

Challenges for Higher Education in the Pacific Islands

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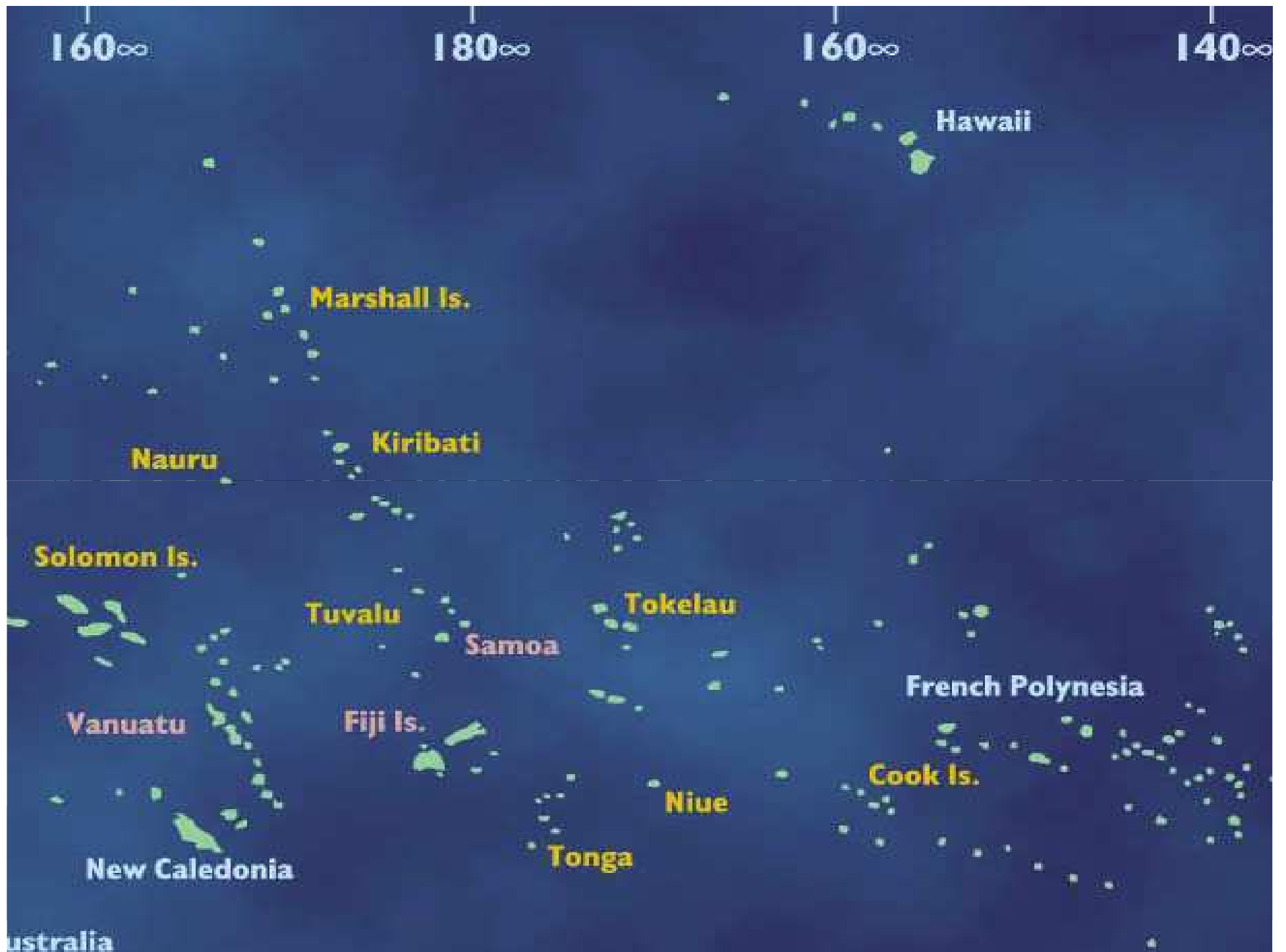
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Contents of the Presentation

- **Pacific Islands context**
- **Key issues in Education**
- **Economic Integration amongst the PICs
for Delivery of Higher Education**
- **Concluding Comments**

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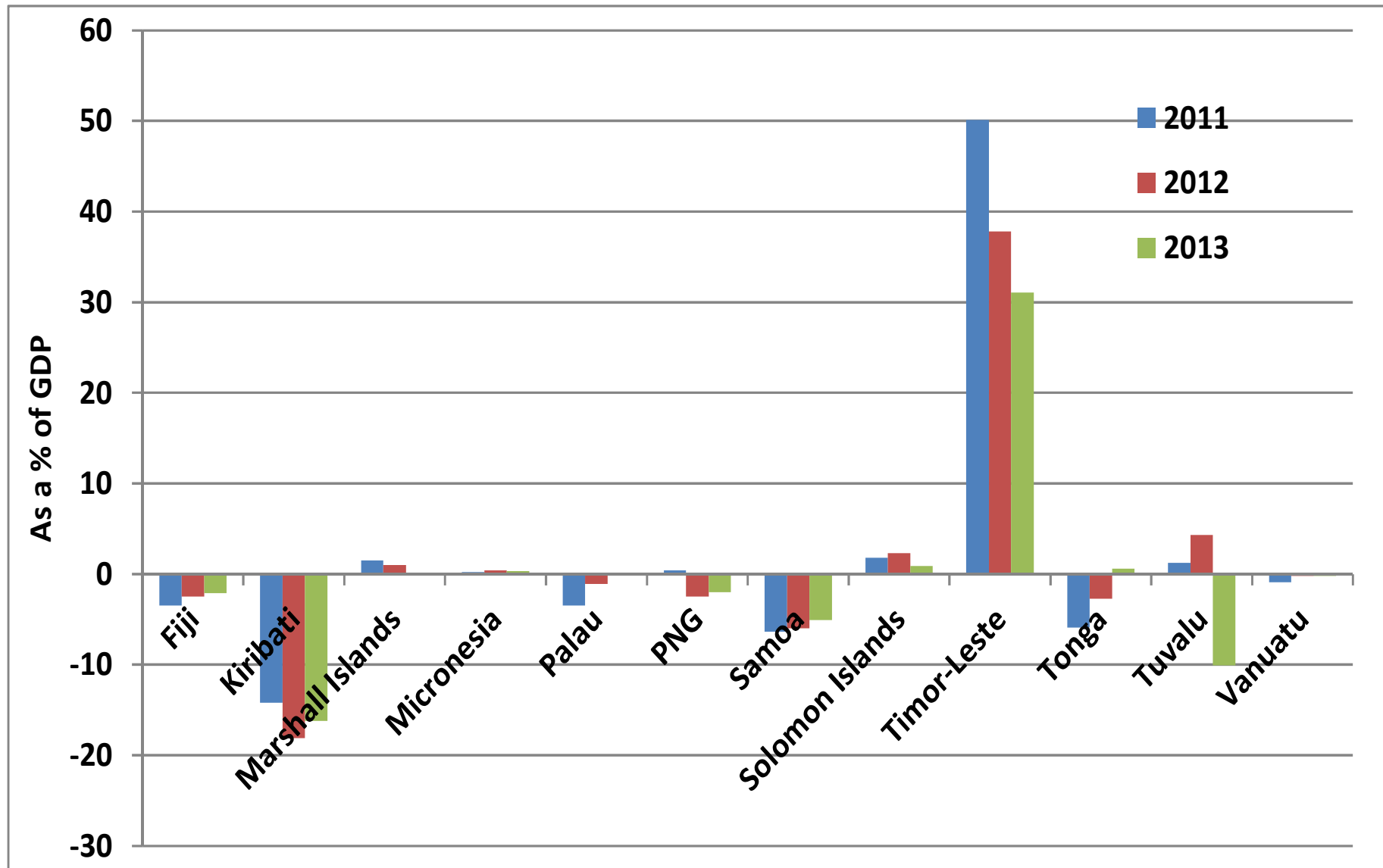
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Country	Real GDP Growth						
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Fiji	-0.9	1.0	-1.3	0.1	1.9	2.7	2.9
Kiribati	0.4	-1.1	-0.7	1.8	3.0	3.5	3.0
Marshall Islands	3.0	-1.9	-1.3	5.2	5.0	5.4	2.6
Micronesia	-1.9	-2.3	0.4	3.1	1.4	0.9	0.4
Palau	-0.5	-6.1	-4.6	0.3	5.8	3.0	2.0
PNG	6.5	6.6	6.1	7.6	8.9	7.7	4.0
Samoa	1.8	4.3	-5.1	0.4	2.0	1.5	1.9
Solomon Islands	10.7	7.1	-4.7	7.0	9.3	6.0	4.0
Tonga	-1.2	2.0	-0.4	1.9	1.4	1.6	1.2
Tuvalu	5.5	7.6	-1.7	-2.9	1.1	1.2	1.3
Vanuatu	6.5	6.2	3.5	2.2	3.8	4.2	4.0
Timor-Leste	7.8	25.6	16.1	0.3	6.9	-5.9	-0.4

Source: IMF Article 4 Report, relevant countries

Figure 4: Government Budget Balance



Source: IMF Article 4 Report, relevant countries

Social Indicators (MDGs)

- For the Pacific as a whole the performance is a mixed bag
- Papua New Guinea with a population of 6.7million, Solomon Islands, Kiribati and Nauru are off-track on all the goals.
- Cook Islands, Niue and Palau are on-track for six of the goals.
- Most of them are off-track in achieving the goal of reducing the poverty, environmental sustainability and gender equality.

Environmental Challenges

- threats to freshwater resources;
- degradation of the marine and coastal environment;
- degradation of land and forests;
- problems of urbanization and waste management;
- depletion of biodiversity;
- concern about energy use;
- adaptation to climate change and natural disasters
- weaknesses in environmental management capacities and governance.

Other Development Challenges- post 2015

- MDGs played an important role but did not reflect fully national development concerns;
- Poor infrastructure development at the national level
- Gender equality and focus on youth;
- Better management of natural resources
- Climate change focus;
- Ownership of their problems and not donor driven
- Data constraints for good policy;
- Focus on quality of outcomes in education and health

Regionalism and Education for Sustainable Development

- **Pacific Regionalism and Integration**
- **Pacific Plan was designed to support and promote regionalism and economic integration**
- **Pacific nations are small and on their own they could not afford higher education**
- **Response: Pooling of Resources- The Formation of the University of the South Pacific**

The University of the South Pacific

- 12 Member countries
- Campuses in each of the twelve countries;
- Courses are delivered in a blended mode;
- Considered to be the most successful example of regional cooperation;
- Strong donor support for the USP

Challenges facing Higher Education in the PICs

- Funding
- Quality;
- Governance and Ethics;
- National infrastructure (ICT);
- Accreditation scale and scope of universities and pressure for expanding student numbers;
- Preparation for entry;
- Staff conditions and practice;
- Research;
- Cooperation with Overseas Institutions
- Maintaining the regionality of the University (some countries are putting emphasis on national institutions)

Funding for USP- 2013-2018

Sources of Funding	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Commercial and other Income	32.2	30.3	33.4	36.6	39.2	42.0
Development Assistance	53.2	56.3	61.1	68.0	74.8	80.0
Tuition fees	39.5	40.4	41.5	45.0	45.3	47.7
Member Country Contributions	47.9	47.7	47.9	47.9	47.9	47.9

Labour mobility and regionalism

- PICs have significant youth unemployment;
- PICs want access to labour markets in Australia and New Zealand;
- Tertiary Institutions are trying to produce graduates that can also find employment in the Australian and New Zealand Labour markets. These efforts are supported by ANZ through funding support to tertiary institutions;
- The issue of unskilled labour mobility remains on the agenda of PICs

Future of higher education

- USP has to become a quality driven University- strategic plan 2015-2018 strives to do that
- National Institutions can help by concentrating on TVET
- Modes of delivery should be blended- MOOC or total online is not a possibility;
- Significant investment in ICT related infrastructure would be required