

## Micronesian Teachers Education Conference (MTEC) – Brief summary

Endorsed by the FSM Association of Chief State School Officers (FACSSO) and the FSM Department of Education, the 2023 Micronesian Teachers Education Conference (MTEC) was hosted by the Kosrae Department of Education which was held on July 04 -07, 2023 in Kosrae, Federated States of Micronesia (FSM). Having had the annual Conference postponed for four years due to the global COVID-19 pandemic, the participants who were mostly teachers from the four states in the FSM; Chuuk, Kosrae, Pohnpei and Yap including technical consultants from outside of the FSM had gathered in a week-long exchange of knowledge and wisdom coupled with graceful remarks by esteemed Speakers through workshops, presentations, and exhibits. One of the components of the Conference was based on the critical understanding of the considerations for and implications of child protection issues and protective measures towards enhancing culturally inclusive practice.

Though the FSM Government had taken significant steps in meeting its international commitments through the ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on Rights of the Child (CRC) and the involvement of Children in armed conflicts on October 26, 2015,<sup>1</sup> it was critical that all parties involved in working (in)directly with children understood and fully realized the commitment of the FSM under the CRC whereby children have the right to relevant and quality education, play (with specific reference to a play-based culturally relevant curriculum for 3-5 yo), excellent health, access to appropriate information and, most importantly, to know and practice one's culture and religion. Hence, the workshop facilitated by Dr. Kelesi Whippy, Education Adviser Chuuk Department of Education had attempted to bring to the fore the significance of the Conference theme, *'Connecting indigenous knowledge across academic disciplines'* through recognizing abuse, power in relationships and exploring protective strategies situated within local ways of knowing and being. Specifically, to fully realize effective child protection and respectful relationships in the teaching and learning process, the workshop highlighted the importance of creating a supportive learning environment, strengthening parental and community involvement and empowering students through skills and character development and, using appropriate and sustainable teaching strategies. According to the participants' feedback responses, the workshop was an 'eye-opener' as the inclusion of Child Protection matters particularly in lesson planning was often over-looked and given less consideration.

The Conference resolutions articulated the need for all states in the FSM to develop a culturally relevant curriculum that is context-specific bearing local content and language, pedagogy and assessment strategies that situate the 'Micronesian Child' at the heart of the teaching and learning process.

Photos: Kosrae Depart of Education



<sup>1</sup> Human Rights Council Forty-seventh session 21 June–9 July 2021  
Agenda item 6 Universal periodic review. FSM

