between November 2009 and September 2010.

The training course included five modules, each aligned with a set of learning objectives (Table 1).

Table 1: Modules and associated learning objectives for Vakameasina

Module	Learning objectives
Financial and personal goal setting	• Set short term goals • Set long term goals • Perform basic financial calculations
Budgeting	• Produce a simple personal budget based on short term goals • Produce a simple group budget based on long term group/community goals • Demonstrate sound knowledge of basic number facts – addition and subtraction • Demonstrate knowledge of number sequence to 1000 • Understand 10 as a counting unit • Participate in short conservations using simple structures
Pay slips, deductions and your rights and responsibilities	• Demonstrate understanding of layout of pay slip • Demonstrate understanding of deductions on pay slip • Perform calculations necessary to confirm hours and deductions are correct • Outline the rights of an employee in New Zealand
Remittances	• Understand key terms around remittances • Demonstrate understanding of exchange rates and currency • Be able to compare rates and fees • Demonstrate understanding of percentages
Health and safety	• Demonstrate understanding of the importance of personal hygiene • Demonstrate understanding of signs/symbols in workplace and living areas • Identify and explain one important safety procedure in workplace

Each module was to contain two, two-hour teaching sessions (a total of 20 hours tuition).

Findings

The findings are discussed under three headings:

- Relevance: workers' needs and interests; relevance of content; teaching methods / practice and learning environment.

- Effectiveness: Pre and post assessment, attainment of new competencies and learner outcomes.

- Efficiency: participants' completion of modules; targeting of RSE workers; media coverage; management of the programme, and value for money.

Relevance

Workers' needs and interests

Overall, there was huge interest from workers to participate in training while in New Zealand. This was evidenced by the high number of enrolments (130) in the first intake which resulted in the pilot finishing ahead of schedule[3]. A number of workers interviewed said they would have difficulty attending such a course in their home country because of the logistics of travelling to a main centre.

Data from the 'enrolled students' details[4] and the interviews with workers and employers identified a range of needs and interests, with English language being the biggest priority. As part of the enrolment process workers were asked: "what do you want to learn"? Workers said they were keen to improve their English (76%), develop computer skills (58%) and budgeting and money management skills (44%)[5].

As the following excerpts from the enrolment data illustrate, workers had a range of reasons for doing the programme, including wanting to communicate more effectively in the workplace, improve job prospects in their home countries, support community and business projects in their home countries, and for personal growth.

A ni Vanuatu man

said he wanted to improve his math and spoken English to help him with his work in New Zealand. He also wanted to learn computer skills as his 25 and 13 year old (children) used one. "I want to be able to tell my children 'move over' so I can use the computer now!"
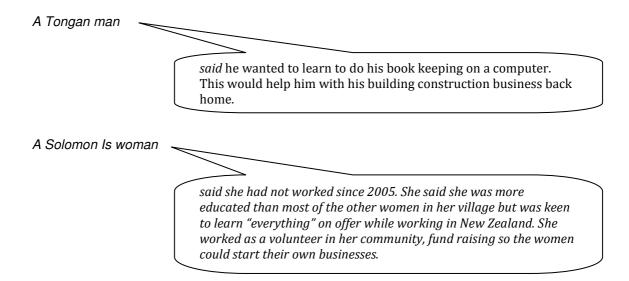
Three ni-Vanuatu women

said they wanted to learn computer skills so they could get work in tourism. One had worked as a housekeeper in a hotel and hoped that once she could use a computer she could move into a better position at a hotel.

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[3] Originally the pilot was expected to run for two years.

[4] As part of their enrolment interview 353 workers were asked 'what do you want to learn?'

[5] Many workers identified more than one priority; thus the percentages do not add to 100%.

A Tongan man

said he wanted to learn to do his book keeping on a computer. This would help him with his building construction business back home.

A Solomon Is woman

said she had not worked since 2005. She said she was more educated than most of the other women in her village but was keen to learn "everything" on offer while working in New Zealand. She worked as a volunteer in her community, fund raising so the women could start their own businesses.

Employers described the RSE workers in general as "shy", "reticent to speak out" and "hierarchal". For these reasons workers tended to defer to group leaders to engage with supervisors or employers. Three employers said their expectation of the programme was that participants become more confident about speaking to supervisors and other staff. As one employer said:

(I wanted to see) an improvement in their English, for them to be more competent and confident in their ability to relate to New Zealand workers, particularly supervisors and managers on orchards.

Likewise, another employer said:

(We) expected that the training would increase their level of understanding and comprehension of English to a level we expect for workers; where concerns of the employer can be understood and taken on board.

Relevance of programme content

The training modules developed by McGirr / Fruition (Table one) were based on feedback from employers and staff responsible for RSE workers, industry representatives and New Zealand government officials. Direct worker input was not incorporated in the curriculum design. As the provider noted:

We couldn't… hear more from workers about what they most wanted to learn until courses started and we met some.

The provider stated that only minor modifications were required during the pilot phase to respond to learner needs. As the end of pilot report states:

Both participants and their employers commented favourably that the topics chosen provided a relevant context for the literacy, numeracy and financial literacy learning. (McGirr / Fruition, October 2010. p6)

This assessment was confirmed by the evaluator's interviews with workers and employers. Overall, the content was relevant to workers' needs and interests, although some topics (understanding pay slips and remittances) received only scant mention in the enrolment interviews.

While computer literacy was not a specific focus for the programme, it was identified (in the enrolled students' details and in interviews with workers and tutors) as one of the main reasons why workers wanted to attend the programme. Computers were used during some of the

programme classes and computers were placed in some workers' accommodation to enable further practice of computer skills and use of tools such as the 'sendmoneypacific' website. One tutor commented that learning to use a computer "really captured people's excitement". Likewise, two workers interviewed said they have never used a computer prior to the course: "We had no idea where the button was to turn it on and off". They now use computers in their accommodation to connect with family and to download music and movies and said they would like to do another course that focused just on computers.

The provider noted that tutors had the flexibility within modules to tailor a session to what workers wanted and needed. This flexibility was important given learners' different needs and interests. For example, during the goal setting session some workers said they planned to buy a solar water heater to take home. The tutor followed up by inviting a guest speaker to talk to the class about this topic. Workers built their language skills by writing, and then asking their questions when the speaker came. The end of pilot report notes that this responsiveness was:

> *entirely appropriate especially as the module topics were designed as a focus for developing literacy and numeracy rather than as an end in themselves. (McGirr / Fruition, October 2010. p7)*

In another example:

> *One group of workers travelled to Auckland to attend Independence Day celebrations. At the class the next day the workers turned up with a flag and music. The session became a history lesson about their island. The guys were helping each other with their English.*

The tutor commented that the workers had become "braver" and had taken "risks" with speaking English as they engaged the tutors in a history lesson of their island.

Comments on specific modules

The following comments were made about the programme content.

• Goal setting

Comments from the Tongan government liaison officer and workers suggests workers did not need to learn how to set goals. All but one of the workers interviewed were in their third and fourth year of RSE and could describe goals (and what they had achieved) for each year. For example, one worker built a house with the savings from his first season's RSE work. The second year he bought a shop, selling mainly fuel.

However, feedback from tutors suggests this part of the programme gave a structure to further learning and discussion and provided a useful vehicle for developing workers' English language skills.

• Budgeting

Some workers valued the time spent on budgeting while others did not. In some cases, interest in learning about budgeting related to workers' ability to control their own finances. A Vakameasina director gave the example of a women's group from Kiribati who saw little relevance in learning about budgeting:

> *…in reality they have no control over their personal money. So what was the point in spending a lot of time on it?*

• Pay

Only a small number (9) of the 353 workers interviewed during the enrolments said they wanted to learn how to read pay slips. However, it is clear there was some need for this content as misunderstandings about pay slips and deductions emerged in several of the classes. For example, one group thought they were paid lower rates than another group because the employer favoured that group.

• Remittances

Of the workers who participated in enrolment interviews, 27 said they wanted to learn more about sending money home. This topic was a particular eye opener for one group of Kiribati workers who discovered they were paying more to send money home than was necessary. Again, these workers had no control over which bank they sent money through. Despite this, the tutor said this group found the 'sendmoneypacific' website "useful".

• Health and safety in the workplace

One tutor noted that while some employers had provided a brief overview of health and safety in English, some workers had not understood the information. However, other workers who had a better understanding of English found this information repetitive as they had already attended health and safety sessions in the workplace.

While the focus of this module appears to have been on health and safety in the workplace, there were situations where tutors picked up on issues that emerged for workers during the programme. For example, a tutor described how a participant's toothache became an opportunity to introduce language around teeth and dentists.

Teaching methods / practice

Tutors were appointed in Hawkes Bay and in the Bay of Plenty, with three tutors in each region and a tutor / manager working from the Bay of Plenty. The provider noted the benefit of having a number of part time tutors in each region is that they were able to meet the demands for flexibility and the high proportion of evening and weekend classes.

Qualifications and previous experience

Three of the seven tutors had formal qualifications related to teaching adult literacy and English for speakers of other languages (ESOL). One tutor had an MA in teaching ESOL, another an MA in teaching adults and the third had a Certificate in teaching adults. Three tutors had general teaching qualifications (not specific to teaching adults / ESOL). A seventh tutor had no formal teaching qualifications.

All but one of the tutors had a wide range of experience in teaching adults and / or ESOL learners. One tutor with no teaching qualifications or experience in teaching had personal connections to the Hastings Samoan community and thus brought an additional skill set to the pilot.

Quality assurance

As the programme evolved, it became apparent that a dedicated manager[6] was required to oversee the programme. The tutor / manager's role included:

> *fostering consistency and effectiveness and keeping true to the documents that had been developed. If tutors wanted to suggest changes, they discussed the rationale and then had a*

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[6] Referred to as a tutor / manager in this report.

consistent voice. If something was not working they would spend time teasing it out. Likewise, if something was working well the group would share ideas and approaches.

The tutor / manager co-taught classes with tutors who had less tutoring experience and provided mentoring to tutors outside the classroom.

Prior to the programme starting, the tutors had a meeting in Hastings and another in Tauranga. This was an opportunity for the tutors to get to know each other and develop a common understanding of the programme: the rationale, content, teaching strategies and assessment approaches. The tutors continued to engage in critical reflection throughout the pilot, meeting regularly to "massage" content.

Some classes were observed by members of the Hawke's Bay and Bay of Plenty labour governance groups, employers and other members of their staff. Feedback, for example from the Tongan liaison officer, was incorporated into the ongoing development of the programme.

Learning environment

Timing

Most classes ran for two hours per week over a 10 week period. Classes were scheduled in the evenings, with night shift workers attending classes in the early afternoon. Some classes were scheduled for Saturdays.

A number of respondents commented that workers who attended during the working week often came to class tired. While participants were enthusiastic about the programme, there is evidence that being tired impacted on their ability to fully engage. Comments included:

> *The class worked long shift hours and (were) too tired. When they were there they were only half awake. (Tutor)*

> *One of the groups 'petered' out. The learners were doing shift work; they were too tired to come to class. (Tutor)*

> *The boys were too tired to do the course at night (RSE worker participant).*

The 'end of pilot' report notes that a 'wet day' programme had been developed but participants did not take up this opportunity. A tutor was available at relatively short notice to work with participants on wet days. However, days when there was no work due to rain or low fruit maturity were few and workers tended to use these days to catch up on household chores or for rest and recreation.

The report also notes that a few groups were moved at short notice to other regions. Programme classes were rescheduled, where possible, once workers returned to the region.

Catering for different needs

Catering for learners with diverse needs proved problematic. Originally the provider planned to accept only those learners who had adequate spoken English to be able to understand most of what a tutor was saying, and who had a least a minimal (TEC Learning Progressions Step 1) level of reading capability:

> *However, employers of groups whose ESOL (English as a second language) was lower than that strongly advocated that those staff be allowed to participate in the programme (e.g. those unable to read or write in their mother tongue and having almost no spoken English). For this reason, and because it would have caused embarrassment among co-workers to accept most peers and exclude a few within a working / learning team, we decided to include 'low ESOL' participants. (McGirr / Fruition, October 2010. P31).*

A further difficulty is that there was resistance to work groups being split into ESOL and 'mainstream' groups. One tutor commented, for example, that a group leader with "huge charisma" would have been insulted to have been placed in a beginner's group. The provider's response to class make-up was guided by advice from a Tongan pastoral care worker. Rather than have separate ESOL classes, he suggested the groups stay together as one. This resulted in an "immersion" approach to managing diverse learner needs, i.e. placing weaker (English language) speakers with better speakers.

One tutor commented said this approach had not worked well for either group of learners:

Asking better speakers to support weaker speakers was difficult. Sometimes the better speakers wanted to be flying; learning themselves, rather than supporting.

Class size

The majority of classes[7] had 13 participants or less. Four classes had between 19 and 23 participants. In three of the larger classes, the end of course report notes there were two tutors. These class sizes appear quite large for participants where there were different literacy needs. One factor that would have helped was that most participants were part of a cohesive group, working and living together and from the same ethnic background.

Building rapport

The end of pilot report notes that some learner groups were initially shy with their tutors. The tutor manager noted:

Workers come from cultures where the teacher knows everything, so don't question the teacher much. (They) also don't want to lose face (by speaking out and getting something wrong).

Interviews with tutors, workers and other respondents who had sat in on classes, suggests that tutors provided a relaxed, informal, supportive and positive learning environment.

A pastoral care worker who sat in on some classes said:

X wanted to get to know them. X pushed the books aside and got them talking about their lives.

An employer said they had received "overwhelmingly positive feedback" from workers about the tutor:

(X) made a connection with the learners.

Comments from a range of respondents suggest the tutors were highly regarded by the participants. Workers in one interview commented (about one tutor):

(X) really knows how to teach.

We understand X.

X presented in a very clear way; slow. X wanted us to catch up.

There were initial concerns about a Samoan tutor working with a group of male Tongan participants. The tutor / manager commented that the tutor had to "grab hold" of her authority and command respect. She reportedly told the class:

I am a woman; I have many brothers. I'm your teacher and that's that.

Some of the participants interviewed had been in this tutor's class. Their comments suggest did build rapport with the tutor, although they did not comment on her teaching:

She was very nice –and she's a great cook!

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[7] Not all class lists were provided in the review documents. The analysis is based on 22 class lists.

Sessions generally started and ended with prayer. Nibbles, for example almonds, fruit and crackers, and orange juice was available for workers as many came straight from work to the classroom.

Pace and depth

Despite examples of responsiveness to learners' interests, one tutor expressed frustration that there was a lot of content to be covered in the timeframe and not much flexibility to go in-depth, as all the modules had to be covered in 20 hours. Her view is that there was too much emphasis on "motoring through the agreed upon modules" and showing evidence of learning. While this was possible for some learners, others were not so "learner ready". In these classes, the pacing was different:

> *(we) covered the topics, but not in any depth.*

This tutor's concern is mirrored by comments from participants. Analysis of the course evaluation forms shows the question that was most often given a 'frown' or 'neutral face' (i.e. strongly disagree or neither agree or disagree) was the statement "there was enough time in the course to learn all the subjects I thought we could learn". The interviews with workers suggest some would like to have had more time to go in-depth into some topics:

> *The course was too short. I'd like to see the course go deeper into budgeting and computing.*
>
> *I was just getting into it and it was over. I wanted more time.*

Effectiveness

Assessment

This section discusses the pre and post course assessment, including what was proposed and what occurred in practice.

Pre-course assessment

A standard approach in the delivery of literacy courses is that pre- and post-course assessments are undertaken. A key purpose of pre-course assessment is to develop individual learning plans (ILP) and to ensure that learning is relevant to the lives and needs of learners.

For the Vakameasina programme, individual enrolment interviews and assessments included a literacy, language and numeracy (LLN) needs assessment which was designed by McGirr and Fruition staff. The assessment was used to gain an understanding of individual learner's current competencies. The end of pilot report notes that the pre-course assessment was detailed enough to indicate whether participants would be able to understand and cope with enough of the teaching content to achieve some learning objectives, or whether they were too competent to benefit from a 'mainstream' class.

The pre-course assessments were not used to inform or develop plans for individual learners. The provider's view is that this was not practical given the budget constraints, nor necessary for the size of the programme. Rather, tutors were provided with notes on individual learners' needs, what participants most wanted to learn, their learning history, and their literacy and numeracy scores.

This meant tutors had a benchmark gauge of where groups were starting from and were able to check that module lesson plans and learning objectives were pitched at an achievable level. Tutors could scan across participants' assessments and see, for example, half the participants had below Step 1 on the TEC Learners Progressions Framework:

So a tutor could decide, 'there's no point in teaching this level of budgeting; this group is really an ESOL group. (I) need to spend more time on x'.

The end of pilot report notes that the entire cohort averaged less than Step 1 for speaking, around Step 1 for reading and listening and Step 2 for numeracy.

Step 1 is the lowest level on the TEC Learners Progressions Framework. At this level, for example, the framework states that most adults will be able to "respond to and use simple formulaic expressions in spoken language" with regard to interactive listening and speaking.

Post-course assessment

The standard approach for assessing gains in learning is to administer the pre-course assessment again at the end of a course. This was not considered feasible for the Vakameasina programme: As one of the directors commented:

When you have only 10 two hour lessons with people, every hour we want to spend teaching, not assessing.

Originally the post course assessment was to have included testing participants' language gains based on vocabulary lists they kept. As participants identified new words or phrases they wrote them in their vocabulary note book. However, testing participants on these words was not feasible as they were being used out of context.

There was an acknowledgement by the provider and tutor / manager that they need to improve the way they capture evidence for assessing gains in learning. The provider's view is that future post course assessment should be "heavy weighted" on judgement statements from employers, self assessment from learners and observations by tutors. During the latter part of the pilot a tutor observation check list was developed which will be trialed in the next phase.

Attainment of new competencies

The agreed KPI was that "learners gain at least two learning objectives[8] per module".[9] The end of pilot report states this KPI was achieved, while noting there were gaps in evidence and record keeping:

The rigorous pre and post assessment required to provide proof of achievement of this KPI was impossible to undertake given the timeframes available for both teaching and assessment. Tutors used vocabulary lists and naturally occurring evidence to make judgements on learning outcomes.

Without pre and post assessment data for individual learners this KPI is somewhat meaningless. Classes included participants with very different language and numeracy abilities and needs. Thus, the ability to perform, for example, basic financial calculations may be a new competency for some participants, but not for others.

In addition there is no data on the number or percentage of participants who achieved two learning objectives per module. Data on attendance[10] shows only 55 percent of participants completed at least one class for each module, suggesting about half of participants had the opportunity to gain new competencies for all modules.

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[8] See Table 1.

[9] Note: the KPI makes no reference to the number of learners expected to gain at least two learning objectives.

[10] A review of McGirr / Fruition documents suggests that attendance registers were kept for only eight of the 25 classes. Analysis of seven registers (104 learners) shows only 55 percent completed all five modules.

Outcomes

The findings on outcomes achieved are based on interviews with four employers and 20 participants. Where possible data from different sources was triangulated, i.e. responses from workers compared with comments from their employer, to provide a greater understanding of outcomes and whether these were related to the course, or other factors.

Respondents identified increased confidence and increased English comprehension as the main outcomes of the programme. At times it was not clear to employers whether a change was related to increased confidence or in a worker's ability to speak English. Study and other life skills were two other outcomes noted by respondents.

The course outcomes are discussed in two sections: changes in the workplace, and other changes relevant to workers' personal lives.

Changes in the workplace

- Increased confidence

Only one of the four employers interviewed said they noticed no changes in the workplace:

> (The workers) don't need to speak English or communicate with the supervisor, so any change is not likely to be seen at work.

The other employers said they had noticed that workers were now more confident to speak directly to supervisors or other staff. All three believe the programme has contributed to this increased confidence, although another factor is that many workers are now in their third or fourth season of RSE and more familiar with the workplace.

One employer said that prior to the programme workers would respond to supervisors with a 'yes' or 'no', but nothing else. After the course workers "opened up; they came back talking". Without a formal pre / post assessment it is not known how much of this change was due to increased confidence in speaking English or development of English language skills (or a combination).

Another employer commented:

> The HR team has really noticed an improvement in workers' confidence. The workers (after doing the course) were no longer reticent about querying things. They have an eagerness to understand more. They (have asked) more questions about contract rates for example. They are proactive.

A group leader at this workplace also commented that the employer had been receptive to queries about pay. The workers had previously had some concerns and had been encouraged by the tutor to meet with the employer to get clarification. The worker commented that the course had taught him about his rights and (said with a smile) "how to complain!"

While this group of workers had found their employer receptive to direct queries about their employment conditions, not all employers appear to be as accommodating. Another employer was described by a tutor as "frustrated and perhaps…a bit defensive" about workers' questioning their pay slips. The difference in employers' attitudes toward workers becoming more confident and proactive raises questions about the 'post course' climate that may assist or inhibit workers' learning from the programme.

- English language skills

There is evidence that, for some workers at least, there has been an increase in English language comprehension. One employer said that in previous years, health and safety messages "went over their head". When the workers returned the next season, the workers had "ripped through" the

paper work. They were "on time, sitting down". The employer said the workers were eager and asked questions:

> *Two and a half hours had been set aside (for the orientation session) but after an hour the session was rounding up.*

- Computer skills

One employer commented that computer skills gained by workers were useful as they have to do 'reject analysis' reports. He has identified workers with computer skills to take up this task:

> *It's a win / win for us and the workers. They are developing skills so they can move into supervisory positions.*

Changes related to workers' personal lives

As noted earlier, learning about computers was a main draw card for many workers who enrolled for the course. Two of the workers interviewed for this review said they had never used a computer prior to the course. They now connect with family via email and download music and movies in their accommodation.

A number of workers had bought computers prior to, and after the course. One worker referred to the name of the programme[11] and commented:

> *Now I am the boat, taking the information home to my children. If I have the opportunity to keep learning that will bring luck to my family.*

For some participants, the programme was the first time, as adults, that they had engaged in formal learning. One tutor noted that some participants had initially been "closed down" to learning:

> *They are young; it's not that long since they were at school. They haven't had positive experiences of education. This opportunity has given them a positive experience; opened them up to the possibilities that education can provide.*

This tutor believes the programme had been a positive experience for workers and had shown participants they could enjoy the process of learning.

None of the workers interviewed could provide concrete examples of how they had used budgeting skills learnt on the programme. The interviews identified that workers had clear goals each time they came to New Zealand and many of these goals had been achieved prior to participation in Vakameasina.

Efficiency

Completion of modules

The provider's end of pilot report states that 90 percent of learners completed at least two modules and 75 percent completed all five modules, noting:

> *attendance was high, though accurate data on attendance has not been retained in every case.*

The review of McGirr / Fruition documents shows attendance registers were kept for eight of the 25 classes. Analysis of seven[12] registers (104 learners) shows only 55 percent completed all five

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[11] 'Vakameasina' incorporates the word 'Vaka' which is a boat / canoe and 'measina' is a Samoan word meaning valuables (thus, a boat of valuables for the family). McGirr and Fruition (2009). Design document: Vakameasina – learning for Pacific growth.
[12] Seven attendance registers were provided to the evaluator. It is assumed an eighth exists, as there is reference to 81% participation. The provider commented that this register had been retained by the tutor.

modules. 'Completion' has been defined as attending at least one class in a module[13]. If this group of learners is typical of the other classes then it unlikely this KPI was achieved.

Reasons for the low attendance were generally out of the provider's control. Tutors noted that attendance dropped once harvesting started (late January to mid February), with entire classes being cancelled for four groups. In other classes, numbers dropped by more than half during the harvest period. In two classes where attendance registers were not kept, the tutor noted attendance had dropped as:

> *many of the workers were excessively tired (due to) working long shifts.*

Analysis of the seven attendance registers shows that a number of participants departed New Zealand before the course was completed.

Group dynamics impacted on attendance in at least one class. The group leader was reported as being unsupportive, actively discouraging others from participating in the course. The tutor reported that only three participants regularly attended the class:

> *although some participants returned to class as they saw progress being made.*

Another class started with only five of 22 expected participants. The tutor reported that the employer had not communicated clearly with the participants regarding the course start date. The tutors "bribed" participants with cake to get them to attend the next class. However, attendance dropped in the last two sessions as some workers were sent home early.

In some classes that started later in the season, or where participants were due to leave early, tutors scheduled classes to run twice a week. Analysis of one attendance register where this occurred showed less than half the group attended both sessions. While the reasons for non attendance are not noted, it may be that workers were too tired to attend two sessions in a week.

One employer used the programme as a 'carrot to ensure workers met their obligations as workers. The employer told the workers:

> *Work is your priority, not the class.*

The employer used this lever " a couple of times", once when half a work group did not turn up for work because they were too tired. She viewed the programme as "a privilege, not a right".

Targeting of RSE workers

Two enrolment targets were set for the pilot. The first was to include workers from at least four of the possible countries of origin. During the pilot, workers from six countries attended. As Table 2 shows, ni Vanuatu workers made up 44 percent of enrolments. Few Samoan workers had the opportunity to participate (eight workers or 3% of enrolments). The actual participation was even lower, as the tutor commented that only three Samoan RSE workers attended classes regularly. One employer said they did not put their Samoan workers forward for the programme as they considered the language barrier for these workers to be "enormous".

The second enrolment target was that at least 30 percent of the participants be female. This target was also exceeded, as women workers made up 43 percent of enrolment. Vanuatu women made up 40 percent of female enrolments. One respondent commented that five Tuvaluan participants had come to New Zealand to save for university fees.

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[13] The KPI defines 'completion' as being measured by the achievement of two measurable competencies'.

Few classes were mixed gender. Three classes had one woman in the group (in one of these classes, the sole woman was the daughter of a group leader). One of the Tongan classes included eight men and six women. Tutors did not report any noticeable differences between sole and mixed gender groups.

Table 2: Enrolment statistics by Pacific Island country

	Total n= 316	Enrolments from participating Pacific Island countries					
		Tonga (25%)	Samoa (3%)	Vanuatu (44%)	Solomon (16%)	Tuvalu (6%)	Kiribati (6%)
Male n =	179	61	7	84	27	0	0
Female n =	137	19	1	55	23	20	19

Source: McGirr and Fruition end of pilot report, October 2010

Two employers and one of the providers interviewed suggested future programmes could be targeted at primarily return workers. A number of respondents commented that the programme is viewed as an "investment" in workers. As such, employers believe the programme is a way to "give something back" to those who return for a second or subsequent term of employment. In addition, respondents commented that many first time workers go through an intense period of adjustment. As one provider commented:

> everything is new and difficult. Second and third year workers know more about what to expect (of their experience).

Likewise, one employer commented that those workers who have been in New Zealand before "are more familiar (and) will get more out of the programme".

Media coverage

One of the agreed KPIs was that the provider identify opportunities for positive media coverage about the pilot. Articles about the pilot programme appeared in two industry-specific publications: 'The Orchardist'[14] and 'The New Zealand Kiwifruit Journal'[15]. One article appeared in the Bay of Plenty Times[16], a Tauranga-based newspaper. In addition, the provider delivered a presentation about the pilot to the annual RSE Employers' Conference held in Wellington in July 2010. The provider reported that questions from the floor related to the likelihood of the programme being offered again and if so, whether it would include other regions.

Management of the pilot programme

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[14] Scarrow, S. (September 2010). *Vakameasina – a success update.* The Orchardist;

Taylor, J. and Scarrow, S. (March 2010). An overview of the pilot Vakameasina project three months on…Many benefits in project with RSE workers. The Orchardist.

[15] This article is referred to in the end of pilot report but was not provided to the evaluator.

[16] (No date). Fisher, E. Free 'canoe' to boost return. Bay of Plenty Times.

This section includes an assessment of the provider's engagement with employers, and with the contracting agency, MFAT.

Engagement with employers

- What worked well?

The end of pilot report notes that stakeholder liaison and employer engagement occurred throughout the design and delivery phases of the programme. This was confirmed by the interviews with employers. All said they had been consulted about the programme content and had provided information specific to their workplace such as pay slips and induction information. One respondent commented that the provider had a good understanding of employers' perspectives in terms of making the training as practical as possible. As well as content, the provider ensured that the programme worked around employers' requirements for participants to be available to them when required. For example:

> if the workers had to work in the pack house we told the provider who was able to change the classes around so workers could catch up.

- What did not work well?

Three employers expressed concerns with the enrolment and assessment process. In one workplace, 25 workers were assessed, but places were offered to only 13:

> That was difficult from my perspective as all the workers wanted to participate. (It) was not a good look as it raised expectations.

One employer described the selection process as "tedious":

> it lacked professionalism. The women didn't know what to expect. Fruition turned up and didn't explain who they were, what they were doing. Each person had to do an interview (at least a half hour) to assess their literacy skills. The assessment is a good idea but they have to be practical about it.

A third employer said there had been a lack of clarity about who could attend the course. Some of their workers had not turned up to a class because they did not know they had been selected.

Value for money

One approach to assessing the programme's value for money is to compare the cost with other literacy programmes delivered in New Zealand under similar circumstances.

The total contract price for the RSE programme was $511,924.00 (GST exclusive)[17]. With 312 enrolments, this equates to $1640.78 per learner (for 20 hours tuition).

A limited review of the TEC's funded programmes suggests one comparable programme (in terms of content) is the Literacy and Numeracy Fund which is fixed at $2500.00 (GST exclusive) for 100 hours of literacy and / or numeracy tuition per learner. This equates to $500.00 for 20 hours tuition, i.e. less than a third of the cost of the RSE programme.

Alternatively, the TEC's Workplace Literacy Fund allocates $3700.00 (GST exclusive) per employee for 40 hours literacy training. This programme is specifically workplace based. This equates to $1850.00 for 20 hours tuition (about $200 more expensive than the RSE programme).

Further information from the TEC would be required to assess which (if either) of the two TEC programmes is comparable to the RSE programme and therefore assess, more robustly, whether the RSE programme is 'value for money'.

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[17] Based on email documentation provided by MFAT

One of the Vakameasina directors noted that the pilot had included costs that were specific to the development of the programme, such as design. These are predominantly one-off costs, and thus one might expect the programme cost per learner to reduce as the programme matures.

Two of the employers interviewed said they would consider funding some of the costs of the programme. One employer said workers' participation in the programme had "huge benefits" for employers and workers. As workers developed their confidence in speaking English and gained skills in computing they could move into supervisory positions. However, other employers are less keen to invest in building staff capabilities, particularly if they see no benefits for the employer. One employer also said it was unlikely workers would contribute to the cost. This was backed up by comments from participants. As one participant said:

> We would not be interested if we had to pay for the course. We have so many deductions already. If you told workers to pay for the course they would say: our priority is to work, not to do a course. I come here to make more money, not to do courses.

Other considerations for assessing value for money include the value of learning new skills to participants, their families and communities. It is clear from the enrolled students' details that some workers see English language and computer skills as a way to move into higher paying positions in their home countries. In the same way, participants' new skills are of value to employers as English literacy results in better communication, fewer mistakes, less accidents, and ultimately more efficient workplace practices.

Discussion

This section starts with an overall assessment of the programme quality and success, including a summary of the evidence that has led to this assessment. This is followed by a discussion of the findings.

Relevance

Curriculum	**Performance exceeded**
	Content was relevant to what learners wanted to learn; also relevant to what employers wanted the course to cover.
	Least relevant: Goal setting
	Most relevant: All other module topics were relevant. English language and computer skills were particularly relevant to workers' needs and interests.
	Tutors identified opportunities to focus learning on topics relevant to workers' needs or interests.
Teaching methods	**Met MFAT expectations**
	Although not all tutors had formal qualifications in adult / ESOL teaching, they had prior relevant experience and skills / personal qualities appropriate for this programme.
	The short duration of the course (20 hours), number of topics to be covered & the large tutor/learner ratio meant tutors could not go in-depth into topics.
	The pilot was, to some extent, organic, in that tutors regularly reflected on what was working well, not so well, and adjusted the content accordingly.
Learning environment / engagement	**Performance exceeded**
	Evidence of good rapport between tutors and participants.
	There was flexibility to reschedule classes if workers too busy / unavailable. However, long working days still meant some workers came to class tired.

Effectiveness

Assessment	**Substandard performance**
	Pre-assessment data gave tutors good information about learners' abilities, interests. There were no individual learning plans and no structured post course assessments. Learning from the pilot has informed the design of a student outcomes report and checklist which could be used in future programmes.
Attainment of new competencies	**Met MFAT expectations**
	There is no pre and post assessment data available to provide evidence of attainment of new competencies. However, qualitative evidence suggests learners acquired new competencies.
Outcomes	**Met MFAT expectations**
	Main outcomes noticed by employers were increased confidence and workers speaking more English in the workplace.
	Some workers are using computers to communicate with family members overseas and for recreation while in New Zealand.

Efficiency

Completion of modules	**Substandard performance** Very few attendance registers kept. Analysis of seven registers (104 participants) shows only 55 percent completed all five modules.
Targeting	**Performance exceeded** Workers from six countries participated. However, there were very few participants from Samoa. 43% of enrolments were female. There was a great deal interest from workers to participate in the programme.
Media coverage	**Met MFAT expectations** Minimal media coverage of the programme. However, there were no negative media reports.
Management of pilot programme	**Substandard performance** Evidence of communication breakdown between the provider and contract manager. Financial reporting was onerous for a pilot programme. Comments from employers suggests the enrolment process needs to be improved. Aspects of the programme require better management processes, e.g. attendance record keeping; development of pre post assessment material.
Value for money	Not able to be assessed as there is limited information about costs of comparable programmes.

The term 'pilot' suggests the programme was in an experimental phase. As such, one could expect that aspects of the programme would require changes through trial and error. The findings need to be viewed in this context.

Overall, the learning from this pilot is that the programme does meet a need. There is enormous interest from RSE workers to participate in training while they are in New Zealand. This was evidenced by the high number of workers who enrolled in the first intake.

Within classes and across groups there were learners with quite different needs. Some workers have set up businesses in their home countries (either prior to, or as a result of their involvement with RSE). These workers particularly valued learning business-related budgeting and financial skills. Other learners had more fundamental barriers to learning. Some are illiterate in their own language and / or have had previous negative experiences of learning.

Although there were five set modules, there was some flexibility within classes to tailor content to the needs and interests of learners. The content appears to work well and is relevant to workers' lives in New Zealand and at home. Within groups there were individuals who did not find some topics, such as goal setting, as useful as others. Most workers said they want more time on computers and all the content was useful. Many workers commented that the programme was too short; one tutor also said it was not possible to go in depth into topics. The programme was relatively short compared to literacy programmes funded by the TEC. It is presumed that this relates to the short time workers are in New Zealand. It may be useful for MFAT to engage an ESOL expert to provide advice on the overall course curriculum and what can realistically be achieved in a 20 hour programme.

The review identified that most of the tutors had teaching-related degrees and qualifications. Whether these are the most appropriate qualifications for adults who have English as a second language, I do not know. However, the interviews identified that tutors have a range of skills and knowledge that is relevant to the needs of the participants. Being able to build rapport and an environment of trust and mutual respect was an important attribute. It was particularly important for those tutors working with participants who have previously had negative experiences of learning in a classroom.

There is evidence that the programme was not static; tutors met regularly to reflect on aspects of the programme and to implement ongoing improvements.

The relatively poor attendance (55% completed at least one session of each module) means that in reality workers had access to less than 20 hours tuition. The long hours and hard physical labour workers were engaged in meant many were too tired to learn at the end of the day. Those that did attend were often too tired to give their full attention to the class. Workers interviewed suggested classes be scheduled for their day off. While this may be possible for some classes, it may prove too difficult to find enough venues and tutors to run courses on Saturdays. The fact that workers did not take up the provider's invitation to attend classes on wet days suggests workers may also be reluctant to give up some of their scheduled day off to sit in a classroom.

One employer had disallowed workers from attending classes "a couple of times" because their behaviour was allegedly "out of line". This action is of particular concern as classes occurred in workers' own time and were not funded by the employer. As such it appears to be a violation of human rights and needs to be monitored.

One aspect of the programme that still requires attention is that of assessment. While the providers undertook an initial assessment of participants' literacy strengths and needs, individual learner progress was not monitored over time. This meant it was not possible to robustly assess learner gains. The provider has suggested strategies for measuring learner gains. However, the reviewer's view is that this should be supplemented by some formal pre and post testing.

Another aspect that needs attention is completion of attendance registers. Very few attendance registers were submitted by tutors to McGirr / Fruition. Without this information there is no evidence of participants completing modules. The provider has acknowledged that development of assessments and recording of attendance are areas that require improvement. It is suggested that completed registers be submitted to MFAT as part of their reporting requirements.

The findings raise a question about the extent to which workers have the opportunity to use their learning. In the literature about 'learning transfer'[18] this is referred to as the 'transfer climate'. It refers to the characteristics of the post-course environment that facilitate or inhibit the use of learning from a course. The literature suggests that the transfer climate is as important as participant learning in enabling transfer of learning to occur.

The fact that the course was held in New Zealand meant many workers had immediate opportunities to put their learning into practice. In the workplace there were examples of workers using their newly acquired skills to engage with supervisors and employers. One employer had identified an opportunity for workers to use computers in the workplace. Two employers had met with workers to clarify issues about pay.

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[18] Holton E.F., Bates, R., Seyler, D. & Carvalho, M. (1997). Towards construct validation of a transfer climate instrument. Human Resource Development Quarterly, 2, 92-114
Holton, E.F., Bates, R., Bookter, A.I. & Yamkovenko, V.B. (2007). Convergent and divergent validity in the learning transfer system inventory. Human Resource Development Quarterly, 18, (3), 385-419

In other workplaces there were less opportunities or support for workers to use their learning. One employer, for example, said workers did not need to speak English or communicate with the supervisor. Another employer was less than keen to engage in a discussion with workers about a pay issue.

Outside the workplace, participants are using computers to communicate with family and for recreational purposes. Some workers have bought their own computers, others use computers in their accommodation. Little is known about the impact of the course on women who participated. Interviews with tutors suggests that some of the women from one Pacific country have less opportunity to use the learning from the course as they have limited or no control over the money they earn; it is sent home to other family members.

It was not possible to assess the programme's 'value for money' as there was limited information available to make comparisons. However, the interviews with employers suggests some see the programme as valuable and are willing to contribute to the costs. It is suggested this be further explored as an option for cost savings.

Conclusion

The purpose of this review was to assess if the RSE worker pilot training programme achieved the intended outcomes, and, if it did, to identify if any changes are required to ensure strong future performance. The review was also to consider continuation and/or expansion of the programme.

The programme is achieving its intended outcome in that workers have new skills that are relevant to their lives in New Zealand and at home. The current modules work well. However, the programme could be better tailored to the individual needs and goals of learners. There is evidence to suggest two programmes be developed. The first would focus on learners who have high literacy needs. A second programme would cater to those workers who require more advanced skills relevant to developing community or business ventures in their home countries.

This review supports the providers' recommendation that digital literacy be recognised as a cross-cutting skill and be explicitly included in the programme design.

There is strong support for a programme that is provided to RSE workers while they are in New Zealand. A number of workers interviewed indicated they would have difficulty attending a course in their home country because they live far from a main centre. The findings suggest the programme works best when learners are kept in groups where they know each other, and where learning occurs face to face. The role that employers play should not be underestimated. They facilitate bringing workers together and provide opportunities for new skills to be immediately used in the workplace.

The one drawback to the programme being run in New Zealand is that workers are often tired because of the long hours and physical nature of the work. The ideal situation is that classes are held either in workers' accommodation or at a venue close by, for example an educational institution with networked computers. In some regions there may be existing literacy courses that workers could attend, particularly those who require more advanced skills such as budgeting or computing skills for business / community ventures. These could be explored through networks such as Adult Community Education Aotearoa.

In the second phase it is suggested the programme be expanded to RSE workers in all regions. If demand exceeds available resources the programme could prioritise return workers, as suggested

by several employer and provider respondents. This approach could be an incentive for workers to be selected for a return season and reinforce the 'win win' nature of the RSE scheme.

Recommendations

1. The RSE worker training programme should continue.

2. MFAT to engage an ESOL expert to provide advice on the overall course curriculum, resource requirements and what can realistically be achieved in a 20 hour programme.

3. The programme should be available to all RSE workers. It could be targeted to those who have returned to New Zealand for a second or subsequent season of employment to acknowledge these workers have returned, and are likely to return again.

4. MFAT to work with the Department of Labour to ensure employers who are granted RSE status do not unreasonably limit workers' access to the programme.

5. The programme requires a high level of relationship management with employers, tutors and other stakeholders in a region. For this reason, it is suggested that the programme be expanded only if the provider has the capacity and capability to deliver a programme of this scale.

6. MFAT should explore part-funding the programme, with employers picking up some of the costs.

Appendix 1: Methodology

Evaluative rubrics

Three evaluative rubrics were developed with input from MFAT staff and McGirr / Fruition. This involved a process of establishing performance 'standards' (i.e. definitions of what constitutes 'excellent', 'adequate', and 'poor' performance against identified criteria) and applying these standards to the data to draw conclusions about performance quality and success.[19]

The rubrics are included in Appendix 2.

Qualitative interviews

Qualitative interviews were held with the following stakeholder groups:

Stakeholder group	No. of interviews
MFAT staff	2
Vakameasina directors	2
Vakameasina tutors	3
DoL regional RSE manager	1
Tongan govt liaison (1)	1
Employers / HR staff / orchard manager / pay roll clerk	7
RSE workers (Vakameasina participants)	24
RSE group leaders (Vakameasina participants)	2
Accommodation provider	1

Respondents will be recruited by telephone and email and were sent an information sheet providing information about the review.

Telephone interviews were held with the Vakameasina tutors, one of the Vakameasina directors, two employers and an accommodation provider.

All other interviews were conducted face to face. Group interviews were held with six Solomon Island workers, 15 Tongan workers and five ni Vanuatu workers. Initially it had been intended to undertake interviews in the Bay of Plenty as well. However workers had yet to return to work in New Zealand. No interviews were held with women workers, for the same reason.

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[19] Davidson, J. (2005). Evaluation methodology basics, Sage: Thousand Oaks

Interviews with two group leaders were held at their workplace prior to the group interviews which were held over two evenings. Although group leaders had been asked to select five people, more workers turned up to two of the interviews. The large group was managed by the reviewer moving around the room and engaging small groups in discussion.

Soft drinks and biscuits, provided by the reviewer, were taken to share with workers and the leader from each group was given five $20 phone cards to share out. Participants were told the phone cards were a thank you gift from MFAT, for their participation in the review.

The information sheet and consent form were explained verbally. All participants signed a consent form prior to the interview starting.

Individual interview guides were developed based on the following list of questions and tailored for specific respondents.

- To what extent has the training been relevant to the lives and needs of workers?

- Which training activities and resources were most relevant? Which training activities and resources were least relevant and why

- In what ways has the programme considered gender issues?

- To what extent have the outputs from the pilot been delivered to the standard required?

- To what extent have workers attained new competencies as a result of participation in the programme?

- To what extent has the training led to benefits for workers, their families and their employers?

- What factors helped or constrained the delivery of outputs and achievement of outcomes? How could enabling factors be maximised and constraints minimised or mitigated?

- To what extent has the pilot been value for money?[20] Are there other models of delivery that could be more cost effective?

- What changes to the programme could lead to greater efficiency?

Document review

Key documents provided by MFAT and McGirr / Fruition were reviewed. They included the following:

- NZAID: GAF MOU with MFAT: "Support for Introduction of Pacific Seasonal Work Scheme"

- NZAID: GAF MOU and LOV with DoL: "Consolidating Pacific States Participation in the RSE scheme"

- Minister of Immigration: RSE One Year Review of Policy

- DoL: One Year In paper

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[20] The proposed method (interviews with key informants) will provide only limited information about 'value for money'. The evaluator will aim to gather additional information about the cost of similar sized literacy programmes in New Zealand so that some comparison of costs can be made. In addition, the evaluation will consider other modes of delivery, such as the literacy programme run by the Australian seasonal labour scheme. This will rely on information being provided by MFAT.

- Australian Government: 'Partners in Progress' – Australia's Pacific Seasonal Worker Pilot Scheme

- McGirr/Fruition: Contract For Services

- McGirr/Fruition: Letter of Variation

- McGirr/Fruition: Design Document

- McGirr/Fruition: 6 monthly Reports x2

- McGirr/Fruition: End of Pilot Report.

- McGirr/Fruition: Revised framework of Learning Objectives

- needs assessment and enrolment data

- end of course reports

- teaching resources and module data

- photos of the learning groups

- stakeholder engagement data including data from feedback sessions with employers.

- media reports

- presentation slides to the national governance group.

Appendix 2: Evaluative rubrics

	Performance exceeded		Substandard performance
RELEVANCE	All round excellent performance	Met MFAT expectations	Unacceptable
Curriculum	Content is flexible enough to focus on issues that arise for workers during the programme	Content is relevant to: what employers wanted workers to learn what learners wanted to learn for personal interests in NZ and/or home contexts what learners wanted to learn to help with their home community interests what could help learners adapt to their NZ living environment.	Most of the content is not relevant to learners' needs (as perceived by learners)
Teaching methods	Tutors recognise the diverse needs of learners and are able to implement appropriate strategies to meet these needs	Tutors recognise the diverse needs of learners and do their best to implement appropriate strategies within the constraints of the contract Tutors are skilled / trained in teaching adult learners	Tutors are not able to recognise the diverse needs of learners and implement appropriate strategies to meet these needs Tutors are not skilled / trained in teaching adult learners
Learning environment / engagement	Flexible scheduling that fits with workers' other commitments	Relaxed, informal, supportive, safe, positive learning environment provided. Culturally appropriate A mix of positive and negative comments from learners on their engagement throughout the programme; skewed toward positive comments. Any negative feedback is addressed in an appropriate timeframe (within a week for simple issues; more complex	Learners' comments about the learning environment are skewed toward the negative.

		issues are worked through in a timely manner)	
	Performance exceeded		Substandard performance
EFFECTIVENESS	All round excellent performance	Met MFAT expectations	Unacceptable
Assessment	Learners receive feedback on what they have achieved and what they need to do to improve or get to the next step.	All learners are assessed and mapped on the TEC's progressions framework. Individual learning plans are developed for all participants Assessments used to ensure learning is relevant to needs of learners. Learners' progress has been monitored throughout the programme. All learners complete an individual post-course interview / assessment	Less than 50 percent of Learners are assessed / documented on the TEC's progressions framework No evidence that assessments have been used to ensure learning is relevant to needs of learners Less than 50 percent of learners complete a post-course interview / assessment
Attainment of new competencies		All learners gain at least 2 measurable competencies (learning objectives) per module as evident in comparison of pre and post assessment	No noticeable attainment of new competencies for 50% or more of participants
Intermediate outcomes	Employers report pastoral care is easier (e.g. less need to deal with misunderstandings around contracts / payslips)	Most (80%?) of participants report they more confident in speaking and reading English Most (80%?) of participants are using financial literacy skills, e.g. reading pay slips, budgeting, making purchasing decisions Participants interviewed report benefits at home from the some of the skills they have learnt.	No noticeable improvement in English language / numeracy / financial literacy skills (for 50 percent or more participants)

	Performance exceeded		Substandard performance
EFFICIENCY	All round excellent performance	Met MFAT expectations	Unacceptable
Completion of modules	All participants complete all of the modules	90% complete at least 2 modules and 75% complete all 5 modules (completion is measured by the achievement of 2 measurable competencies)	50% complete less than two modules
Targeting	More than 50 percent of learners are women Includes learners from six Pacific States	30% of learners are women Includes learners from at least two Pacific states	No women learners Non-target participants attend (i.e. not from one of the six Pacific States involved in the RSE policy
Media coverage	The programme has received positive media coverage in the Pacific States Provider has proactively sought media opportunities to publicise the programme	The programme has received positive media coverage in New Zealand	The programme has resulted in mostly negative media coverage
Management of pilot programme	Reporting has been ahead of time Same line of communication throughout the contract (for both parties)	MFAT has set realistic expectations for the pilot Clear line of communication between parties Timely identification of risk and practical effective solutions (by both parties) Reporting / invoicing / payment has been on time	MFAT has not been notified of delays to reporting No clear line of communication
Value for money	Cost of the programme is excellent value for money when compared with other comparable literacy programmes	Cost of the programme is comparable with other literacy programmes delivered in New Zealand	Cost of the programme is well above the cost of other comparable programmes delivered in New Zealand