



Responding institutions:

Pacific Regional Initiatives for the Delivery of Basic Education (PRIDE) Project and the Fiji Library Association (FLA)

Fiji responded to the IFLA/FAIFE questionnaire in 2003 and 2005.

There are 9 public libraries in Fiji, as well as more than 300 school libraries, 2 university libraries and 5 government-funded research libraries. The sources of these statistics are given as the Ministry of Education, the Library Services of Fiji and the Fiji Library Association.

Internet penetration is currently low, with only 8.1% of the population being Internet users. Levels of access in the country's libraries are correspondingly low – less than 20% of all public libraries, government-funded research libraries and school libraries offer Internet access to their users. The respondents have added that access is not widely available in public libraries and, where it is available, it has been funded by donor aid. Many government department libraries have Internet access for staff, but not necessarily for patrons. Of the university libraries 81-100% offer Internet access, and they do so free of charge. The state has made no extra funding available to improve Internet access in the last two years.

The respondents have indicated that practically no local content is available on the Internet, and practically nothing in local languages. The literacy rate is given as 93.7%.

Although the respondents have indicated that the library association is not in favour of filtering information, filtering software is used to a certain extent (e.g. on children's terminals). The respondents have added that the current "illegal military regime" has tried to block access to certain sites through telecommunications providers "in the interests of national security".

The library association has not yet adopted the IFLA Internet Manifesto or the Glasgow Declaration, but plans to do so within the next two years. A strategic plan for the library association is also being drafted and will be adopted within the next two years.

User privacy and anti-terror legislation

Anti-terror legislation has been passed and the respondents have indicated that it adversely affects the library users' intellectual freedom. The respondents have made the following statement:

"The coup in Fiji in 2006 has seen increased censorship by the regime, with the government telecommunications provider being coerced to breach accepted standards by at times blocking access to selected blogs and perhaps even providing the regime with details of Internet users' access. The Public Emergency Decree and regulations were brought into force in December 2006; these have only now been rescinded. They severely compromised freedom of expression and freedom of information and many other basic human rights. The Public Order Act is now the legal framework to continue such abuses [...] the Fiji Independent Commission Against Corruption (FICAC) has the

potential to compromise privacy. Fiji does not have a Freedom of Information Act and is now unlikely to get one, given the military regime's attempt to abuse basic human rights."

The respondents have also indicated that keeping user records would affect the freedom of expression of the individual Internet user.

Reported incidents/violations of intellectual freedom in the past two years

The respondents have indicated that there have been several incidents in the last two years that adversely affected the freedom of access to information or the freedom of expression. They have stated the following in support:

"The coup in Fiji in 2006 has seen increased censorship by the regime, with the government telecommunications provider being coerced to breach accepted standards by at times blocking access to selected blogs and perhaps even providing the regime with details of Internet users' access. The effect on libraries is hard to qualify; however, the effect on the FLA has been felt, making it difficult for the association to advocate for FoI [freedom of information] principles due to the fear of abuse at the hands of the military. There have been reports of university academics being questioned by the military in connection with articles written in the paper; some citizens have also been questioned or abused by the regime as a result of letters published in the paper. A respected senior journalist at Fiji TV recently said at the Pacific Islands News Association Meeting that there was self-censorship in the media due to fear of the military regime."

- The respondents have also listed the following as sources and examples of these incidents:
- *Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat Eminent Persons Group Report*: http://www.fijilive.com/archive/showpdf.php?pdf=2007/02/EPG_Report.pdf
- *Lawasia Report*: http://www.fijilive.com/archive/showpdf.php?pdf=2007/04/LAWASIA_MISSION_REPORT_FIJI.pdf

- *Fiji Times* (for online access to new stories): <http://www.fjitime.com>

Many blogs have developed as an outcome of the coup – the one below has links to many other blogs as well: <http://intelligentsiya.blogspot.com/>

HIV/Aids awareness

HIV/Aids education in Fiji has been provided by non-governmental organisations (NGOs). The respondents have indicated that although they do not actively use the libraries for educational purposes, it is likely that these NGOs are providing materials to libraries.

Women and freedom of access to information

Libraries in Fiji have no special programmes focusing on the promotion of women's literacy. The reasons given were: lack of funds, lack of awareness and lack of qualified staff. There are, however, programmes that focus specifically on women's access to certain topics. Three NGOs have resource centres focusing on women's issues: Fiji Women's Crisis Centre (FWCC); Women's Action for Change (WAC) and the Fiji Women's Rights Movement (FWRM).

IFLA Internet Manifesto

The IFLA Internet Manifesto has not yet been adopted, but it is part of the FLA's strategic plan and will be adopted within the next two years.

IFLA Glasgow Declaration on Libraries, Information Services and Intellectual Freedom

The Glasgow Declaration not yet been adopted, but forms part of the FLA's strategic plan and will be adopted within the next two years, if deemed appropriate.

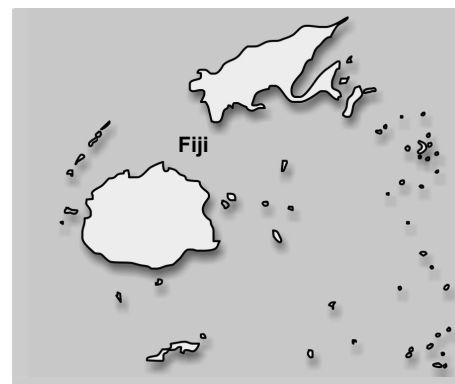
Ethics

The library association's strategic plan is in draft form, and while ethics are not specifically mentioned, there are guiding principles. The plan should be adopted within the next two years.

Main indicators

Country name:	Fiji
Population:	918 675 (July 2007 est.)
Main language:	English (official), Fijian (official), Hindustani
Literacy:	93.7%
Literacy reported by respondents:	93%

Population figures, language and literacy are from the
CIA World Factbook, 2007 edition
<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/index.html>.



Libraries and Internet access

Fiji contributed to the World Report series in 2005 and 2003. The following section compares data and answers from 2007 with the 2005 IFLA/FAIFE World Report and adds context from the respondents' estimates, where possible.

Library services

Estimated number of public libraries*:	9 (2005: 8)
Estimated number of school libraries:	300+
Estimated number of university libraries:	2
Estimated number of government-funded research libraries:	5
Source of these numbers:	Ministry of Education, Library Services of Fiji, and the Fiji Library Association

Internet access

Population online**:	70 000 users as of April 2007 (8.1%) (2005: 6.5%)
Percentage of public libraries offering Internet access to users:	Less than 20% (2005: Less than 20%)
Percentage of school libraries offering Internet access to users:	Less than 20%
Percentage of university libraries offering Internet access to users:	81-100%
Percentage of government-funded research libraries offering Internet access to users:	Less than 20%
In your estimate, how much local content*** is available on the Internet:	Nothing, or practically nothing
To what degree is content on the Internet available in local languages:	Nothing, or practically nothing
Is the library association in favour of filtering information on library Internet terminals:	No (2005: Yes, to a certain degree, in order to protect children, national security, religious values and national ethos/culture; to prevent crime; and to safeguard public morality)
Is the use of filtering software widespread in your country's libraries:	Yes, to a certain degree – the current "illegal military regime" has tried to block access to certain sites/blogs in the "interests of national security" (2005: No)
Is it free of charge for library users to access the Internet on library computers:	Yes, in university libraries; access to the Internet is not available in many public libraries; many government department libraries may have access for library staff (2005: Yes, in all libraries)
Has the state or other library authorities made any extra funding available for Internet access in the library system of your country in the last two years:	No (2005: No)

* Public library service points, including branch libraries.

** Online population numbers are from Internet World Stats (www.Internetworldstats.com).

*** Local content is defined as content that originates in the country.