

APRIL 2019

Review of Solomon Islands Education Support 2016-19: Final Report



ABOUT ALLEN + CLARKE

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Disclaimer:

Data referred to in this report were provided by various stakeholders. The Review Team was not in a position to validate these data and are not responsible for any misrepresentations in the data presented.

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ACRONYMS

AJR	Annual Joint Review
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (Australia)
DFA	Direct Funding Agreement
DP	Development Partner
EA	Education Authority
ESP 2	Education Sector Program 2
FFM	Fellowship of Faithful Mentors
ESF	Education Strategic Framework
GFA	Grant Funding Arrangement
LEAP	Leaders and Education Authorities Project
LPMU	Literacy Programme Management Unit
MEHRD	Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MFAT	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (New Zealand)
MTR	Mid-Term Review
NEAP	National Education Action Plan
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
NZHC	New Zealand High Commission
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PD	Professional development
PEA	Provincial Education Authority
PEAM	Provincial Education Authority Mentor
PEAP	Provincial Education Authority Plan
PfID	Partnerships for International Development Fund
PLD	Professional Learning (and) Development
PLT	Provincial Literacy Trainer
PPY	Pre-primary
RTC	Rural Training Centre
S4EG	Skills for Economic Growth
SBD	Solomon Islands Dollars
SIAVRTC	Solomon Islands Association of Vocational and Rural Training Centres
SIEMIS	Solomon Islands Education Management Information System
SIES	Solomon Islands Education Support 2016-2019
SIG	Solomon Islands Government
SINU	Solomon Islands National University
SISTA	Solomon Islands Standardised Tests of Achievement
SITESA	Solomon Islands Tertiary Education and Skills Authority
SLM	School Leadership Mentor
START	Strengthening Technical and Agricultural Rural Training
SWAp	Sector Wide Approach
TOR	Terms of Reference
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
USP (IOE)	University of the South Pacific (Institute of Education)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

A review of the Solomon Islands Education Support 2016-2019 (SIES) was undertaken from November 2018 to March 2019. The primary focus of this mid-term review was to assess the performance of the SIES and provide recommendations for New Zealand's support to education (including, but not limited to, the basic education programme) and for potential options, delivery modalities and priorities post 2019.

SIES funding and focus

The SIES has a focus on basic education and includes the Leaders and Education Authorities Project (LEAP), implementing the Solomon Islands National Literacy Plan, distributing small grants awarded through the Education Authorities (EAs), and providing technical assistance to the Solomon Islands Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development (MEHRD).

A sum of NZ\$19.1 million over three years (2016/17 to 2018/19) was budgeted to support SIES. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) signed a Grant Funding Arrangement (GFA) with the Solomon Islands Government (SIG) in November 2016 to implement the SIES. A significant component of the GFA has been to support the Solomon Islands National Literacy Plan through the provision of funding to the Literacy Programme Management Unit (LPMU) within MEHRD. A total of approximately NZ\$6.5 million was made available for this purpose. MFAT negotiated a contract of approximately NZ\$10 million to deliver LEAP from April 2017 to November 2019 through a consortium of organisations: Auckland Uniservices Ltd (lead contractor), the University of the South Pacific Institute of Education (Tonga), and the Fellowship of Faithful Mentors (a Solomon Islands based group of mentors). Further funding from the programme was designed to support technical assistance and a programme of small grants awarded through the EAs.

In addition to core SIES funding, Caritas New Zealand has been supported by MFAT through the Partnerships for International Development Fund (PfID) over the period from 2014 to 2019 to deliver a five-year programme to strengthen Rural Training Centres (RTC) in the Solomon Islands. MFAT contributes \$4 for every \$1 contributed by Caritas. The MFAT contribution over five years amounts to approximately NZ\$2.4 million. The total budget for the programme (including the Caritas contribution) amounts to approximately NZ\$3 million.

Review methodology

The methodology for the review was based upon a Review Plan approved by MFAT. The methodology included an assessment of the strategic priorities of MFAT and the SIG insofar as they apply to the SIES. Initial context to the review was provided by the findings and recommendations of Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) Mid-Term Review of Solomon Islands Education Sector Program 2 Basic Education Component (September 2018), the Review of Skills for Economic Growth (January 2019), and other relevant reports. A further context for the review encompassed a qualitative and quantitative assessment of progress towards achieving the anticipated outcomes of SIES.

Conclusions have been drawn about the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability of education activities undertaken during the three-year period of the SIES. Future directions for New Zealand's support are also considered. The contextual review, an analysis of background documents, and the interview responses of key stakeholders in New Zealand and the Solomon Islands, inform these conclusions. Each area of support under the bilateral programme (LEAP, literacy budget support, technical assistance and EA small grants), as well as the support for Caritas, was considered

separately. The budget support programme also supported infrastructure improvements through the Asset Management Division using the reallocated underspend.

Findings

Relevance

The review has found that New Zealand's support to education remains a priority for SIG and MFAT, and that the activities undertaken were highly relevant to the strategic education plans of MEHRD. The goals, focus, and approach of New Zealand's support, which are linked to the *National Education Action Plan 2016-2020* (NEAP), have an emphasis on basic education and are still strongly aligned with the current needs of the sector. The needs, opportunities and challenges that determined the 2016 design of New Zealand's support have not changed significantly. The budget support modality has had mixed success, owing to inefficient initial management, although improvements are now evident as a result of stronger leadership. The Review Team concluded that outsourcing as a modality provides a more reliable mechanism for achieving outputs than full budget support, given the complexities of SIG policies and procedures, as well as some ineffective MEHRD capacity. The pragmatic and flexible approach adopted by New Zealand remains appropriate. There is no question that New Zealand's support for education in the Solomon Islands is a high priority and is valued by SIG.

Effectiveness and Efficiency

The Review Team approached its assessment of effectiveness and efficiency of the SIES by gathering evidence to assess what progress had been made in achieving both short-term and medium-term outcomes ("effectiveness"), and how efficiently New Zealand's support had been implemented ("efficiency"). Because, at the time of the review, the programmes had been implemented within a relatively short timeframe (one to two years), a decision was made to focus attention on outputs and short-term outcomes.

Although evidence was accumulating that outputs and outcomes were being achieved, the overall results were mixed, depending on the particular programme. At a high level, the Review Team concluded that it was premature to make definitive conclusions about the effectiveness of the programmes. The evidence that informed the Review Team's conclusions was largely qualitative, drawing, for example, on reports from LEAP and LPMU (which systematically explain progress towards achieving outputs and outcomes) and data gathered through interviews with, and self-reporting by, staff at LEAP, MEHRD and the Provincial Education Authorities (PEAs), and individuals involved with RTCs. With respect to efficiency, the main questions raised related to timeliness, since the activities (particularly those under the bilateral programme) had been slow to start.

Leaders and Education Authorities Project (LEAP)

LEAP mentors are working with 85 primary schools across six LEAP provinces – Guadalcanal, Malaita, Central, Isabel, Rennell and Bellona, and Temotu. The LEAP short-term outcomes are:

- a) PEAs support and supervise school managers and teachers to improve their leadership and teaching;
- b) school leaders support improved teaching; and
- c) schools and PEAs engage parent bodies.

LEAP has recorded a number of successful achievements to date, such as the development of School Improvement Plans (completed for the first three provinces of Guadalcanal, Malaita and Central), classroom visits to support the teaching of writing, and activities such as meetings and literacy workshops supported by the mentors. Owing to delays in initiating many of these outputs, as well as

the amount of time needed to train mentors, many of whom were not familiar with LEAP methods, it is too early at this stage to ascertain the extent to which project outcomes will be achieved within the timeframe of the provided support.

The evidence gleaned from available reports, and from the interviews held with LEAP management and mentors, indicates that LEAP activities and outputs have been delivered to good quality standards, and within the budget. Nevertheless, a number of targets have not been met, partially because some targets were overly ambitious or unable to be verified given the lack of relevant data (such as, for example, collection of data relating to teacher absenteeism). The latest quarterly report (November 2018 – February 2019) against the LEAP Results Management Framework indicates that 11 of the 31 applicable Year 2018 targets were assessed as having been “met”, while 20 were “not met”. Twenty-five of the 33 Year 2019 targets were assessed as being “on track” compared with 8 which were “not on track”. The main issue has been timeliness: there have been considerable delays in getting the project mobilised. Work in the second group of three provinces (Isabel, Rennell and Bellona, and Temotu) appears to be lagging behind the progress achieved in the first group of three provinces (Guadalcanal, Malaita and Central). This timing was part of a deliberate strategy to phase in the second group of provinces once the initial work in the first group of provinces had been established.

The strengths of the LEAP initiative include its sound philosophical and research base (that features a firm grounding in Solomon Islands culture and a strong emphasis on the concept of *tok stori*¹), and its use of classroom data and contextual school-based evidence to inform school and provincial improvement plans. Other strengths include:

- the decentralised focus on the provinces;
- the use of mentors to support schools in leadership development and literacy improvement;
- the targeting of leadership both at the school level and in the PEAs; and
- engagement of parents and the community.

LEAP also has a focus on delivering school-based professional development training and support to teachers in classrooms via experienced mentors, with an emphasis on the teaching of writing. This emphasis on writing in schools is yielding literacy results in a good proportion of LEAP schools.

LEAP is a relatively expensive programme and the Review Team investigated whether the investment represents value for money. The Review Team noted the disparity between the costs of fees for technical advisers and the cost of fees for provincial mentors. However, it was also acknowledged that the LEAP leadership had been careful not to inflate salaries for local mentors, given the overall aim of ensuring that the activity can be kept sustainable over time. Although the Review Team observed that the programme may be too expensive to be replicated in its current form across all Solomon Islands communities, it is clear that, through the work to date, a basis has been established that does represent ongoing value for Solomon Islands communities. There was a strong sense emerging from the review consultations that the concept of LEAP should be continued in future if possible, possibly using a pared-down model with more cost-effective arrangements.

The funding modality for LEAP has been working well by comparison with the budget support for LPMU. The outsourced approach has had the considerable benefit of LEAP mentors being able to

¹ *Tok stori* is a Solomon Islands Pijin term that refers to allowing people in-context to story their lives, to use a storied approach to change and or improve themselves; and to story their own futures based on their storied pasts and presents. Within LEAP, *tok stori* is a core mechanism that will enable engagement with teachers, leaders, and PEA staff in a way that enables and affirms them. (*Tok Stori – A Philosophy and Method for People Enabling and Improvement*. Adapted from Sanga, 2015).

access travel funding as required in order to support their schools (unlike their provincial literacy trainer counterparts in LPMU). In the longer term, the ongoing implementation of LEAP support needs to be transferred to MEHRD so that the LEAP initiative is owned by MEHRD and becomes sustainable. To achieve this objective, it may be necessary to consider using an outsourced model to ensure that funding can be accessed efficiently.

In consideration of the slow start to the LEAP initiative, MFAT could consider either negotiating an extension to the end date of the LEAP contract or providing alternative arrangements to ensure that LEAP targets can be met some time after the current LEAP contract end date (September 2019).

Literacy Budget Support (Literacy Programme Management Unit)

LPMU outputs included:

- the development of teaching and learning materials and making these materials available in schools;
- training teachers to use the new curriculum and materials; and
- training teachers to use assessment data.

There is evidence that the first literacy budget support output (teaching and learning materials are developed and available in schools) has been achieved. Nguzu nguzu readers were observed in the schools that the Review Team visited.

The achievement of the second and third outputs (training of teachers to use the new curriculum and materials, and to use assessment data) was more problematic. The use of Provincial Literacy Trainers (PLTs) who are embedded trainers living in the provinces and supported by PLTs in Honiara is appropriate. The implementation of the strategy through MEHRD has not worked as well as it could have, for several reasons. Much of the implementation of the literacy strategy has focused on LPMU: this focus initially overwhelmed the unit, although there has been an improvement now that leadership has been strengthened. The current inefficient processes associated with SIG funding distribution have also been a factor in slowing down progress. The SIG process preventing PLTs from accessing funds in order to travel to schools was identified as a significant barrier. Special arrangements were negotiated in late 2018 between MFAT and MEHRD to address these problems and improve the situation. MFAT will need to monitor these arrangements to ensure that they are working properly. MEHRD also needs to ensure that other Divisions (such as curriculum and assessment), the PEAs, and the LEAP mentors link more effectively with the LPMU so that a more coherent and coordinated approach supports literacy development. Specifically, the LEAP mentors in the provinces need to work closely with the PLTs funded through LPMU budget support.

Other Support for Education in Solomon Islands, including Technical Assistance

Two technical assistance positions were funded by New Zealand: an Education Sector Adviser and a Literacy Adviser. The technical assistance provided to support MEHRD did not work effectively. The recruitment process did not identify candidates with the right relationship skills to work effectively in the Solomon Islands context. There were also issues in relation to the management of the technical assistance. The need for effective technical assistance to support MEHRD remains unresolved. Support from a literacy adviser is still necessary. Possible options include support from a LEAP expert or recruitment of a suitable person.

A small grants facility for Education Authorities (up to SBD100,000 per application) is available to support initiatives at the provincial level to improve literacy. Two grants have been made to date to PEAs. Fourteen applications were considered in the latest round of applications. This facility is a good example of how the work to support literacy and leadership initiatives in the provinces can be supported. The uptake and implementation of these grants should be monitored.

Support for Rural Training Centres (RTCs) Through Caritas

The main components of the START (Strengthening Technical and Agricultural Rural Training) programme include:

- management leadership training for RTC leaders;
- training of RTC instructors in carpentry, agriculture and mechanics;
- financial capability training for women in rural areas; and
- support for infrastructure development in eight RTCs.

Caritas works in partnership with the Solomon Islands Association of Vocational and Rural Training Centres (SIAVRTC). The feedback from interviews with the people involved in START clearly indicated that the support from Caritas has been very effective. The Caritas support has been particularly effective in raising the standards of RTC management and tutors, and in providing facilities and equipment of a good standard. The delivery of funding through an NGO rather than through government systems has been an effective model. However, there is still an unresolved need to improve the standard of delivery in the RTCs. The Review Team recommends that MFAT, together with Australia, develop a joint proposal with Australia in order to develop an appropriate strategy for the technical and vocational education² (TVET) sector that can help determine where investment might be best targeted to improve the quality and delivery of skill-based training in Solomon Islands, including RTCs.

Sustainability

Evidence suggests that sustainability aspirations for the Basic Education Programme could be fulfilled, despite caveats about the ongoing capacity of MEHRD to implement the programmes. LEAP mentors have been working with schools to ensure that school improvement plans are in place, and that sound school planning underpins effective school operations. All LEAP schools now have individual school improvement plans and cluster goals. School Leadership mentors have been working with school leaders to improve their knowledge and skills and with teachers to improve the teaching of writing. School cluster literacy workshops have been held to strengthen teachers' literacy pedagogy. LEAP mentors have also been working with school leadership and with PEAs to improve school community relationships. The outcomes from this work are still emergent.

It will be challenging for SIG to sustain the skills, management capacity and funding for the LEAP initiative without continued external assistance. The recent departure of a critical staff member in a senior management position makes this challenge more acute for MEHRD. The review's recommendations are designed to ensure that:

- there is improved engagement and dialogue between LEAP personnel and MEHRD personnel;
- suitable professional development about LEAP approaches is available to MEHRD staff; and
- a suitable transition plan is developed that can build on the undoubted strengths of the LEAP model.

It will be important that the LEAP initiatives are integrated with the work of LPMU.

² Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) can be considered as including formal provision of TVET, second chance education for school leavers/adults and for technical education provided in secondary schools.

Future Design and Support

The investments already made during the 2016-2019 period to improve the quality of basic education in Solomon Islands should be consolidated and continued. The existing programmes supported by New Zealand focus largely on improving the quality of education in the classroom. A continued emphasis on this priority should be maintained for the next phase of New Zealand's support.

The current New Zealand support for basic education is delivered separately from Australia through the bilateral support mechanism. The option of pooling with Australia should be considered in the next phase of support. Both Australia and New Zealand are currently supporting basic education in Solomon Islands, and pooling funds would ensure improved coordination in a key target area, avoid duplication of effort, and reduce compliance costs for MEHRD.

Other education sectors are also important. Investment in early childhood education is important to lay a strong foundation for the development of children. In order to meet the MFAT goal of social cohesion, TVET is also a particularly important area where improvements are needed in terms of both quality and access. There are particular needs in the rural training sector that would benefit from continued New Zealand support.

The provision of funding support to continue and strengthen the existing activities of SIES 2016-2019 does not exclude possible support for new initiatives. It is still necessary to continue working towards achieving the goal of improved access to education. This may include greater infrastructure support: there is a persuasive case for investment in the junior secondary education level (including support for infrastructure development) in order to improve access and strengthen quality. Years 7 to 9 are regarded as part of basic education.

Recommendations

Basic Education

1. In order to support literacy improvement, MEHRD needs to ensure there is better alignment in its plans, especially in the work of the PEAs, between the LEAP mentors in the provinces in which they are working, and the work of the PLTs funded by budget support in the LPMU.
2. Consideration be given to steps that can be taken in 2019 to support the transition of the LEAP initiative to MEHRD, to ensure sustainability in the long term. Steps to support this objective could include:
 - a. the LEAP Management Team working with MEHRD Senior Management to develop a clear transition plan to transfer the responsibility for the planning and implementation of the programme to SIG. This would need to integrate the strengths of the LPMU and LEAP into a coherent programme that is economical and fit for purpose. MEHRD may consider outsourcing of some components to a partner;
 - b. the LEAP Management Team should ensure greater engagement of key MEHRD personnel (including senior managers and practitioners of teaching and learning) in the governance and implementation of the LEAP initiative;
 - c. to achieve better understanding of LEAP philosophies and approaches, and to promote better understanding of approaches to literacy improvement, those LEAP Facilitators responsible for the PEA Mentors and School Leadership Mentors should work closely with senior MEHRD officers responsible for education to develop and deliver a professional development programme for MEHRD staff;

- d. the LEAP Management Team should endeavour to improve the communication with PEAs about LEAP; and
 - e. MFAT should provide technical assistance to MEHRD to assist in the design and implementation of the next phase of work to follow the LEAP initiative.
3. LEAP Management consider increasing the number of mentors in provinces that have only one School Leadership mentor, to two, in order to increase the frequency and effectiveness of school-based training and classroom visits in remote schools.
 4. In recognition of the slow start to the LEAP initiative, MFAT consider either negotiating an extension to the end date of the LEAP contract, or making other arrangements to provide more time within which to achieve LEAP targets (an extended LEAP termination date would ensure that outputs and short-term outcomes could be more satisfactorily delivered).
 5. MEHRD monitor the proposed new arrangements for access to funding by PLTs in a timely way, to ensure that these arrangements are working effectively and efficiently to support the LPMU's work in provinces.
 6. MFAT monitor the uptake of Education Authority Special Grants to ensure that the funding-decision process is appropriate and that the purposes of the grants are being met.

Technical and Vocational Education and Training

7. MFAT consider continuing its support in the interim for Caritas Aotearoa New Zealand and the RTCs in the Solomon Islands from 1 July 2019 out to 30 June 2020, either through the Partnerships for International Development Fund (PfID), or directly through the bilateral fund.
8. MFAT agree to support the development of a joint TVET design for the Solomon Islands in conjunction with Australia and its relevant local Solomon Islands counterparts over the period to 31 December 2019, for implementation in 2020.
9. MFAT investigate the option of pooling funds with Australia in the next phase of support for basic education.

Future Design and Support

10. MFAT consider the following areas as priorities for future development in its next phase of support:
 - a. continued support for basic education as the main focus of the programme, including a programme that builds upon the achievements of LEAP and the MEHRD literacy plan;
 - b. targeted support for improving access, including infrastructure support, targeted particularly at the junior secondary school levels (Years 7 to 9); and
 - c. increased support for TVET, targeted particularly at support to strengthen rural training centres (aligned to recommendations 7 and 8).

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background

The New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) has invested in Solomon Islands basic education since 2003. This support was initiated under the auspices of the Regional Assistance Mission Solomon Islands following the five-year period known as “*the tensions*” (1998-2003) during which schools were not operational. New Zealand’s early engagement in basic education has contributed to the significant expansion of the education sector and an improvement in education outcomes subsequently led by the Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development (MEHRD).

The current programme, known as the *Solomon Islands Education Support 2016-19* (SIES) programme, was scoped in mid-2016, and focuses on two integrated components targeting the school and provincial level, namely: support to six Provincial Education Authorities (PEAs), and support to literacy.

MEHRD has two guiding strategic documents: the *Education Strategic Framework 2016-2030* (ESF) and the *National Education Action Plan 2016-2020* (NEAP). New Zealand’s support is focused on the first of the NEAP goals: “*By the end of 2020 more girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes*”. In particular, given that MEHRD identified “*literacy and numeracy [...] as the most important area where further progress is required*” (ESF, 2015, p.7), New Zealand’s assistance specifically focuses on improvements in literacy. During the activity design it was considered that, at the completion of this programme, New Zealand should consider transitioning its focus towards improving education in vocational and technical skills.

The SIES programme includes:

1. budget support and Technical Assistance to MEHRD; and
2. the Leaders and Education Authorities Project (LEAP)

The current SIES programme was costed at NZ\$19.1 million over three years and specifically focuses on literacy improvements. The support from MFAT for LEAP is based on a contract for NZ\$9.96 million with a consortium of organisations to deliver LEAP from April 2017 to November 2019: Auckland Uniservices Ltd (lead contractor), the University of the South Pacific Institute of Education (Tonga), and the Fellowship of Faithful Mentors (a Solomon Islands based group of mentors).

MFAT signed a Grant Funding Arrangement with the Solomon Islands Government (SIG) in November 2016 to implement the Solomon Islands National Literacy Plan through funding for the Literacy Programme Management Unit (LPMU). A total of NZ\$6.5 million is available. The LPMU is a new unit inside MEHRD dedicated to supporting Education Authorities throughout the Solomon Islands, and other organisations working in literacy, to build a coordinated programme of literacy education delivery to students. The unit designs activities that support MEHRD’s Literacy Strategies. Three outputs are expected: (i) teaching and learning materials are developed and available in schools; (ii) LPMU training and support equips teachers with the necessary knowledge and skills for using the new curriculum and materials; (iii) LPMU training and support equips teachers with the necessary knowledge and skills for using assessment data.

In addition, Caritas New Zealand has been supported by MFAT through the Partnerships for International Development Fund (PfID) over the period from 2014 to 2019 to deliver a five-year programme to strengthen Rural Training Centres (RTCs) in the Solomon Islands. MFAT contributes \$4 for every \$1 contributed by Caritas. The MFAT contribution over five years is approximately

NZ\$2.4 million. The total budget for the programme (with the Caritas contribution included) amounts to approximately NZ\$3 million.

1.2. Review Purpose

The primary focus of this review is to assess the performance of the SIES (basic education programme) and provide recommendations for New Zealand's support to education (including, but not limited to, the basic education programme) post December 2019. This review is considered a mid-term review as its focus is on the successes and challenges of each of the components of the current basic education programme over the initial two years of delivery. The review also aims to discuss potential options, delivery modalities and priorities for New Zealand support post December 2019. The review has taken a long-term view in identifying options of support that will best achieve 20-year outcomes in Solomon Islands education.

The review included a consideration of the findings and recommendations of Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) Mid-Term Review of Solomon Islands Education Sector Program 2 Basic Education Component (September 2018) and, where possible, avoids duplication. The review briefly considers the impact of New Zealand's broader support to the Solomon Islands education system including civil society implemented education activities.

In addition, the review has included consideration of New Zealand's support to the Caritas Aotearoa implemented activity with Solomon Islands Rural Training Centres (RTCs). In 2014, Caritas Aotearoa began a five-year programme to strengthen RTCs in Solomon Islands, in partnership with the New Zealand Aid Programme, which contributes \$4 for every \$1 provided by Caritas. RTCs are vocational tertiary training centres that provide technical and mechanical skills for young people to earn a living in a country with high youth unemployment and a fast-growing young population. The Strengthening Technical and Agricultural Rural Training (START) programme extends beyond funding to the sharing of knowledge and experience in technical and agricultural areas in which New Zealand has expertise. Caritas is partnering with other NZ-based organisations in delivering its aid programme. Caritas partners include Wintec (Waikato Institute of Technology), Taratahi Agricultural Training Centre, Learn.fast Pacific and the Salvation Army New Zealand. The Review Team's second field visit included a focus on this activity.

Finally, the review included a brief analysis of the sector to help determine where New Zealand support has been, and would continue to be, most effective. The review has assessed the following:

- the relevance of New Zealand's basic education programme in terms of its coherence with SIG priorities and alignment with the objectives of MFAT's Four Year Plan;
- the performance of New Zealand budget support to MEHRD in achieving intended outcomes;
- the progress and effectiveness of the LEAP in achieving intended outcomes, both as a modality and activity, and the value for money and sustainability of the project approach;
- the relevance and effectiveness of MFAT-supported technical assistance in MEHRD to achieve the desired goals of this activity;
- the relevance of New Zealand's support to Solomon Islands education more broadly and how this contributes to a strong public sector and a socially cohesive Solomon Islands;
- the impact of New Zealand's support to the Caritas START programme, and the potential options for supporting RTCs following the conclusion of this activity mid-2019;
- approaches for closer coordination and alignment with SIG and other Development Partners (DPs) including Australia; and

- the levels of funding and support across the education sectors (both from SIG and DPs) relative to performance and impact.

The review also makes recommendations for future New Zealand support to education (including but not limited to basic education) in Solomon Islands.

This review will be used by MEHRD and MFAT to:

- identify priorities that will benefit from NZ’s support to achieve results and improve outcomes for education in Solomon Islands;
- determine how NZ support to education can also leverage improved outcomes for other focus areas for New Zealand aid, specifically social cohesion and youth engagement; and
- inform decisions on the modalities of support to the Solomon Islands education sector and what the future direction and design of this support should be.

1.3. Review Scope

The review covers the current phase of support (known as the basic education programme) while also reflecting on previous phases of support since 2003, providing a ‘light’ consideration of the Caritas Aotearoa New Zealand-led START Activity, and a reflection on how the rural training centres could be supported at the conclusion of this Activity. The focus for this review is all of Solomon Islands and the time period from the beginning of support in November 2016 until February 2019.

The review was undertaken using the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) Criteria to underpin and focus the assessments being made. The key review questions, aligned to the DAC criteria, are outlined below.

Table 1: Key review questions aligned to the DAC evaluation criteria

Criteria	Key review questions
Relevance	To what extent does NZ’s support to education remain a priority for Solomon Islands and the New Zealand Aid Programme?
Effectiveness	To what extent are outputs and outcomes being achieved, or likely to be achieved?
Efficiency	How efficiently has NZ’s support been implemented?
Sustainability	What evidence exists to demonstrate that sustainability aspirations for the Basic Education programme are likely to be fulfilled?
Future design and support	What should NZ do to support education in the Solomon Islands in future?

1.4. Structure of this report

The remainder of this report is structured as follows.

- Section 2 outlines the review approach and results framework;
- Section 3 outlines the review’s findings, organised under the DAC criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability;
- Sections 0 and 5 provide lessons learned and review conclusions; and
- Section 6 presents a list of recommendations.

2. REVIEW METHODOLOGY

2.1. Approach

The approach that the Review Team applied was guided by the review's purpose, objectives, and key review questions, the approach signalled in the Terms of Reference (TOR),³ and MFAT's expectation for a culturally responsive methodological approach.

The Review Team sought to address these guiding criteria as follows:

- A contextual review was undertaken of the strategic priorities of MFAT and the SIG in the review of New Zealand's SIES. The context included consideration of previous reports such as the Australian mid-term review of Components A and D of the Education Sector Program 2 (ESP 2) (jointly referred to as ESP 2 Basic Education Component), the Review of Skills for Economic Growth, and other relevant reports. This contextual review included a qualitative and quantitative assessment of progress against the anticipated outcomes of SIES.
- Conclusions have been made about the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability of education activities undertaken during the period between 2016 and the timing of the review (November 2018-March 2019). These conclusions are informed by the contextual review described above, an analysis of available background documents, and the interview responses of key stakeholders in New Zealand and the Solomon Islands.
- It is acknowledged that there are a range of stakeholders with an interest in education in the Solomon Islands, that these stakeholders are critical partners for this review, and that they will be impacted by the findings.
- Stakeholder voices have been included as part of the data collection and analysis process through a variety of means, including culturally responsive methodological approaches that were unique to Melanesia. These included:
 - interviews;
 - focus groups (such as the Review Team's interactions with the Provincial Education Authority (PEA) Chief Education Officers);
 - the use of the *tok stori*⁴ methodology in interacting with groups of School Leadership mentors (SLMs) and PEA mentors (PEAMs). The culturally responsive *tok stori* methodology (where individuals were given space to tell their story without interruption) was used in the Review Team's interactions with SLMs and the PEAMs.
 - sharing of interim findings by circulating an Aide Memoire after the first field visit; and
 - a presentation and discussion of emerging themes, issues, and preliminary findings to stakeholders at the end of the second field visit.

³ The Terms of Reference for this Review are attached as Appendix 1: Terms of Reference

⁴ *Tok stori* is a Solomon Islands Pijin term that refers to allowing people in-context to story their lives, to use a storied approach to change and or improve themselves; and to story their own futures based on their storied pasts and presents. Within LEAP, *tok stori* is a core mechanism that will enable engagement with teachers, leaders, and PEA staff in a way that enables and affirms them. (*Tok Stori – A Philosophy and Method for People Enabling and Improvement*. Adapted from Sanga, 2015).

Table 2, over the page, provides a summary of the number and type of stakeholders interviewed throughout the course of the review. A detailed list of the stakeholders interviewed can be found at Appendix 7: Stakeholder Engagement List of Interviews.

Table 2: Summary Table of Stakeholders

Stakeholder	Number of people
Alota'a Community High (Non-LEAP school)	5
Auki Primary School (LEAP school)	4
Bitakaula Community High (Non-LEAP school)	5
King George VI Secondary school (Non-LEAP school)	1
Lunga Community High (Non-LEAP school)	5
Mbua Vale Community High (Non-LEAP school)	3
Tamboko Primary School (LEAP school)	2
Breadfruit Consulting	1
Caritas	2
Cognition (Design Team)	4
DFAT	3
Rural Training Centres	2
Provincial Education Authority	5
LEAP	5
LEAP (Focus Group)	21
MEHRD	12
MEHRD (Focus Group)	25
MFAT Wellington	9
NZ High Commission Honiara	3
Ministry of Finance and Treasury	1
Skills for Economic Development	1
Solomon Islands Association of Vocational and Rural Training Centres	6
Save the Children	2
Education Authority CEOs and PEOs (Focus Group)	21
Solomon Islands National University	2
Uniservices	2
University of South Pacific	1

A Review Plan was developed and submitted to MFAT for approval before the first of the two field visits to Solomon Islands. The Review Plan set out the review purpose, scope and structure and provided detailed information about:

- the review methodology;
- the review framework;
- the principles underpinning the review,
- the key review questions and associated sub-questions,
- a data collection framework, including how information would be collected and the documents to be reviewed, and
- a list of key stakeholders who would be interviewed.

The Review Plan also addressed quality and ethical considerations, governance arrangements and risks, and communications and dissemination issues. Draft interview guides, an information sheet and an Aide Memoire template were included. The Review Team worked to select the most appropriate data collection methods for the review that were sensitive to the Solomon Islands context. In developing the Review Plan and drafting this review report, the team has been guided by MFAT as the primary intended user. This included consideration of whether the chosen areas of focus in the SIES and the modalities adopted are still the most appropriate for MFAT to use. The speed with which the review was launched in late 2018, at MFAT's request, in order to ensure that the first field visit was completed before the end of the 2018 calendar year, meant that MFAT formal approval of the Review Plan was delayed until after the first field visit had begun.

2.2. Results Framework

The key objective of this review is to determine the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability of the SIES Programme in improving the delivery of education in the Solomon Islands. To achieve this, the team has made evaluative judgments about the quality of education delivery relative to the goals set out for the programme. As a basis on which to evaluate the achievement of the goals, objectives/outcomes and outputs of the SIES programme, the review has involved a 'light' retrospective assessment of the programme's design, its Results Measurement Table and Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Workplan. The programme design is outlined in the Activity Design Document, which included as an Appendix a Results Framework (incorporating a Theory of Change diagram, a Results Measurement Table and a Monitoring and Evaluation(M&E) workplan). The Review Team understands the programme design has evolved since it was first released. A further relevant design document is the Grant Funding Arrangement (*Solomon Islands Education Support 2016-2019*) between MFAT and SIG (signed in November 2016). The Results Measurement Table (RMT) from the Grant Funding Arrangement is attached to this report as Appendix 8: Results Management Table, with some additional commentary. This RMT is consistent with, although it differs slightly from, the RMT in the original Activity Design. Finally, the Activity Design Document (May 2014) for the New Zealand PfID *Strengthening Technical and Agricultural Rural Training in Solomon Islands* (START) is the original basis for the Caritas support for Rural Training Centres (RTCs).

2.3. Review Limitations

There were limitations in carrying out this review, as is the case with similar reviews, although care was taken to mitigate risks. The Review Plan set out a number of risks that described the limitations for this review, their likely effect, and the proposed mitigation measures.

Some of the limitations of the review have included the following:

- data referred to in this report were provided by various stakeholders. The Review Team was not in a position to validate these data and is not responsible for any misrepresentations in the data presented to it;

- the speed with which the review was mounted did not allow the Review Team sufficient time to undertake in-depth engagement on the proposed Review Plan with MFAT, nor did the time frame allow MFAT sufficient time to set up a Steering Committee and arrange to meet with the Review Team and advise on the Review Plan in a timely way (although meetings were held with MFAT personnel prior to the field visits, and the review design was agreed);
- documents/reports supplied to the Review Team may not have been comprehensive or may have been supplied late or not at all (e.g. some critical documents were not supplied until later in the review);
- there was insufficient time or opportunity in-country for the Review Team to undertake adequate in-depth consultation with stakeholders (e.g. in Western Province), although the opportunity to return in February 2019 meant that some stakeholders who could not be contacted in November/December 2018 were interviewed subsequently in 2019;
- the extension of the timing of the second field visit by a week because of unforeseen circumstances (a delay to the signing of the contract with the Design Team,⁵ and the determination of the timing of its visit to Honiara), while a sensible move, meant there was very limited time in Honiara (three days overlap only) for consultation with the Design Team, who had a very pressured schedule, and could spare only 90 minutes for a meeting with the Review Team; and
- the sense-making workshop at the end of the second field visit did not achieve its objectives owing to unanticipated events. The workshop was originally designed for a small group of 15 participants who were scheduled to work in small groups to tease out themes and emerging issues. The workshop was delayed since the Permanent Secretary had to hold an urgent meeting with scholarships students. When the workshop eventually began, there were significantly more people in attendance and the time available was abbreviated. Because of the time constraints, a decision was made to hold a plenary discussion rather than small break-out groups at the conclusion of a presentation from the Review Team. While the plenary discussion provided some useful observations, an in-depth exploration of issues with input from multiple viewpoints did not occur as planned.

⁵ In early 2019 a Design Team was engaged by Australia, with input from New Zealand, to develop a design for the next phase of support for education in Solomon Islands from 2020 on. The Review Team was asked by MFAT to engage with and provide input into the work of the Design Team. One key input will be this review report.

3. FINDINGS

This section outlines the findings of the review of the SIES based on a review of existing policy and practice. Stakeholder interviews, operational documents, and published reports informed the review. Emerging themes and issues, and interim findings were presented to stakeholders at a sense-making workshop at the end of the second field visit in the Solomon Islands on Wednesday 13 February 2019, and feedback from that process has been incorporated into this draft report. These review findings are organised according to the key review criteria (relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and future design and support), and according to the review questions which were set out in the agreed Review Plan.

3.1. Relevance

This section seeks to address the key evaluation question “*To what extent does NZ’s support to education remain a priority for Solomon Islands and the New Zealand Aid Programme?*”

3.1.1. Education as a priority for New Zealand and Solomon Islands

The needs, opportunities and challenges that drove the 2016 design for New Zealand’s support have not changed significantly. The focus and approach of New Zealand’s support, which are linked to the NEAP’s emphasis on basic education, are therefore still strongly aligned with the current needs of the sector. The review has found that New Zealand’s support to education remains a priority for Solomon Islands and MFAT, and that the activities undertaken were highly relevant to the strategic education plans of MEHRD.

The review has found that New Zealand’s support to education remains a priority for Solomon Islands and MFAT, and that the activities undertaken were highly relevant to the strategic education plans of the MEHRD. The evidence gleaned from the sense-making workshop held with key stakeholders in the Solomon Islands on Wednesday 13 February 2019 was that the key priorities of the Solomon Islands education system, as outlined in the *National Education Action Plan 2016-2020* (NEAP), remain unchanged. The three key NEAP goals focus on improving access, quality and management in the education sector. The focus and approach of New Zealand’s support, which are linked to the NEAP’s emphasis on basic education, are therefore still strongly aligned with the current needs of the sector. The needs, opportunities and challenges that drove the 2016 design for New Zealand’s support have not changed significantly. There is no question that New Zealand’s support for education in the Solomon Islands is a high priority and is valued by SIG.

Evidence gathered during the Review Team’s visits to primary and secondary schools on Malaita and on Guadalcanal emphasised the key challenges still facing the basic education sector in Solomon Islands. Given the inherent challenges associated with geographical distance, isolation and remoteness, many Solomon Islands schools lack the essential pre-conditions and infrastructure necessary for learning, such as clean water and sanitation, well-maintained classrooms, staff housing, electricity and access where possible to communications and transport services. As an example, a school like Bitakaula Community High School, only two kilometres from Auki, the main town on Malaita, faces problems of access, especially in wet weather, because of the poor condition of the roads. Electricity is available only in the staffroom, so classrooms are poorly lit. Specialist facilities (libraries, science laboratories, home economics kitchens) are not available.

The linguistic diversity in the Solomon Islands constitutes a significant challenge for the improvement of literacy and numeracy, with more than 80 home and first languages, pijin as the lingua franca, and English as the official language for delivery of the school curriculum. The current

focus of the basic education programme on reading and writing therefore remains highly relevant. Central to improving these basic skills is the teacher. Well-trained teachers in primary schools (a major focus of New Zealand’s support) are essential to delivery of a quality education.

The different components of the SIES were assessed as being highly relevant to needs in the education sector in Solomon Islands. The LEAP focus on school leadership and improving students’ writing supports fundamental education goals that remain relevant. The focus on literacy in the work of the LPMU is equally relevant. LEAP had fostered effective support for schools through community engagement with parents and local leaders, using tools such as *tok stori*, data collection and information gathering, profiling and subsequent sense-making workshops with the community. These supports serve to contribute to the attainment of relevant goals such as social cohesion and improved education, all of which are central to MFAT’s strategy and four-year plan for engagement with the Solomon Islands. MFAT’s current focus on the priority of basic education is both appropriate and highly relevant, and supports the priority of MEHRD.

The predominant (and appropriate) emphasis through New Zealand’s support for education in the Solomon Islands over the period 2016-2019 has been on improvement of quality in the education sector. There is an equally cogent case for now placing a renewed emphasis upon improving access, since access is a core goal of NEAP. A change in focus to devoting some resources to improving access would be highly relevant, given the data about retention and completion rates in the Solomon Islands school system, and particularly the low completion rates in the junior and senior secondary school sectors. A similar case can be made for supporting the improvement of technical and vocational education in Solomon Islands. These issues are explored further in the later section of this report dealing with Future Design and Support.

3.1.2. Funding approach

The Review Team was asked to assess the performance of NZ budget support to MEHRD. This assessment included an examination of possible funding modalities, and how these modalities might support possible higher-level policy objectives and desirable education reform. Possible funding modality options include full budget support, earmarked budget support, technical assistance, or project funding, or some combination of each of these approaches.

In order to assess the development effectiveness of the current funding approach, the potential advantages and disadvantages of a full education sector budget support modality were examined. These are set out in Table 3 below:

Table 3: Potential Advantages and Disadvantages of a Full Education Sector Budget Support Modality

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More efficient use of resources through pooling of funds • Avoidance of potential duplication of reporting • Reduction of transaction costs involved in aid planning and delivery • Building the capacity of Solomon Islands institutions to deliver services • Recognition of trust in Solomon Islands services • Building of partnerships between SIG and Development Partners • Provision of greater predictability and clarity of funding • Strengthening Solomon Islands management systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A lack of transparency over intended use of Development Partner aid funds • An inability to demonstrate actual use of donor funds • No ability for Development Partners to target resources directly to areas of need identified by them • Possibly issues around the financial management systems of the partner Government

Other funding modalities have both advantages and disadvantages. Earmarked budget support has the advantage over full budget support of allowing DPs to target funding towards identified outcomes and outputs. This modality provides more transparency in the use of funds. Project funding is even more targeted or “ring-fenced” and gives donors a greater ability to track with precision where the funds are being spent. Technical assistance is potentially a useful way of providing necessary technical skills, and for helping to build capacity which may be lacking in the Partner Government. Outsourcing of activities is a potential mode which can be used in combination with either full budget support, earmarked budget support or project funding. The advantage of outsourcing is that it gives the partner government access to skills where in areas where it may have a lack of capacity or resources. Its disadvantage is that may substitute for rather than build capacity.

The current funding modality for New Zealand support under SIES is a mix of earmarked budget support, technical assistance and project funding through an ‘outsourced’ model. The earmarked budget support modality has had mixed success, owing to inefficient initial management, although improvements are now becoming evident as a result of stronger leadership. The Review Team was not confident that a full budget support modality would be appropriate at this time in Solomon Islands, although this approach is a desirable future goal. The Review Team concluded that ‘outsourcing’ as a modality for project funding provides a more reliable mechanism in the current Solomon Islands context for achieving outputs than full budget support, given the complexities of SIG policies and procedures, and some ineffective MEHRD capacity. If a predominantly outsourced model is to be used, however, it is acknowledged that there could be less ownership by MEHRD. For this reason, it is important for MEHRD to be central in managing any future outsourced model, and for its capacity to be strengthened.

The pragmatic and flexible approach adopted by New Zealand (for example, in dealing with underspending and identifying other priorities for spending) remains relevant and appropriate. The Review Team noted that when underspending was identified in the earmarked budget support component of the SIES, some funding was redirected to infrastructure spending (e.g., on the construction of girls’ dormitories on Choiseul) to support access objectives. This decision was appropriate. Retaining the flexibility to redirect funding in this way when circumstances require it would be more difficult under a full budget support modality.

The support for education by New Zealand (particularly the support through Caritas for the RTCs) contributes towards achieving the goal of social cohesion by targeting disadvantaged youth in isolated parts of the Solomon Islands. An example of this is given by hearing-impaired students at the San Isidro Care Centre (an RTC visited by the Review Team) in west Guadalcanal who have clearly benefited from the investment through Caritas in staff training and provision of facilities. The funding approach adopted to support RTCs through the Caritas model has essentially been project funding, using an outsourced model delivered through an NGO rather than directly through a government mechanism. This approach has been relevant and has worked.

3.2. Effectiveness and Efficiency

This section seeks to address the key evaluation questions *“To what extent are outputs and outcomes being achieved, or likely to be achieved?”* and *“How efficiently has NZ’s support been implemented?”*

The Review Team approached these questions by gathering evidence to assess what progress had been made in achieving both short-term and medium-term outcomes. Each area of support under the bilateral programme (LEAP, budget support, and technical assistance) was considered separately. The support from the PfID provided to RTCs through Caritas was examined. Factors that had influenced the achievement or non-achievement of outcomes, and whether support had been delivered as intended, were considered separately under each area of support.

The effectiveness and efficiency of the Results Framework for the SIES (already discussed in Section 2.2) was examined, with a view to assessing both the strength and reliability of the Theory of Change behind the SIES and LEAP, and the appropriateness of the RMT that was used to report on progress for each component of the SIES. A light assessment was also undertaken of the Results Framework for the Caritas project, including its associated Results Diagram (the Theory of Change), the outputs/inputs table, and the Results Measurement Table.

There is not a single ‘Theory of Change’ document or RMT that relates to SIES: there are several. Some of these (e.g. the LEAP RMT) have been changed and modified over time. The various RMTs are important because these documents were the basis upon which reporting against SIES programme outcomes was undertaken. These various documents (‘theories of change’, RMTs, M&E plans) were effectively dynamic “moving targets” that were adjusted during the course of the development of the programme as indicators were changed or modified (sometimes for good reasons). This situation made it difficult for those implementing the SIES to monitor progress, since over time the “goalposts had been changed”. It was clearly sensible to make amendments to the Theory of Change if the original design was not fit for purpose. Ideally, any amendments to the Theory of Change would be made at the outset during in-depth negotiation with MEHRD.

It was difficult for the Review Team to assess the strength and reliability of all the components of the Results Frameworks, since there has been only limited consistency in these foundation documents over the time frame of the review. The Review Team concluded that there was a need for a simpler more manageable Results Framework design, improved coordination and coherence among components of the various Results Frameworks, better integration of programme design activities (for example, between LEAP and LPMU), and improved coherence and coordination of monitoring and reporting. Earlier more extensive consultation at the design stage between MFAT officials, LEAP contractors, and MEHRD officers who were involved in gathering information and reporting against targets would have been beneficial. Further comments on and detailed discussion about the issues connected with the Results Frameworks are included in Appendix 8. In addition, specific comments that relate to individual SIES programme components are included in the following sections.

3.2.1. Leaders and Education Authorities Project (LEAP)

The strengths of the LEAP programme include its sound philosophical and research base (including its grounding within Solomon Islands culture and emphasis upon the concept of tok stori), and its use of classroom data and contextual school-based evidence. Challenges facing the programme include difficulty attracting suitably qualified and experienced people to undertake the role of mentors, and delays in the provision of direct practical support to leaders and teachers in schools.

The outcomes to be achieved by LEAP in each of the six participating provinces are:

Table 4: LEAP expected outcomes

Long-term outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved literacy learning outcomes • Improved PEA management of, leadership of, and support to schools (to achieve improved literacy outcomes) • Improved school leadership (to achieve improved literacy outcomes)
Medium-Term Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved skills and motivation of existing teachers • School managers lead teaching and learning in schools • Improved parent body support for schools
Short-term outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PEAs support and supervise school managers and teachers to improve leadership and teaching • School leaders support improved teaching

- Schools and PEAs engage parent bodies

LEAP is working with 85 schools across the six provinces (Guadalcanal, Malaita, Central, Isabel, Rennell and Bellona, and Temotu) as listed in Appendix 6: LEAP School Clusters - 6 Provinces. The first delivered output was the implementation of PEA Improvement Plans (with a focus on supporting capability-building at organisational and individual staff levels of participating PEAs to support improved school leadership and student literacy learning outcomes at primary level). This output was to be supported through the provision of Education Authority coaches or mentors. The second output was the implementation of school improvement plans that build school leaders' knowledge, skills and motivation to support improved literacy learning and engage parents. This output was to be supported by provision of full-time Principal Mentors who would be placed in the target provinces for at least two years. These mentors will develop school improvement plans for school leaders in each cluster. Input was also to be provided to MEHRD to develop and deliver the Education Authority Small Grant facility.

3.2.2. LEAP Effectiveness

While there is some evidence of achievement of LEAP outcomes, and while progress had been made in the first group of three provinces (Guadalcanal, Malaita and Central) work in the second group of three provinces (Isabel, Rennell and Bellona, and Temotu) appears to be lagging behind, although the LEAP strategy was designed to deliver the outputs in a phased way.

The Review Team examined LEAP reports provided by Uniservices and interviewed key stakeholders and participants in the project both within Solomon Islands and outside the country in order to assess the effectiveness of LEAP.

The Review Team found that the strengths of the LEAP initiative include its sound philosophical and research base (including its grounding within Solomon Islands culture and emphasis on the concept of *tok stori*), and its use of classroom data and contextual school-based evidence to inform school and provincial improvement plans. Other strengths include the decentralised focus on the provinces, use of mentors to support schools in leadership development and literacy improvement, the targeting of leadership both at the school level and in the PEAs, and the engagement of parents and the community. LEAP includes a focus on delivering school-based professional development training and support to teachers in classrooms via experienced mentors, with an emphasis on the teaching of writing.

Although evidence is accumulating that outputs and outcomes were achieved, overall the results were mixed. At a high level, the Review Team concluded that it still was too soon to make a definitive assessment of the effectiveness of the programmes. Some good progress had been achieved in Guadalcanal, Malaita and Central Provinces. Work in the second group of three provinces (Isabel, Rennell and Bellona, and Temotu) appears to be lagging behind the progress achieved in the first group of three provinces. The main explanation for this lag is that the delayed rollout to the second group of provinces was part of a deliberate strategy to implement the programme in a phased way, and that delays in securing appropriate appointments of mentors in these more isolated provinces were contributing factors.

Key challenges for LEAP personnel (as identified in LEAP reports and reported in interviews) included the need to move swiftly from research and the collection of data to the provision of direct practical support to leaders and teachers in schools. Challenges that have hindered achievement of outcomes to date include the time that it has taken to appoint mentors in all of the provinces. The LEAP Management Team has recognised that a successful outcome depends upon having the most suitable people in place, and that this takes time. Not everyone will necessarily find a position in a remote province appealing and, as a consequence, there were delays in making key appointments. As

a result of delays in mobilising the resources necessary for timely delivery, it was not possible to demonstrate early results with measurable outcomes: LEAP needs a longer incubation period and more time to observe the delivery of outputs/outcomes that meet targets.

There were also challenges attracting suitably qualified and experienced people to undertake the role of mentors, mainly because of the relatively short-term nature of the positions. These delays have affected progress in some provinces. Although there has been some inevitable mobility in the staffing of LEAP at senior levels, overall the LEAP senior leadership team over the 2018 calendar year has been relatively stable.

LEAP Achievements to Date

The LEAP November 2018 Annual Report lists a number of key achievements (mainly outputs), including successful induction and mobilisation of school leadership and PEA mentors across the six LEAP provinces, the development of School Improvement Plans (completed for the first three provinces of Guadalcanal, Malaita and Central) and various associated activities such as meetings and literacy workshops that the mentors have supported. Owing to delays in initiating many of these outputs, it is too early at this stage to ascertain the extent to which the project outcomes will be achieved within the timeframe of the provided support.

The evidence gleaned from reports and from the interviews held with LEAP Management and mentors indicates that LEAP activities and outputs have been delivered to good quality standards, and within the budget. Nevertheless, a number of targets have not been met, partly because some targets were overly ambitious or unable to be verified because of lack of relevant data (such as, for example, collection of data on teacher absenteeism). The November 2018 – February 2019 LEAP Quarterly Report included a summary of progress towards achieving agreed outcomes based on the updated LEAP Results Management Framework. Eleven of the 31 applicable Year 2018 targets were assessed as having been “met”, while 20 were “not met”. Twenty-five of the 33 Year 2019 targets were assessed as being “on track” compared with eight which were “not on track”. While some of the evidence used to make the assessments with respect to meeting 2019 targets is anecdotal, and progress has initially been slow, the latest progress report indicates that LEAP expects that many targets and outcomes can be achieved by the project end later in 2019. The view of the Review Team is that the number of indicators in the LEAP RMT is too extensive. Comments from interviews suggested that the extensive number of indicators included in the LEAP RMT was a result of pressure from MFAT, and that with the advantage of hindsight perhaps the LEAP contractor should have pushed harder in contract negotiations to achieve a simpler set of specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time bound (SMART) indicators.

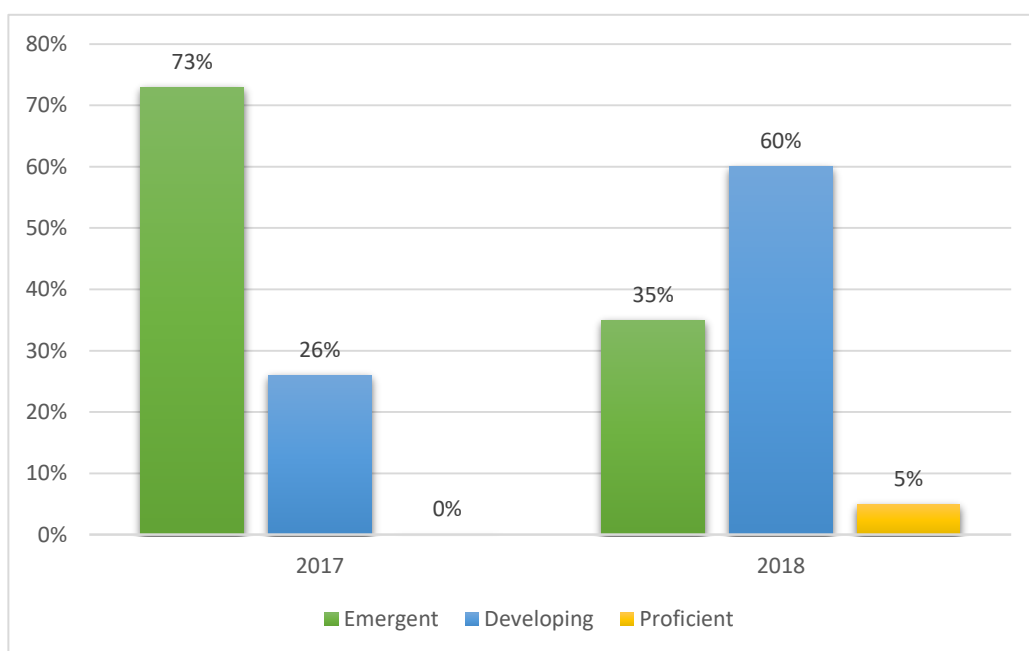
The main issue in the achievement of outputs has been timeliness: there have been considerable delays in getting the project mobilised.

Evidence that LEAP Outcomes are Being Achieved

While it is still too early to draw definitive conclusions, the LEAP team has been gathering evidence to demonstrate achievement of its outcomes with respect to literacy (and specifically with respect to writing). Evidence provided to the Review Team during the second visit included data about the “free write” overall scores for students at LEAP schools. A total of 6,069 “free writing” samples were collected from students in Years 2 – 6 from 83 schools. The quality of the writing samples were graded based on assessments of the written work of students from whom “free writing” samples had been collected in September 2017 and again in October 2018. These writing samples were marked by Honiara teachers who were also Solomon Islands Standardised Tests of Achievement (SISTA) markers, and the results were moderated by the Professional Learning Development (PLD) Facilitator (Schools) in 2017. In 2018, the writing samples were marked by LEAP School Leadership Mentors (SLM) personnel and moderated by the PLD Facilitator (schools).

The writing samples were assessed and placed in one of three categories: “emergent”, “developing” and “proficient”. A clear pattern in the data is emerging of a significant proportion of students moving from “emergent” to “developing” writers between 2017 and 2018.

Figure 1: 2017-2018 LEAP Students' Achievements in Writing



In Guadalcanal province, for example, about 40 percent moved from “emergent” to “developing”; 3 percent moved from “developing” to “proficient”. In 2018, there were higher proportions of Guadalcanal students in the “developing” category at all grades than was the case in 2017; higher proportions of students in Grades 2 and 6 were also assessed as “proficient”. A similar pattern of improvement become evident in the analysis of writing samples supplied by LEAP from Malaita and Central Province. These differences are statistically significant. This pattern of achievement is encouraging and is an indication that the focus on the teaching of writing in classrooms is yielding results. No detailed analyses of results of writing samples from the second group of provinces (Isabel, Rennell and Bellona, and Temotu) were supplied to the Review Team.

Other LEAP instruments were used to provide evidence of the achievement of outcomes. These instruments included classroom observations of students in Years 1, 3 and 5, and *tok stori* results (who attended, and how frequently). The classroom observations of literacy lessons noted that more time was spent on reading and writing in 2018 than 2017; that students were spending more time reading whole texts in 2018; that there was a greater variety of writing lengths produced in 2018; and that there was significantly less ‘copying’. These indicative findings are encouraging.

The Review Team saw tangible evidence (for instance at Tamboko Primary School on Guadalcanal) that the SLM had visited the school regularly, had worked intensively with the Head Teacher and other teachers, and helped the school produce a School Improvement Plan. The staff noticeboard included a simple School Improvement Plan and a chart about the writing process. Teachers in LEAP schools interviewed by the Review Team talked about how their approach to teaching writing had been influenced by the mentors. The changes to the teaching of writing that they commented on reflected good teaching practice. On the basis of these interviews and observations, the Review Team concluded that the SLMs had been effective and, over time, would make a difference to student achievement in LEAP schools.

It was not so straightforward to identify tangible evidence of improvements brought about by the PEA mentors. Greater role clarity is needed for the work of this group of mentors. Much of the present work of PEAs is administrative, and considerable reform and professional development

support is needed if the provinces are to become real engines of change in the Solomon Islands education sector.

Achievement of Gender Objectives

The Review Team investigated how well LEAP support was addressing inclusiveness (as it relates to gender) objectives. Some data was available for three provinces (Guadalcanal, Malaita and Central). As a general comment, boys and girls achieved about the same for LEAP schools in 2017. In 2018 there were higher proportions (which constituted a statistically significant result) of students placed in the categories of “developing” and “proficient” for both males and females in LEAP schools. These general observations, however, masked some quite divergent trends in smaller geographical clusters. For example, in the Southern Cluster of Malaita schools, large shifts were evident of males moving from “emergent” to “developing” and “proficient” in the “ideas” dimension of writing. There were also steady shifts for females. No male students in this cluster were “proficient” in language or encoding, and only a small percentage of female students met the criteria for placement in this category. There were good gains in the “organisation” dimension of writing for both male and female students. Numbers in these smaller geographic clusters were relatively small, and therefore caution has been exercised in interpreting the results. The pattern emerging from these early data nevertheless shows a pleasing improvement in results for both boys and girls.

PEA response to LEAP

In the interviews held during the first field visit, the Review Team heard mixed results from PEAs about the success of the LEAP support. One PEA explained that selected LEAP schools report on their teachers receiving new skills in the teaching of writing, on observable improvements in how children start to read and write, and on how well school Boards were working with schools. However, another PEA noted that expectations had not been met and that communication with the PEA by LEAP mentors had not been effective.

Officers of MEHRD who were interviewed also had mixed views on the effectiveness of LEAP. Most of those interviewed suggested the programme had initiated innovations that would improve student performance. However, a few indicated that there was no tangible evidence of improvements in the quality and timing of PEA reports, that annual work plans were not adequate, and that some PEAs that do not receive LEAP support were doing better than those that were. The LEAP programme, with its focus on leadership and literacy improvement, complements other development partner support such as the work of the Literacy Programme Management Unit. The LPMU officers reported that co-operation between LEAP mentors and LPMU Provincial Literacy Advisers had been variable: in some provinces there was good interaction and sharing, but in other provinces engagement and interaction could be improved.

Feedback from interviews in the second field visit suggested that mixed views about LEAP from PEAs encountered by the Review Team in the first field visit had arisen as a result of a lack of effective communication about LEAP. By February 2019, as a result of better communication about LEAP and improved engagement with LEAP by MEHRD senior leaders, some previously negative attitudes had been modified to some extent.

Pre-Service Teacher Training

Several interviewees indicated that pre-service teacher training in the Solomon Islands National University (SINU) College of Education did not adequately cover literacy. The Head of Education at SINU noted that pre-service teacher education suffered because few of the SINU staff had qualifications in teaching literacy, and that the students themselves enter their teacher training with a low level of literacy. Improved engagement between LEAP and SINU is important for the sustainability of the programme. It is suggested that LEAP personnel actively engage with teacher

trainers at SINU in order to help both SINU staff and teacher trainees improve their knowledge and understanding of literacy learning.

3.2.3. LEAP Efficiency

The funding modality for LEAP has been working well. In the longer term, the ongoing implementation of LEAP support needs to be transferred to MEHRD so that the LEAP initiative is owned by MEHRD and becomes sustainable. It may be necessary to consider using an outsourced model to achieve this objective in order to ensure that funding can be accessed efficiently.

Value for Money

The Review Team examined whether the LEAP model delivered value for money. It was not possible, for the purpose of making comparisons, to derive a simple dollar amount spent per LEAP school, or per province, over the total period of the contract (by dividing the total contract amount by the 85 LEAP schools, or by the six provinces): there are many variables involved and such a simplistic calculation would be neither accurate nor helpful. The Review Team noted that the contract with MFAT indicated that spending on fees and/or salaries for mentors who were working in provinces (eight PEAMs and eight SLMs) for provincial delivery was less than half (43 percent) of the total amount budgeted for fees. The remaining money in the budget for fees for technical advisers (approximately 20 people) included fees for programme governance (two percent), programme senior leadership (19 percent), programme implementation (29 percent), and technical assistance and training (6 percent). Technical advisers providing programme leadership were mainly Solomon Islanders, while the technical experts providing programme implementation support were mainly Solomon Islanders or, like the SLM Facilitator, were based in Solomon Islands. While one of the key technical advisers was based at a New Zealand university, he is a Solomon Islander and travelled frequently to Solomon Islands to give advice.

An interview was held with Uniservices personnel to discuss the issue of value for money. The interviewees noted that LEAP was a design-based research model. It included profiling and sense-making activities as part of the design. Technical advisers worked in collaboration with provincial mentors to identify real needs in schools and communities. The design allows for the collection of evidence from the education system, with the aim of promoting faster development over time through the ownership of data. Some of the expenditure includes the costs of compiling, coordinating and analysing school data as part of the profiling and sense-making activities. The aim is for the activity to become sustainable over time: overinflated salaries paid in the Solomon Islands would counteract the achievement of this objective. The mentors are paid on a scale that is consistent with teacher salaries in the Solomon Islands. The higher fees that are paid to technical advisers are considered to be market rates that are not parallel to fees paid to mentors. Consequently, the fees paid to technical advisers are proportionately higher than fees paid to local mentors.

A Senior Officer in MEHRD indicated that, in his view, the programme could be extended with one additional programme manager and two PLD Facilitators, and with school leadership mentors and PEA Mentors. The Review Team formed the view that the cost of the LEAP programme (approximately NZ\$10 million) is relatively expensive. In its current form it may be too expensive to be replicated across all Solomon Islands communities. The LEAP approach represents a programme in which most of the funds are spent on Solomon Islanders delivering services in the Solomon Islands. The reason for adopting this approach is that developing countries need to set their own strategies for improving their institutions. For example, LEAP project uses the wan tok system to build ownership in the project. Therefore, in a sense LEAP meets the development effectiveness criterion of partner ownership. While it is difficult to provide a definitive assessment of the overall value for money of the project, particularly given the slow start to LEAP, the Review Team found evidence that

most of those interviewed (particularly the mentors) saw merit in the programme, and believed that schools and communities had benefited. That positive sense of accomplishment was shared by the Review Team.

There was a strong sense emerging from the consultations that, if possible, the concept of LEAP should be continued in future, possibly using a pared-down model with more cost-effective arrangements. The technical costs could drop if activities like profiling and sense-making became the responsibility of MEHRD. A key issue is whether MEHRD would be ready to take on the function of leading an extension of the project, and whether it has the capacity to do so.

Unintended Results

Mentoring is a new methodology and a new experience for Solomon Islanders, as is sense-making and working in clusters. Mentors are working with PEAs and schools to improve planning. There is a need to align the Education Authority Annual Work Plans (where the template for planning is controlled by MEHRD) and the LEAP Provincial Improvement Plans. Effective negotiations over plans therefore depend upon effective personal relationships and trust between mentors, PEA officers and MEHRD Head Office staff. On their second field visit, the Review Team heard from the LEAP leadership team that some operational tensions had arisen as a result of differing approaches. The issue of allowances and entitlements was particularly problematic. The LEAP mentors had been paid according to a clear set of University of South Pacific (Institute of Education) (USP IOE) guidelines. The MEHRD allowance rates payable are lower. If a MEHRD officer accompanies a LEAP mentor on a field visit, different rates are payable to the individuals concerned. It is awkward if Chief Education Officers, who are senior in the PEA space, are paid lower allowance rates than the LEAP mentors, even though the mentors are on temporary contracts. These difficulties affect relationships and the building of trust between LEAP mentors and the PEA officers. If LEAP is to transition to come under MEHRD direction in the future, these anomalies need to be addressed and resolved. One solution would be to ensure that only MEHRD allowance rates are used once the current LEAP contract is completed.

The Review Team received reports during the discussions with schools and PEAs that credit for introducing LEAP was due to MFAT and/or to the USP IOE and/or to Uniservices. To some extent this feedback may indicate that the MFAT objective of building community confidence in MEHRD may be undermined as a result of lack of ownership of the programme by SIG. It is important to build the ability and capacity of countries to manage their own future. Hence the critical need for engagement and ownership of the programme by MEHRD.

Possible LEAP Contract End Date Extension

In recognition of the slow start to the LEAP initiative, MFAT could consider either negotiating an extension to the end date of the LEAP contract, or providing alternative arrangements to ensure that LEAP targets can be met after the current LEAP contract end date (September 2019). The Grant Funding Arrangement signed by MFAT and SIG in November 2016 notes that the activity is designed to continue providing support to LEAP provinces after the direct LEAP inputs end. An extension of time would ensure that outputs and short-term outcomes could be satisfactorily delivered by an extended LEAP contract termination date. LEAP Management indicated to the Review Team that a fiscally neutral extension to its contract termination date, based on its current contract, would be challenging. There would be a need for additional funding to cover mentors' salaries after the current September 2019 termination date (assuming the staff concerned were to continue working), and the LEAP budget does not provide for that contingency. If MFAT wishes to consider this idea, any work to either extend the end date of the contract, or to make other arrangements should start immediately and not be delayed, since mentors would need adequate advance warning if their contracts were to be extended. The Review Team therefore recommend (see Recommendation 4) that, in recognition of the slow start to the LEAP initiative, MFAT should consider either negotiating an extension to the end date of the LEAP contract, or making other arrangements to provide more time within which to

achieve LEAP targets (an extended termination date would ensure that outputs and short-term outcomes could be more satisfactorily delivered).

3.2.4. Literacy Budget Support

The Literacy Budget Support Activity is designed to support the MEHRD National Literacy Plan through funding for the Literacy Programme Management Unit (LPMU) Annual Costed Literacy Work Plan. A key component of this support is the provision of Provincial Literacy Trainers (PLTs). Three of these trainers work in the National Office of MEHRD in Honiara, and the remaining PLTs are based in the provinces. Ten Education Authority Literacy Trainers are maintained. The LPMU was established by MEHRD as a result of the provision of funding support provided by MFAT through the GFA. The outcomes and outputs for this programme, which are complementary to the outcomes for LEAP, are set out below in Table 5:

Table 5: Literacy Budget Support expected outcomes and outputs

Long-term outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved literacy learning outcomes Improved PEA management, leadership, and support to schools Improved school leadership
Medium-term Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers use available information to improve classroom teaching Improved skills and motivation of existing teachers
Short-term outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers use new curriculum and materials as designed
Outputs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching and learning materials are developed and available in schools LPMU training and support equips teachers with knowledge and skills to use the new curriculum and materials LPMU training and support equips teachers with knowledge and skills to use assessment data

3.2.5. Literacy Budget Support Effectiveness

The use of Provincial Literacy Trainers (PLTs) for school-based support is a good model. However, the implementation of the strategy through MEHRD has not worked as well as it should have. Much of the implementation of the literacy strategy has focused on one single unit in MEHRD (LPMU). This focus initially overwhelmed the unit, although now the leadership has been strengthened.

There is evidence that the first output (teaching and learning materials are developed and available in schools) is being achieved. New Zealand support has paid for the development of Nguzu Nguzu learning materials (graded readers for use in primary schools) that are a good fit with the Solomon Islands new school curriculum. The Review Team did see copies of the graded Nguzu Nguzu readers in the schools they visited.

The interviews held with LPMU staff and Provincial Literacy Advisers indicated that the achievement of the second and third outputs (training of teachers to use the new curriculum and materials, and to use assessment data) was more problematic. The use of PLTs for school-based support is a good model. The decentralised model of having embedded trainers who both live in the provinces and are supported by PLTs in Honiara is appropriate. Much of the implementation of the literacy strategy has focused on one single unit in MEHRD (LPMU). This focus initially overwhelmed the unit, although now that leadership has been strengthened there has been an improvement. The inefficient SIG funding distribution processes in place have also been a factor in slowing down progress. The main barrier was the SIG process that prevented PLTs in the provinces from accessing funds in order to travel to schools. The approach to provide budget support through LPMU to improve literacy through

school-based support is appropriate and is also sustainable because it supports the national curriculum. However, the implementation of the strategy through MEHRD has not worked as well as it should have.

Other reasons for the relatively ineffective performance of the LPMU include initial insufficient management, and inefficient performance management systems within MEHRD to deal with management problems. The external technical assistance provided was also less effective than required, and relationship management issues and conflicts with staff affected progress. That person is no longer with the unit.

MEHRD needs to ensure that other Divisions (such as curriculum and assessment), the PEAs, and the LEAP mentors link more effectively with the LPMU so that a more coherent and coordinated approach supports literacy development.

Technical Assistance

The technical assistance provided to support MEHRD did not work effectively and there is still a need for effective technical assistance to support MEHRD. Possible options to address this issue include support from a LEAP expert or recruitment of a suitable person.

Two technical assistance positions were funded by New Zealand: an Education Sector Adviser and a Literacy Adviser. The recruitment process did not identify people with the right relationship skills to work effectively in the Solomon Islands context. The Education Sector Adviser position remains unfilled. The objectives of this role are covered to some extent by the Australian funded Education Management Sector Adviser, whose focus is on support for implementation of the NEAP. A recent appointment funded by New Zealand has been made for a role embedded in MEHRD for approximately a year to provide advice on school accountability and improvement. This person started work in MEHRD in February 2019. This appointment will provide advice on some of the territory that an education sector adviser would have covered.

The LPMU staff in Honiara have indicated a need for further technical assistance in relation to literacy improvement, although they are capable of undertaking and managing their own operation themselves. An appointment of an external literacy adviser as a technical assistant who has both the necessary technical skills and appropriate personal skills could be considered by MFAT. It is very difficult to get the right people to work long term in the Solomon Islands. For this reason, it may be better to leave positions vacant rather than employ someone who is not the best fit. One interim option to investigate is whether the support required for the LPMU staff could be provided through an extension of the job description for the School Leadership LEAP Coordinator. This person is currently providing effective support to the LPMU.

3.2.6. Literacy Budget Support Efficiency

Having all the funds delivered through MEHRD has slowed up desirable activity because of the inefficient funding distribution processes in place. As a consequence, the budget was underspent. Changes to processes have been made since November 2018 and this has improved the situation for some provinces.

Temporary officers such as PLTs are not permitted by SIG to operate an imprest account. Because the PLTs could not access funds, they have been unable to visit schools and provide teachers with support and training. They therefore either had to spend their own money to travel to schools, or remain in the Provincial Education Office. As a consequence, the budget was underspent.

The budget support funding modality did not work as anticipated and there were delays in the programme as a result. To remedy this situation, a special arrangement was negotiated in late 2018

between MFAT and MEHRD, allowing PEAs to access up to SBD50,000 at a time, with a requirement that the funding must be deposited in a designated separate bank account, and the funding be “retired” (i.e. accounted for) before a new tranche of funding can be advanced. In their second field visit in February 2019, the Review Team heard that all provinces except one (Makira) have opened separate bank accounts for this purpose. One province (Guadalcanal) has already received its funds. Eight provinces were expected to receive their funds shortly, once the final approval signatures had been received. This “reimbursable” model allows the provinces to receive funds to support LPMU literacy initiatives and will also allow the PLTs to access funding for travel and expenses associated with school visits. The PLTs and provinces’ accountants have been through training in order to learn how to “retire” the funds. Once the original funds (SBD50,000) from the first advance have been spent and the “retirement” of funds has been completed, the next tranche of funding can be delivered promptly from the LPMU funds.

Whether this arrangement is actually working in practice, without undue delays, needs to be monitored and reviewed by MFAT before 31 March 2019. If the special arrangement is working, the roles of the PLTs could be extended for a further year until the end of 2019/ early 2020.

3.2.7. Other Support for Education in Solomon Islands

Small Grants Facility

A small grants facility for Education Authorities (EAs) (up to SBD100,000 per application) is available to support initiatives at the provincial level to improve literacy. Two grants have been made to date to PEAs with 14 applications currently being considered in the latest round of applications. This facility is a good example of how the work in the provinces supports literacy and leadership initiatives. The uptake and implementation of these grants should be monitored, both by MEHRD and by MFAT.

The criteria for assessing the success or otherwise of these grants will need to relate to the purpose of the grant, as indicated in the initial application, and whether the criteria for these grants have been satisfied. The criteria set out in the application form include the following:

- a realistic budget that aligns to the proposed activities and meets MEHRD Finance standards/expectations for costs;
- a clear explanation of how the identified problem/need will be addressed by the proposed solution (the activity);
- a clear outcome statement that describes what success will look like, and how it will be measured;
- a clear explanation of how the EA thinks this activity will impact student learning, and what evidence they have to support this belief;
- a logical and achievable work plan for implementation and clarity as to who will be responsible for ensuring implementation; and
- clear links to PEAP and NEAP outcomes.

Improving access to education

The ability to redirect underspent funds to other priority areas (e.g. to infrastructure spending on the construction of girls’ dormitories in Choiseul) showed initiative on the part of the New Zealand High Commission, and, at the same time, still supported the key MEHRD goal of improving access to education. It also helped to meet the need to provide access to education for girls living in remote areas.

3.2.8. Monitoring and Evaluation of LEAP and LPMU

The Review Team investigated whether M&E of the MEHRD literacy programme was effective by examining the M&E Plans for the main components of the SIES (both the LEAP M&E Plan and the LPMU M&E Plan – the NEAP 2016-2020 Literacy Initiative). The Grant Funding Arrangement (signed 18 November 2016) between SIG and the Government of New Zealand includes a Results Management Table (see Appendix 8: Results Management Table). This table includes activities to be undertaken by LEAP and by LPMU. MEHRD has also developed a M&E Plan which is used to monitor progress towards the achievement of the NEAP outputs, intermediate outcomes and end outcomes. The MEHRD M&E Plan is a very complex and sophisticated document that includes a Theory of Change which has now (appropriately) been simplified.

The Review Team examined what M&E of LEAP had been occurring. The LEAP Results Diagram and the Results Framework provide a basis for monitoring and self-evaluation of progress by LEAP management. A LEAP Annual Report was presented in November 2018 (covering the previous 12 months), and regular quarterly reports are required. The November 2018 – February 2019 LEAP quarterly report included the updated Results Framework, with reports against the longer-term outcomes, medium-term outcomes, short-term outcomes and outputs (results are summarised above on p. 24). The reports indicated that the monitoring and evaluation of results was effective, with the recent reports commenting on the achievement (or not) of agreed targets for 2018 and 2019. In addition, there have been regular meetings of the LEAP Senior Leadership Team and the Strategic Management Team, and regular mentor reflection workshops for School Leadership and PEA mentors, at which forward planning is undertaken and monitoring of progress occurs. Classroom assessments were undertaken by SLMs. Data from these assessments supplied by LEAP indicated that more attention was spent in classrooms on reading and writing in 2018 than 2017, that students were spending more time reading whole texts in 2018, that there was a greater variety of writing lengths produced in 2018, and that there was significantly less ‘copying’. The assessments of samples of student writing were moderated by trained markers. LEAP reports indicate that results of this monitoring and evaluation show real change appears to be taking place, but that change is slow.

No external or independent validation of these results has been undertaken. It would be desirable if use of an external instrument like the SISTA could be used to independently assess these student results. However, caution needs to be exercised in terms of comparing SISTA results from the 2017 cycle with the earlier 2015 and 2013 cycles, because of insufficient linking items (or a lack of linking items) between year levels (Year 4 and Year 6).

LPMU has developed a costed Annual Work Plan (*NEAP 2016-2020: Literacy Initiative*) which is broadly aligned with the MEHRD M&E Plan which includes the latest version of the MEHRD ‘Theory of Change’ document. Annual and quarterly LPMU reports have been sighted by the Review Team. These reports document progress against the indicators in the LPMU Annual Work Plan. Monitoring and evaluation of LPMU activity is clearly occurring, although it would be an enhancement if MEHRD and LPMU management were to review and simplify the instruments that are being used, so that the monitoring process is clarified, simplified, and does not impose undue burdens on staff. A review of the LPMU monitoring reports indicates that while a lot of detail has been supplied, the quality of reporting could be improved. There also appear to be a number of outputs that have not been achieved. In addition, the Results Framework and the RMT in the Grant Funding Arrangement need to be aligned with the NEAP and the MEHRD M&E Plan. It is apparent, however, that the scale and complexity of the NEAP is beyond the scope and capacity of MEHRD M&E resources to effectively encompass all activities.

Co-operation between LEAP and LPMU

Some PLTs are able to work together with LEAP mentors, and travel to nearby non-LEAP schools when the LEAP mentors travel using LEAP resources. This cooperation is a sensible approach, and is

a good example of alignment and mutual support between the two programmes. However, the Review Team noted during their first visit that this cooperation was not consistent. Follow-up with the LEAP Senior Management Team during the second field visit indicated that co-operation where possible between LEAP mentors and PLTs at the provincial level was desirable in the national interest, and that shared planning would be fostered by the LEAP Senior Management as far as possible.

3.2.9. Support for RTCs Through Caritas

Feedback from interviews with SIAVRTC representatives was that the support from Caritas has been particularly effective in raising the standards of RTC management and tutors, and in providing facilities and equipment of a good standard. The result of the leadership and management training had been an improvement in management of resources.

The model used by MFAT to support the RTCs in Solomon Islands is an innovative one that is outside government systems. The niche support provided in this way has been working well, and delivers value for money. On balance, the funding provided to RTCs through Caritas has been implemented efficiently, and meets a significant need in RTCs.

The Strengthening Technical and Agricultural Rural Training (START) programme involves a partnership between Caritas and four New Zealand-based organisations (Wintec – Waikato Institute of Technology, Taratahi Agricultural Training Centre, Learn.fast Pacific (now Breadfruit Consulting), and the Salvation Army New Zealand) to deliver training for Principals and staff in 16 selected RTCs, along with some infrastructure support for eight of the RTCs. The main components of the START programme include management leadership training for RTC leaders, training of RTC instructors in carpentry, agriculture and mechanics, financial capability training for women in remote rural areas, and support for infrastructure development in eight RTCs. Caritas works in partnership with the Solomon Islands Association of Vocational and Rural Training Centres (SIAVRTC).

The Review Team spoke with representatives from Caritas, SIAVRTC, and visited the San Isidro Care Centre, an RTC in west Guadalcanal that provides training for youth who are hearing-impaired. A visit was made to the Don Bosco Technical Institute in Honiara, technically a rural training institute, but possibly the best resourced of all the RTCs. The scheduled visit to Kaotave RTC on the Guadalcanal Plains had to be cancelled since heavy rain made it impossible for the Review Team to travel to the isolated campus.

The outcomes anticipated from the START programme are outlined in the Activity Description.

Table 6: START programme expected outcomes

Long-term outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an increased number of graduates, better able to meet community needs in agriculture and trades • a high-quality network of self-sustaining RTCs across the country; enhanced livelihood outcomes in rural communities • strengthened relationships between RTCs and local communities
Medium-Term Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improved quality of instruction at RTCs • strengthened administration and management systems at RTCs • enhanced income generation in RTCs based on local economic opportunities • improved numeracy and budgeting skills within communities and RTCs • improved community perception of RTCs
Short-term outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RTC instructors have enhanced technical and teaching skills • RTC administrators have strengthened management and governance skill

- a greater engagement in learning through improved RTC equipment and facilities;
- improved access to adult numeracy and budgeting training in rural communities
- increased understanding of community-RTC-economy linkages for stakeholders

Evidence of Achievement of Outcomes

The feedback from interviews with SIAVRTC representatives was that the support from Caritas has been the best thing that ever happened to the RTCs. Support from donors is important in order to raise standards and the Caritas support has been particularly effective in raising the standards of RTC management and tutors, and in providing facilities and equipment of a good standard. Managing the support from Caritas has been a test of the organisation, but both the Board and the Director believed that SIAVRTC had grown in skill and competence as a result. SIAVRTC had managed the available Caritas funding in order to ensure that there was a good geographic spread across the entire country, given the significant needs in each province. While the bulk of the Caritas funding was invested in staff training, the Caritas funding had also been used for provision of equipment and tools to support specialist trade training. Funding (NZ\$800,000) had also been used to target infrastructure needs such as classrooms and staff housing at eight of the RTCs. These funds had been well managed and distributed with oversight by SIAVRTC. A component of the overall funding was designed as a performance-based fund with the object of rewarding schools that were performing well, and assisting these schools to generate sustainable income.

Leadership and Management Training

The feedback on the leadership and management training delivered for Principals, Deputy Principals, bursars, and Boards Chairs has been positive. The training was delivered by Breadfruit Consulting on contract to Caritas. The focus of the training had been on team building, so that a leadership and management team could be developed in each RTC. This approach was important for succession planning. The model adopted by Breadfruit Consulting ensured that several of the key people from the RTC (the Principal, the Deputy Principal, the Bursar, Board Chair, and a representative of the Church Education Authority) attended the 12-day training. The delivered training focused on building the capacity of people, because this aspect was seen as a key need. This training has been effective. The SIAVRTC Board noted that, prior to the intervention by Caritas, the management of RTCs and the associated resources had been poor. The result of the leadership and management training had been an improvement in management of resources. Project management skills, which were formerly lacking, had been enhanced and strengthened.

Improvement to the Quality of Instruction of Tutors

Key outcomes expected from the Caritas support included improved quality of instruction at RTCs and that RTC instructors have enhanced technical and teaching skills. The support from Caritas and its partners such as Wintec and Taratahi has helped in achieving these outcomes, although there is still much that needs to be done to improve the standards of teaching qualifications and skills of tutors in RTCs. The Review Team spoke with a tutor at San Isidro who had spent three months at Wintec, and who had brought back useful technical construction skills that had benefited the organisation (a workshop and a girls' dormitory had subsequently been constructed).

Pre-Service Training for TVET Tutors

A key issue raised in the consultations was pre-service teacher training for tutors in the RTCs. There is a need for good quality training to raise the standard of teaching in RTCs. Most tutors/teachers in RTCs are trained at Vanga Teachers' College in Western Province, an institution run by the Catholic Church. Vanga Teachers' College is not supported by the government, is not well resourced, and is not located well geographically (one hour by boat from Gizo in the Western Province). Its facilities are reported to be poor. The Review Team was not able to travel to Western Province, so has not

personally visited Vanga Teachers' College. The SIG does not appear to recognise graduates from Vanga Teachers' College. A letter to Caritas from the Catholic Bishop in the Western Province was referred to the Review Team, seeking some clarification of the status of Vanga Teachers' College. While some dynamic members of staff at RTCs have come from Vanga, there is a real need to develop an appropriate national policy and to strengthen the teacher training regime for RTC tutors in Solomon Islands. The role of the Vanga Teachers' College, its status and its funding, will need to be examined carefully in that process.

3.3. Sustainability

This section seeks to address the key evaluation question *“What evidence exists to demonstrate that sustainability aspirations for the Basic Education programme are likely to be fulfilled?”*

The current contract for LEAP is due to terminate in September 2019. A key issue was how LEAP should embed its systems, processes and activities into MEHRD to sustain any benefits.

3.3.1. Sustainability for LEAP Processes/Activities

If no follow-up occurs through the provincial education offices, or if an appropriate transition is not put in place after September 2019, the gains that have been achieved may be put at risk. Staff turnover at senior levels within MEHRD also raises some questions about the sustainability of the LEAP programme outcomes.

LEAP mentors have been working with schools to ensure that school improvement plans are in place, and that sound school planning underpins effective school operations. All LEAP schools now have individual school improvement plans and cluster goals. School Leadership Mentors have been working with school leaders to improve their knowledge and skills. School cluster literacy workshops have been held to strengthen teachers' literacy pedagogy. LEAP mentors have been working with school leadership and with PEAs to improve school community relationships. This community engagement in order to build trust in schools is a key objective in school improvement plans, and is facilitated by the *tok stori* process. Progress towards increased community engagement is often slow and can be difficult. PEA mentors are therefore working with PEA staff to improve knowledge and skills. PEA improvement plans have been developed for the PEAs in the six provinces in which LEAP has been operating. Nevertheless, historic issues at the PEA level mean that the changes envisaged by LEAP are very ambitious. If no follow-up occurs through the PEAs, or if an appropriate transition is not put in place after September 2019, the gains that have been achieved may be put at risk.

It is important that the significant investment made by MFAT in LEAP since the contract was signed in 2016 is translated into sustainable practice. The Review Team's assessment, based on interviews with Head Teachers and classroom teachers during school visits, and on data supplied by LEAP in its reports, is that the investment in professional development that has already occurred through LEAP means that school leaders and teachers have learnt new approaches and techniques that have changed their practice. These changes will remain embedded in how they lead or teach. In this sense some sustainability is guaranteed, whatever transition occurs involving LEAP after 2019, or even if the programme terminates in September 2019. The LEAP PLD model, however, was designed as a cascade model where workshop participants would share new knowledge and learning (for example, about the teaching of writing) with professional learning communities. Given the delays with LEAP implementation, there has not been time to implement a cascade model that would involve a wider group of teachers and schools in professional development activity.

Risks

There are a number of risks that could still threaten the sustainability of LEAP. These risks include:

- changes in teacher postings (if school leaders and teachers that have been involved in PLD are shifted to non-LEAP schools);
- that the mass appraisal of teachers initiated by MEHRD in 2018 will run into 2019 before being completed;
- possible disruption or delay to LEAP work following the General Election in April 2019;
- the risk posed by a lack of effective engagement between LEAP personnel and MEHRD Senior Management. This risk has been accentuated by the departure of the MEHRD Under Secretary for Education Authorities for further study and by the time that might be needed to make a new appointment to that role; and
- the temporary employment of LEAP mentors and the fact that they may have to find other employment after September 2019 (if other options are not available) is also a risk to sustainability.

SIG Capacity

It will be challenging for SIG to sustain the skills, management capacity and funding for the LEAP initiative without continued external assistance. The recent departure of a critical staff member in a senior management position makes this challenge more acute for MEHRD. The recommendations in this report are designed to ensure that there is improved engagement and dialogue between LEAP personnel and MEHRD personnel, that suitable professional development about LEAP approaches is available to MEHRD staff, and that a suitable transition plan is developed that can build on the undoubted strengths of the LEAP model. It will be critical that MEHRD takes the lead in any future development. It will be essential that MEHRD is willing to absorb the focus on leadership development and literacy learning that MFAT has been supporting, and that the positive achievements and ways of working initiated by LEAP become part of MEHRD culture. The comments from MEHRD participants at the final workshop held by the Review Team in February 2019 indicated that some staff were open to new ways of working, and that the preliminary evidence emerging from LEAP was encouraging. More time will be needed to ensure that the learnings from LEAP are embedded within MEHRD. MEHRD staff will need to develop their capacity and skills if an effective transition from LEAP is to occur, and if any programme that follows LEAP is to be owned by MEHRD. To ensure that an effective transfer of skills occurs, it is recommended that MFAT should provide technical assistance to MEHRD to assist with the development of a sustainable transition plan.

3.3.2. LPMU Sustainability

In order for the basic education programme in the Solomon Islands to be sustainable, it is essential in the long term that MEHRD is seen to drive future developments.

The sustainability of MEHRD's basic education programme does not depend upon LEAP alone. MEHRD has a strong school literacy strategy, and if the changes to funding arrangements discussed elsewhere in this report can be implemented without delay, the work of the LPMU and the provincial literacy advisers should become more effective. The funding and continuation of the literacy programme is partly dependent upon continued funding from New Zealand or Australia to pay the salaries of the provincial literacy advisers (unless SIG intervenes and decides to fund these roles as permanent positions). In order for the basic education programme in the Solomon Islands to be sustainable, it is essential in the long term that MEHRD is seen to drive future developments. For this reason, and for any transition plan to lead to a sustainable future, MEHRD will need to have a central role, and consider how the benefits of the LEAP initiative and the work of the LPMU can move forward in an integrated way. This includes considering whether parts of any future programme need to be outsourced, and whether technical assistance is needed to support the development of a

suitable transition plan. The recommendations that follow are designed to ensure this central engagement of MEHRD.

3.4. Future Design and Support

This section seeks to address the key evaluation question “*What should NZ do to support education in the Solomon Islands in future?*”

As a general comment, the LEAP activity complements the work being done by Australia to strengthen the basic education sector. LEAP is targeting the improvement of school leadership and literacy in primary schools in the six provinces. The Australian Mid-Term Review in October 2018 recommended that the next phase of the Australian programme should continue to focus on basic education, and that its emphasis should remain on literacy and numeracy.

3.4.1. Challenges Facing the Education Sector

The challenges facing the education sector in the Solomon Islands are many and varied. MEHRD’s three key education goals (from NEAP 2016-2010) are to improve quality, access and management. New Zealand’s aid for education should be aligned with these goals.

Analyses of the Solomon Islands context all agree on the challenges facing the education sector. The needs of the sector, and the issues and challenges facing it are immense. The issues and challenges include:

- problems with the basic preconditions needed for learning to occur, including environmental and infrastructure factors such as access to fresh water and good sanitation in schools;
- absence of any coordinated approach to early childhood education;
- schools in distant and remote locations, with associated difficulties in communication;
- inadequate sub-standard infrastructure (classrooms and teacher housing);
- too many untrained and/or unqualified teachers;
- low student achievement in literacy and numeracy;
- teacher and student absenteeism;
- unaffordability of education owing to required parental contributions;
- ineffective capacity in administration of education, including teacher management;
- children who are not enrolled in school at the appropriate age;
- poor completion rates of schooling, especially through to junior secondary and senior secondary levels;
- examinations used to ration places at several levels of the school system;
- inadequate learning materials;
- ineffective strategic provision for disadvantaged students such as the disabled;
- poor access to good quality technical and vocational education and training; and
- disproportionate spending on scholarships.

Given the range and extent of these issues and challenges, DPs face conundrums in prioritising and determining what future support to education is needed in Solomon Islands. All sectors of the education system (early childhood education, basic education, junior and senior secondary education, TVET, and tertiary education) need more support. Deciding how to determine priorities for

expenditure among these many challenges and competing priorities is acknowledged to be a difficult issue.

Support for Basic Education

The pattern of New Zealand support over the last 20 years has been to target support to basic education. Basic education has been, and remains, the key priority area for investment. It is an essential priority because it is where the bulk of the population is being educated, and because basic education provides the foundation for a child's future learning and development. The investment in basic education is also consistent with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and with MEHRD's own strategic plans (the *Education Strategic Framework 2016-2030* and the *NEAP 2016-2010*). The investment in the period 2016-2019 through the bilateral programme has been on LEAP and the LPMU, with a focus on quality improvements in the areas of literacy and school leadership. This priority is appropriate. Targeting the improvement of literacy and numeracy in the primary school, through a focus on classroom-based improvements and teacher training, remains a top priority. The investments already made during the 2016-2019 period in improving the quality of basic education in Solomon Islands should be consolidated and continued, but with a caveat that donors need to be aware that a long-term time frame will be needed before significant improvements in literacy or numeracy outcomes can become apparent. The existing programmes supported by New Zealand focus largely on improving the quality of education in the classroom. The review's findings support a continued emphasis on this priority for the next phase of New Zealand's support.

Support for Improved Access

The school environment in some Solomon Islands schools is a barrier to access (e.g. poor access to clean water, sub-standard sanitation, dilapidated classrooms, limited access to electricity), with the result that the necessary pre-conditions for effective learning in schools are not met. This challenging environment also contributes to teacher and student absenteeism, both significant issues in Solomon Islands. Investment in improving the school environment is one aspect of supporting improved access to education.

The existing programmes being supported by New Zealand focus largely on improving the quality of education in the classroom. While this emphasis is important, the need to continue working to improve access to education should not be neglected. The Permanent Secretary of MEHRD provided some salutary statistics in his speech to those participating in the Annual Review Meeting in November 2018. He noted that school completion rates in Solomon Islands schools were poor, and that the system was failing its students. He noted that 49 percent of students complete their education by the end of primary schooling (Year 6), that 39 percent of students complete to the end of Year 9. Completion rates to the end of Year 10 (approximately 30 percent) and Year 12 (approximately 15 percent) were progressively lower. These figures indicate that a focus on improving access at both primary and secondary school levels remains an important goal. While the focus of New Zealand support in 2016-2019 has been on improving the quality of education, there is a parallel need to improve accessibility (and specifically student completion rates).

New Zealand could invest, through the next tranche of its funding support, in improving access (including infrastructure support) as well as quality. The development of community high schools with enrolments in Years 7 to 9 was originally envisaged as a way of providing access to secondary schooling for more students, because these schools are closer to students' homes and students attending would not have to board. These community high schools require additional support (qualified teachers and infrastructure support) to function effectively and efficiently. There is a good case for investment in infrastructure at the junior secondary education level in order to improve access at this level, to boost enrolments and to strengthen quality. The Years 7 to 9 are regarded as part of basic education.

3.4.2. Support for TVET (Technical and Vocational Education and Training)

In order to meet the MFAT goal of social cohesion, the area of TVET is a particularly important area where improvements are needed to both quality and access. New Zealand and Australia have slightly different approaches to TVET and there are benefits to considering how these could be better aligned in the future.

Education sectors other than basic education are also important. In order to meet the MFAT goal of social cohesion, the area of TVET is a particularly important area where improvements are needed to both quality and access. There is a large population of unemployed and disaffected youth in the Solomon Islands. Attention to TVET is needed in order to provide skills training to these and other disadvantaged young people and to lift economic growth in the Solomon Islands. Options for investment include further support for RTCs. One option is to extend the support provided to Caritas for a period (say 12 months) while New Zealand works with Australia and SIG to develop an appropriate TVET Strategy for Solomon Islands.

Another option is to work with MEHRD on developing a more practical TVET component in the secondary school curriculum that would provide suitable courses for the school “push-outs” who do not currently attend junior secondary school. Such a “design and make” curriculum would need to be suitably resourced with appropriate tools and workshops, and skilled teachers. Provision of a more suitable curriculum may encourage students, who have a more practical bent and prefer “learning by doing”, to remain in school and develop skills that may lead to employment, thereby assisting in improving access and lifting school completion rates.

Skills for Economic Growth

The Review Team met with representatives from the DFAT and Skills for Economic Growth (S4EG), during their second visit to discuss developments in TVET in the Solomon Islands, and the relationship of Australian initiatives in this space to the work undertaken by Caritas.

With its S4EG project, Australia has taken a different approach to the RTCs than New Zealand with its support for Caritas. Australia has focused on a “leader-feeder” model that targets the need to develop provincial technical institutes in the provinces. There is an acknowledged need for better quality TVET in the provinces. Australia initially had two major partners that were effectively rural training centres that are being upgraded to pilot technical institutes, one in Malaita, and one in Western Province (Tabaca). There has been a significant investment in upgrading the facilities and improving the quality of instruction offered in these two institutes. Australia has now moved from two pilots to seven, and SIG has, in addition, supported 200 vocational scholarships for students in six of these seven technical institutes (RTCs).

This support complements a wider trend across DFAT’s bilateral programme to increase support to civil society in addition to the institutions of state. Niche support should continue to smaller-scale projects targeting innovations or particular outcomes that may be better pursued outside of government systems. This support has previously been implemented by civil society partners such as Caritas.

The independent Mid-Term Review (MTR) of Australia’s Education Support Program Two in September 2018 confirmed that support through government systems (complemented by technical assistance) provides value for money and is the most efficient and effective way to reach the most children and support long-term, systemic, sustainable change. The MTR recommended this modality continue and be complemented by support to smaller-scale projects targeting innovations or particular outcomes (such as strengthened parental/community support for and demand for education) that may be better pursued outside government systems.

That review also recommended that DFAT extend the current phase of the S4EG programme for 12 months, to allow time to assess the best model moving forward. This would allow for one more year of implementation to consolidate outcomes and obtain more clarity on APTC's work programme, and the corresponding SIG budget, before commencing on a design and tendering process in early 2020. The Review Team understands that no decision has yet been taken by DFAT on the recommendation made in the S4EG review report to extend the programme for 12 months while the development of a strategic plan for TVET in the Solomon Islands is undertaken. The DFAT decision on this issue may be a material factor in MFAT's decision whether or not to pursue an extension of the Caritas programme for 12 months.

Differences Between NZ and Australian Approaches

The approach taken by Australia in the S4EG programme focuses on building up the skills and competence of a selected few (initially two) model technical institutes on the grounds that the quality of RTCs was low and establishing a benchmark for quality TVET in the Solomon Islands was necessary. New Zealand, however, through Caritas, has focused on providing support to a larger number of RTCs since it recognised that there were significant vocational and training needs across the entire country, especially in isolated, remote and inaccessible areas. The key policy issue is how support is best delivered to improve the quality of technical and vocational education and training. Should resources be focussed on improving a limited number of providers and increasing their standards? Or is it more appropriate to spread available resources so that the acknowledged needs of more RTCs around the country can be met? Can both objectives be met? There is a strong case for a co-ordinated approach between Australia and New Zealand in order to support and improve standards in RTCs.

A complicating factor is the work that is concurrently going on to develop the Solomon Islands Tertiary Education and Skills Authority (SITESA). Legislation has been passed to establish this body, with a role to monitor and develop the standards of qualifications and programmes in the Solomon Islands, but no chief executive has yet been appointed. It is likely to be some time before this body is able to be up and running.

Need for TVET Support and Strategy Development

There is currently a need for the development of an effective TVET strategy in Solomon Islands. No such strategy exists at present and the current TVET section in MEHRD has ineffective capacity. There is a strong case for better coordination between Australia and New Zealand in the design of an appropriate TVET strategy, working closely with MEHRD. Australia appears to be open to the possibility of working closely with New Zealand and producing a joint design over the next 12 months. This approach seems sensible and constructive.

On that basis, it is recommended that New Zealand consider continuing its support in the interim for Caritas and the RTCs in the Solomon Islands, either through the PfID, or directly through the bilateral fund. An extension of funding for the Caritas project for another 12 months (out to 30 June 2020) would ensure much-needed support could be continued for the RTCs. While the current funding for START is concluding mid-year 2019, the MFAT Partnerships Team will be introducing a new funding mechanism for NZ civil society organisations like Caritas. This arrangement is referred to as "Negotiated Partnerships". Caritas will have the opportunity to negotiate a programme with MFAT which could include a second phase to the START programme. If this funding mechanism was to be pursued, it would need to be aligned with the needs of the sector and SIG/DFAT's current work. To achieve this alignment, it is recommended that MFAT consider developing with Australia and the relevant local Solomon Islands counterparts an agreed joint TVET design for the Solomon Islands.

3.4.3. Other considerations for future design and support

Other areas of education require support including early childhood education, education opportunities for children with disabilities, strengthening secondary school and tertiary education provision, and raising the literacy and numeracy skills of teacher trainees.

Other improvement opportunities include areas of the education sector that have not been given the attention they deserve. Some examples include the following:

- support for field-based training of early childhood education teachers (Save the Children is doing good work in Choiseul Province in training early childhood teachers, but this activity occurs in only one of ten provinces);
- support for the education of children with physical, emotional or intellectual disabilities, including supporting inclusive education of disadvantaged children in mainstream classes;
- strengthening both junior secondary and senior secondary education;
- strengthening tertiary education; and
- strengthening the literacy and numeracy skills of pre-service teacher trainees.

The visit to the Faculty of Education at SINU by the Review Team highlighted the issue of inadequate literacy skills of trainees accepted into the pre-service teacher training courses, and the problem of insufficient skilled staff in the faculty with in-depth knowledge and teaching skills in the field of literacy. Technical assistance from an expert lecturer in teaching reading and writing would help strengthen the staffing of the Faculty of Education by working cooperatively to provide professional development and upgrade the skills of other staff, and at the same time help the university to improve the literacy skills of pre-service teacher trainees.

3.4.4. Delivery Modality

The mixed-mode approach to the funding delivery modality has been pragmatic and supported flexibility to redirect funding where there has been underspend in one area and shortage in others. The option of pooling with Australia should be considered in the next phase of support to improve the effectiveness of targeted budget support.

The current delivery modality for funding through the period 2016-2019 has been a pragmatic managed mix of earmarked budget support (support for the national literacy plan), project funding (LEAP), technical assistance, and a small grants facility. The funding is directed to support of the NEAP, and this plan provides appropriate strategic direction for the Solomon Islands education sector. The link to the NEAP also ensures that New Zealand's funding is supporting the work of the MEHRD who are in the "driving seat". When underspending has been evident, there has been flexibility to direct available funds towards other priorities such as infrastructure spending (the construction of a girls' dormitory in Choiseul). The approach adopted has been sensible, and, because it has been both realistic and pragmatic, it has worked.

Because of concerns about capacity in MEHRD, and because of challenges that MEHRD still faces in information collection, information management, analysis, and monitoring, full budget support with a performance component is not recommended at this stage for the next tranche of funding. Close monitoring and management of earmarked budget support is the recommended delivery option for the future.

The current New Zealand support for basic education is delivered separately from Australia through the bilateral support mechanism. The option of pooling with Australia should be considered in the

next phase of support. The reason for considering this option is that both Australia and New Zealand are currently supporting basic education in Solomon Islands, and pooling funds would enable improved coordination in a key target area, avoid duplication of effort, and reduce compliance costs for MEHRD. If pooling is not agreed to, close coordination with Australia is essential. It is likely that targeted budget support will be more effective in the Solomon Islands than a widely disbursed model, so that any combined approach with Australia may need to ring-fence New Zealand's contribution if specific targeting is required.

Social Cohesion and Youth Engagement

Investment in education can help to foster community cohesion and a sense of belonging among young people. Other important MFAT priority areas for Solomon Islands include supporting goals of national identity and youth engagement. The education sector can support national identity through a high quality curriculum that respects and values Solomon Islands culture and values, in areas such as reading (using the Nguzu Nguzu readers), social studies, history and geography (understanding and appreciating the unique history and geography of each province of the Solomon Islands), science (including understanding and valuing the unique environment, biodiversity, and flora and fauna of the country), and arts and crafts, including carving, dance, song and movement. The education sector could take a lead in showcasing and valuing both at home and abroad the unique contribution that Solomon Islands culture makes to the life of the country. New Zealand may be able to make a modest contribution to support of such celebrations.

The SIES is directly linked to goals of social cohesion and national identity. Literacy support provides opportunities to support and develop culture, language and identity (and social cohesion by extension). Solomon Islands culture and identity is developed and fostered at an early age in school classrooms through a strong foundation in language development, and is continued throughout the years of schooling. An effective school curriculum is a key instrument in the development and appreciation of Solomon Islands culture and in nation-building, and the SIES has played a key role through its practical support for basic objectives in the national curriculum.

The education sector can also play a critical role in securing youth engagement in positive activity, both for those within and outside the formal institutions. Increasing numbers of youth who are dissatisfied or marginalised create a social risk for Solomon Islands society. Investment in strengthening the RTCs and/or technical institutes will be particularly important so that disadvantaged youth "pushed out" from the formal education system can gain access to useful good quality training. Engaging more young people in constructive activity that builds their skills and helps them contribute to society is a positive way of ensuring social cohesion.

Future Directions

On balance, this review has found that New Zealand should continue to support the activities that have been supported over the period 2016-2019 and should consider cautious expansion into new areas of the education sector. The focus on school leadership and on improving literacy in basic education is appropriate. Strengthening the capacity of the PEAs and clarifying their roles is critically important if the provinces are to become real engines of change and improvement. The investment in LEAP will need to be refined to ensure that MEHRD has a central role in any future activity, and any future activity should build on the effective professional development which has already occurred. The expertise of already trained mentors should be drawn upon in any future programme, with a view to using a cascade model that would involve more Head Teachers and teachers in the next phase, and possibly those provinces that have not been included to date. In the next design phase, the work initiated by LEAP should be integrated with the work of the LPMU. The current focus on strengthening the teaching of writing in schools is admirable, and should continue.

This support for continuing existing activities does not exclude possible support for new initiatives, such as some of those described above. As a general principle, investing in fewer activities, following through on a long-term basis and supporting them until measurable progress can be observed is the best policy. One observation of the Review Team is that if reform and change is too frequent, and if there are too many staffing changes at higher levels in institutions (either at MEHRD, SINU or MFAT), stability and continuity can be undermined, and lapses of institutional memory can occur. One example was the significant four-year investment by New Zealand in strengthening the curriculum of the School of Education at the Solomon Islands College of Higher Education (SICHE) through a partnership between that institution (the forerunner of SINU) and the University of Waikato. That programme was reviewed in 2011.⁶ The findings of that review seemed to have now been lost. This is not to say that change and renewal should not occur (those events occurred eight to 10 years ago, after all) but, as George Santanyana once said, “those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it”.

The Review Team’s recommendation is that MFAT should consider the following areas as priorities for future development in its next phase of support:

- support for basic education, including a programme that builds upon the achievements of LEAP and the MEHRD literacy plan;
- support for improving access, including infrastructure support, targeted particularly at the junior secondary school levels (Years 7 to 9); and
- support for technical and vocational education and training, targeted particularly at support to strengthen rural training centres

⁶ Vince Catherwood & Lester Taylor, *Evaluation of the School of Education (Solomon Islands College of Higher Education) and the University of Waikato Partnership*, NZAID, 30 June 2011.

4. LESSONS LEARNED

The key lessons learned from the Review of Solomon Islands Education Support 2016-2019 to inform future funding support for the education sector are related to the need for an adequate time frame to implement new approaches; the need to recognise in-country capacity; and the need for improved and ongoing communication about the goals and objectives of new activities.

The lessons learned can be summarised as follows:

- Take the time that is necessary at the outset of a major programme to plan well. Contractors, MFAT and SIG agencies all need to start planning early, acknowledge that recruitment processes in the Solomon Islands take time to deliver a good result, allow time for SIG processes to be completed, and be realistic about implementation time frames. Experience suggests that the implementation of a major initiative such as LEAP and/or literacy support needs a time frame of at least five years before the benefits begin to become apparent.
- Start with small manageable steps so that initial progress can be measured, and plan activities that can be phased in gradually in order to achieve sustainability. Lack of attention to in-country capacity, adoption of overly ambitious targets, and insufficient prior analysis of the country context are recurring lessons in the Pacific.
- Achievement of improved literacy outcomes in the complex Solomon Islands language environment is challenging and will take considerable time to show measurable benefits on external tests of literacy. It is necessary to establish intermediate outcomes and process indicators (e.g. successful completion of professional development programmes by teachers) that are measurable indications of progress towards goals, as well as end outcomes.
- Ensure there is effective and timely communication with all key stakeholders, and transparency about new initiatives and about the expectations with respect to performance of those involved in implementing the initiative.
- Effective co-ordination with Provincial Education Authorities in the Solomon Islands is essential if new initiatives are to reach remote and hard to access schools and rural training centres, and make an enduring impact. Establishing role clarity of all partners, including mentors and PEAs, is an essential pre-requisite for successful implementation.
- Regular visits and/or feedback to schools and rural training centres by mentors or training officers to follow up initial professional development training is a good strategy for measuring progress, for setting new goals, and for gaining and keeping commitment by project participants to achieving anticipated outcomes.
- Adoption of new models and approaches such as the LEAP design-based approach (focusing on mentoring, *tok stori*, profiling and reprofiling, and sense-making) inevitably takes time to be understood and appreciated, and needs to be balanced with initial “quick wins” that show evidence of small measurable achievements, so that both participants and funding agencies can see value in what is being undertaken. Mentors told the Review Team that the feedback to school communities, which is an explicit part of the LEAP reprofiling and sense-making processes, has improved community engagement and has helped to build motivation and performance in schools.

5. REVIEW CONCLUSIONS

The New Zealand support to education in Solomon Islands has had mixed success to date. Nevertheless, the SIES programme remains a high priority for SIG and MFAT. The goals, focus, and approach of New Zealand's support (specifically, on basic education) remains entirely appropriate, and its approach is well aligned with the priorities of MEHRD. The provision of technical assistance to support MEHRD is necessary, but implementation problems have prevented the assistance provided to date from being as effective as it should have been. There is a need to ensure that MEHRD has (and is seen to have) a central role in the next phase of education support post-2019.

The mixed-modality funding (project funding for LEAP, earmarked budget support for literacy improvement, and provision of technical assistance) is a pragmatic response to needs in the Solomon Islands, given MEHRD challenges in managing programmes, and improving capacity. The flexibility of the approach adopted has been its strength. The ability to redirect underspent funds to other priority areas (e.g. to infrastructure spending on the construction of girls' dormitories in Choiseul) showed initiative on the part of the New Zealand High Commission, and still supported the key MEHRD goal of improving access to education.

Although the LEAP initiative has been slow to mobilise, the feedback of data gathered and provided back to school communities has been well received. While it is still too soon to see definitive evidence of achievement of expected LEAP outcomes, such as movement in national SISTA results, there have been some positive developments. Evidence is emerging that the focus on teaching writing is bringing results in LEAP schools, where there has been a 40 percent increase in the number of students classified as "developing" writers (by comparison with the numbers of those previously classified in the lower category of "emergent" writers). The profiling of schools and use of 'sense-making' and *tok stori* as techniques for enabling communities to discuss their needs and perspectives is empowering, and was reflected in the interviews by reports of greater community commitment to their schools. These techniques (particularly 'sense-making' and *tok stori*) have a sound basis in Solomon Islands culture, and are slowly bringing results.

The work of the SLMs especially in LEAP schools in the first three provinces of Guadalcanal, Malaita and Central Provinces, is bringing tangible results such as the development of school improvement plans and teacher professional development focusing on the teaching of writing. The regular visits to schools by SLMs provide opportunities for regular feedback and monitoring of progress. The Provincial Education Authority Mentors have had mixed success. While there have been anecdotal stories of success through their interventions, these mentors need improved role clarity in order to demonstrate the difference they are making. Aligning and integrating LEAP provincial education plans with official PEA work plans has been a challenge.

The budget support for LPMU, designed to improve literacy, is a positive strategy, but has not worked as well as it might have. Initial slow progress was a result of system and process barriers that have prevented funding being accessed by PLTs to do their work in the provinces. The special arrangements that have now been negotiated hold the promise of delivering better results. Whether these arrangements are actually working needs to be monitored by MFAT by 30 March 2019, and further interventions undertaken if there are still barriers preventing PLTs from travelling to schools. It is important that LEAP mentors and PLTs work together in a complementary way to reinforce common literacy goals at the provincial level. Although the interviews in the Review Team's first field visit suggested there was some variability in approach in different provinces, evidence from the second visit indicated that better communication and cooperation at the local level is now occurring.

The five-year programme of support through the MFAT PfID delivered by Caritas Aotearoa New Zealand, in partnership with SIAVRTC, has been valued by RTCs. Caritas initially supported eight RTCs and then extended its support to 16 RTCs because of the evident needs. The main components

of the START programme included management leadership training for RTC leaders, training of RTC instructors in carpentry, agriculture and mechanics, financial capability training for rural women, and support for infrastructure development in eight RTCs. These programmes have been generally successful in strengthening the skills and capacity of the target RTCs, and have delivered value for money. However, much more remains to be done to raise standards throughout the network of RTCs in Solomon Islands.

The support provided by MFAT to RTCs in Solomon Islands is innovative in the sense that it is delivered not through government channels but through civil society/ an NGO (Caritas). The Australian MTR in October 2018 recommended that niche support continue to smaller-scale projects targeting innovations or particular outcomes that may be better pursued outside government systems. The strategy of support through an NGO is working to build up skills in selected RTCs.

Australia's recently completed (January 2019) Review of Skills for Development has recommended that DFAT should extend the current phase of the S4EG programme for 12 months (during 2019), to allow time to assess the best model moving forward. This proposed 12-month extension would allow for one more year of implementation to consolidate outcomes before commencing on a design and tendering process in early 2020.

Because of the urgent need for ongoing support in the RTC sector, MFAT could consider continuing its support in the interim for Caritas and the RTCs in the Solomon Islands from 1 July 2019 out to 30 June 2020, either through the PfID, or (if no funding is available from that source) directly through the bilateral fund. Such an interim arrangement would ensure that support for RTCs could continue while other arrangements are put in place to develop a more coherent strategy for the RTC sector.

Investment in the TVET sector is important in order to support MFAT's goal of social cohesion. New Zealand and Australia have both been supporting RTCs, along parallel tracks. There is scope for improved cooperation and coordination between New Zealand and Australia in supporting TVET in Solomon Islands. While effective coordination (and policy dialogue) across education sub-sectors can be achieved without sub-sectors being included in one design document, an integrated approach would assist planning and would be likely to deliver better results. The current coordinated New Zealand and Australian Design Team led by Cognition Education is working on a joint design for basic education only in Solomon Islands (TVET and tertiary education is excluded in the Design Team's terms of reference). If MFAT was to work together with Australia and SIG counterparts (including industry, SINU and the RTC sector) in developing a long-term integrated strategy for improvement of TVET in both RTCs and SINU, such cooperation would help to enhance skills training and ensure a more integrated and coherent approach to the development of the whole education sector in the Solomon Islands.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Basic Education

1. In order to support literacy improvement, MEHRD needs to ensure there is better alignment in its plans, especially in the work of the PEAs, between the LEAP mentors in the provinces in which they are working, and the work of the PLTs funded by budget support in the LPMU.
2. Consideration be given to steps that can be taken in 2019 to support the transition of the LEAP initiative to MEHRD, to ensure sustainability in the long term. Steps to support this objective could include:
 - a. the LEAP Management Team working with MEHRD Senior Management to develop a clear transition plan to transfer the responsibility for the planning and implementation of the programme to SIG. This would need to integrate the strengths of the LPMU and LEAP into a coherent programme that is economical and fit for purpose. MEHRD may consider outsourcing of some components to a partner;
 - b. the LEAP Management Team should ensure greater engagement of key MEHRD personnel (including senior managers and practitioners of teaching and learning) in the governance and implementation of the LEAP initiative;
 - c. to achieve better understanding of LEAP philosophies and approaches, and to promote better understanding of approaches to literacy improvement, those LEAP Facilitators responsible for the PEA Mentors and School Leadership Mentors should work closely with senior MEHRD officers responsible for education to develop and deliver a professional development programme for MEHRD staff;
 - d. the LEAP Management Team should endeavour to improve the communication with PEAs about LEAP; and
 - e. MFAT should provide technical assistance to MEHRD to assist in the design and implementation of the next phase of work to follow the LEAP initiative.
3. LEAP Management consider increasing the number of mentors in provinces that have only one School Leadership mentor, to two, in order to increase the frequency and effectiveness of school-based training and classroom visits in remote schools.
4. In recognition of the slow start to the LEAP initiative, MFAT consider either negotiating an extension to the end date of the LEAP contract, or making other arrangements to provide more time within which to achieve LEAP targets (an extended LEAP termination date would ensure that outputs and short-term outcomes could be more satisfactorily delivered).
5. MEHRD monitor the proposed new arrangements for access to funding by PLTs in a timely way, to ensure that these arrangements are working effectively and efficiently to support the LPMU's work in provinces.
6. MFAT monitor the uptake of Education Authority Special Grants to ensure that the funding-decision process is appropriate and that the purposes of the grants are being met.

Technical and Vocational Education and Training

7. MFAT consider continuing its support in the interim for Caritas Aotearoa New Zealand and the RTCs in the Solomon Islands from 1 July 2019 out to 30 June 2020, either through the Partnerships for International Development Fund (PfID), or directly through the bilateral fund.

8. MFAT agree to support the development of a joint TVET design for the Solomon Islands in conjunction with Australia and its relevant local Solomon Islands counterparts over the period to 31 December 2019, for implementation in 2020.
9. MFAT investigate the option of pooling funds with Australia in the next phase of support for basic education.

Future Design and Support

10. MFAT consider the following areas as priorities for future development in its next phase of support:
 - a. continued support for basic education as the main focus of the programme, including a programme that builds upon the achievements of LEAP and the MEHRD literacy plan;
 - b. targeted support for improving access, including infrastructure support, targeted particularly at the junior secondary school levels (Years 7 to 9); and
 - c. increased support for TVET, targeted particularly at support to strengthen rural training centres (aligned to recommendations 7 and 8).

APPENDIX 1: TERMS OF REFERENCE

Terms of Reference:

Review of Solomon Islands Education Support 2016 -2019

Overview

This document specifies the Terms of Reference (TOR) for the review of Solomon Islands Education Support 2016-2019

This TOR has been developed to obtain proposals to meet MFAT's requirements for the selection of an independent and suitably qualified review team. The final description of the Services that will be included in the contract will be confirmed through negotiation with the successful review team.

Background

Basic Education Programme

The New Zealand Aid Programme has invested in the Solomon Islands' basic education since 2003. This support was initiated under the auspices of the Regional Assistance Mission Solomon Islands following the five- year period known as "*the tensions*" (1998-2003) in which schools were not operational. New Zealand's early engagement in basic education has contributed to the significant expansion of the education sector and improvement in education outcomes that the Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development (MEHRD) has subsequently led.

The current programme was scoped in mid 2016, and focuses on two integrated components targeting the school and provincial level being: support to six of the Provincial Education Authorities (PEA), and to literacy.

The programme comprises of:

- 1) budget support and Technical Assistance to Ministry of Education and Resource Development, and
- 2) Leaders and Education Authorities Project (LEAP)

The current programme was costed at NZ\$19.1 million over three years and specifically focuses on literacy improvements.

Review purpose

The primary focus of the review is to assess the performance of Solomon Islands Education Support 2016 - 2019 (basic education programme) and provide recommendations for New Zealand support to education (including but not limited to the basic education programme) post December 2019.

The review will consider the success and challenges of each of the components of the current basic education programme and discuss potential options, delivery modalities and priorities for New Zealand support post December 2019. The review will take a long term view in identifying options of support that will best achieve 20 year outcomes in Solomon Islands education.

The review will consider the findings and recommendations in Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Mid-Term Review of Solomon Islands Education Sector Program 2 Basic Education Component (September 2018) and where possible, avoid duplication.

The review will briefly consider the impact of New Zealand's broader support to the Solomon Islands education system including civil society implemented education Activities. Specifically the review will consider New Zealand's support to the Caritas Aotearoa implemented Activity with Solomon Islands Rural Training Centres.

Finally the review will undertake a brief sectoral analysis to help determine where New Zealand support would be the most effective.

The review will assess:

- The relevance of New Zealand's basic education programme in terms of coherence with Solomon Islands Government's priorities and alignment to the objectives of MFAT's 4YP
- The performance of New Zealand budget support to Solomon Islands Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development in achieving intended outcomes
- The progress and effectiveness of the Leadership and Education Authorities Project (LEAP) in achieving intended outcomes, both as a modality and Activity, and the value for money & sustainability of the project approach
- The relevance and effectiveness of MFAT supported technical assistance in the Ministry of Education and Human Resources to achieve the desired goals of this Activity
- The relevance of New Zealand' support to Solomon Islands education more broadly and how this contributes to a strong public sector and socially cohesive Solomon Islands
- The impact of New Zealand's support to the Caritas START programme, and the potential options for supporting Rural Training Centres following conclusion of this Activity mid 2019
- Approaches for closer coordination and alignment with Solomon Islands Government and other Development Partners such as Australia
- The levels of funding & support across the education sectors (both from SIG and donors) relative to performance and impact.

It will also provide recommendations for future New Zealand support to education (including but not limited to basic education) in Solomon Islands.

This review will be used by MEHRD and MFAT to:

- Identify priorities that will benefit from NZ support to achieve results and improve outcomes for education in Solomon Islands
- Determine how NZ support to education can also leverage improved outcomes for other NZ Aid Programme focus areas – social cohesion and youth engagement
- Inform decisions on the modalities of support to Solomon Islands education sector and what the future direction, design and support should be.

Review objectives and key questions

Tentative objectives and key questions are provided whilst noting that the review team will work with MFAT to refine the objectives and key questions in the planning phase.

Objective 1: To what extent does NZ's overall support to Solomon Islands education remain a priority for the partner country and the New Zealand Aid Programme.

- How relevant and effective are the modalities of the Basic Education programme in achieving the outcomes? Are these still aligned to the priorities of the Solomon Islands Government (SIG)?
- Should NZ shift sectoral focus or modality to better meet both SIG's priorities/challenges and contribute to New Zealand's goals for stronger social cohesion?

Objective 2: To assess the performance of NZ budget support to Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development.

- What progress is being made (or not) in achieving NZ budget support outputs and short term and medium term outcomes?
- To what extent have activities and outputs been delivered to agreed quality standards, timeframes and budgets?
- o Specifically how effective is NZ support to literacy improvement and how could support (modality, governance and interventions) be improved?
- what key challenges/issues (if any) are hindering NZ budget support performance?

Objective 3: To examine the progress and effectiveness of the Leadership and Education Authorities Project (LEAP)

- What progress is being made (or not) in achieving short term outputs and outcomes and tracking towards medium term outcomes?
- How should LEAP embed its systems, processes and/or activities to sustain any benefits?
- Does LEAP offer value for money (modality; model & delivery)
- What are the options to build on any progress made either through budget support to MEHRD or complementary assistance for the remainder of LEAP or following project completion in December 2019?
- What learnings does the Leadership and Education Authorities Project (LEAP) model and other outsourced support by MEHRD and/or Development Partners provide?

Objective 4: To assess the Technical assistance component of the Basic Education Programme provided by MFAT

- What role has technical assistance played in the delivery of the programme? How effective has the assistance been?
- Is technical assistance targeted at the right priorities and areas?
- How can NZ technical assistance be improved?

Objective 5: Future design and support to education (including but not limited to basic education) in Solomon Islands.

- Has the overall delivery approach (modalities, governance mechanisms and interventions) been effective and has it followed Pacific and culturally appropriate best practice?

- What priorities/ focus areas will benefit from NZ support to achieve improved outcomes in education in Solomon Islands and to what degree should NZ continue to provide support?
- What kinds of activities should NZ support continue, refine or cease (including types of modalities, approach, interventions)?
- How can NZ support to education also be leveraged to improve outcomes for other NZ Aid Programme priority areas: national identity and youth engagement
- Any other recommendations to inform the future direction of NZ's support for education.

Review scope

The review will cover the current phase of support (known as the basic education programme) while also reflecting on previous phases of support since 2003, and

- Lightly consider the Caritas Aotearoa led START Activity and reflect on how the rural training centres could be supported at the conclusion of this Activity
- its geographic focus is all of Solomon Islands

Engagement with key stakeholders

In support of a consultative and participatory approach, the review team will be expected to engage with a number of key stakeholders. These stakeholders will include:

- respective Solomon Islands Programme and Activity managers and other relevant MFAT staff
- Solomon Islands Government (Ministers and officials at the Prime Minister's Office; Ministry of Education and Resource Development; and Ministry of Planning, Development and Aid Coordination; and Provincial Government)
- Head of Mission and development staff at New Zealand High Commission Honiara
- Development Partners, including implementing partners Australia; UNICEF; World Vision; and Caritas NZ; SPC Education Quality Assessment Programme
- Solomon Islands Chamber of Commerce; Solomon Islands Association of Rural Training Centres;
- Education Authorities; school boards; school leaders; teachers, students

The results of the review will be reported and disseminated to MFAT, relevant partner government institutions and other key stakeholders.

Review deliverables

The review needs to be completed by early 2019. Anticipated key deliverables and delivery dates are as follows:

	Outputs	Description	Due date
Phase One			
1	Review Plan	Literature review, briefing and finalised Review Plan	Early Nov 2018
Phase Two			
2	Field work complete	Field work complete and results provided to stakeholders during a stakeholder workshop	End Nov 2018
3	Draft Report and key findings report	Preparation of draft report and submission to MFAT	Mid Dec 2018
4	Final report and other communications products including review brief	Acceptance/approval by MFAT after any revisions of the draft are completed, and debriefing	Late Jan 2019

The above timeframe is indicative only and respondents' proposals should reflect their own availability, including the possibility of completing the review sooner.

Respondents should submit a proposal and budget for Phases One and Two.

The review Steering Group will approve the review plan. This will reconfirm the delivery of all or some of the proposed Phase Two, or none if, for whatever reason, MFAT decides not to proceed.

Review design

In proposing a review design, the review team should identify the most appropriate approach, methodology and tools to generate credible evidence that corresponds to the review's purpose and the questions being asked.

We envisage that this review will include a short literature and documentation review in Phase One. Phase Two would apply a mixed or multi-method approach, using both qualitative and quantitative methods. This will increase the credibility and validity of the results.

The final design will be confirmed in the review plan and in consultation between the review team and MFAT.

Relevant documents and data will be provided to the successful review team. See Appendix B for a list of key documents along with other relevant information and data.

Culturally responsive methodological approaches

There are a range of world-views and we encourage the use of culturally appropriate review designs, methods and approaches to ensure the review contributes to the body of knowledge of the country and its people which are the focus of the review.

Capacity building

Indigenous capacity and capability building through reviews are key to improving indigenous knowledge outcomes and is a tangible example of reciprocity in action. It demonstrates a commitment to the empowerment of the indigenous community and partner government, and

provides an opportunity to build indigenous research and evaluation capacity. We encourage proposals from indigenous-led review teams or from review teams which include emerging indigenous researchers or evaluators

The review plan

The review team will develop a review plan (using or being guided by MFAT's review plan).

- The review plan should include the review's design. It will also include: a stakeholder analysis
- a communication plan;
- a high-level plan to disseminate the findings, conclusions and recommendations to promote take up of learning;
- an outline of the quality and ethical issues to be managed as part of the review;
- a schedule identifying key deliverables and timeline;
- identification of the risks and how they will be mitigated along with a brief outline of the review's governance arrangement.

It is anticipated that the review plan will identify how the information needs can be met through current documentation (including undertaking documentary analysis), and what information gaps, if any, will need to be filled through fieldwork including in-country visits. Data collection methods, for example, interviews (structured and semi-structured), focus groups, direct observation and case studies should be outlined.

The review Steering Group will approve the review plan, following any required amendments. The review plan must be approved prior to the commencement of any field work or other substantive work.

Reporting requirements

The review report must as a minimum meet quality standards as set out in Appendix C. It should be guided by the New Zealand Aid Programme review report template.

As this is an evidence-based review, the findings, conclusions and recommendations must be based on clear evidence presented in a way that allows readers to form their own views on the validity and reliability of the findings, including assessing the vested interests of sources.

Where there is conflicting evidence or interpretations, the report should note the differences and justify the findings.

The report must contain an abstract suitable for publishing on the MFAT website. A one to two page review fact sheet identifying the review's key findings, recommendations and lessons learned will also be produced.

Before submission to MFAT, the review team must ensure the final draft of the report is accurate, complete, and meets a good standard of English.

The draft review report will be reviewed by MFAT staff, stakeholders and/or external experts. Further work or revision of the report may be required if it is considered that the report does not meet the requirements of this TOR, if there are factual errors, if the report is incomplete, or if it is not of an acceptable standard.

MFAT will develop a management response to the review's findings, conclusions and recommendations. MFAT will publish the review plan and report and its management response on its website

The Review Team will comprise three members:

- the Team Leader who will be a Monitoring and Review Specialist;
- a Solomon Islands Education Specialist. A representative from the New Zealand High Commission to Solomon Islands will be the final member of the team providing support & advice on review planning & brokering connections.

□ The Team Leader will lead the review process, including participating in the initial briefing, assigning tasks and responsibilities to the other team members, and presenting preliminary review findings. The Team Leader will also bear primary responsibility for delivering the following outputs, and will delegate/utilise the expertise of the other team members as necessary:

- develop the overall approach and methodology for the review;
- manage and direct the Review Team;
- represent the Review Team and lead the Review Team's consultations;
- manage, compile and edit inputs from other Team members, ensuring high quality of all reporting outputs;
- present preliminary findings to key stakeholders at the end of the in-country mission.
- produce the draft Review Report; and
- produce the final Report.

Under direction of the Team Leader, the Solomon Islands Education Specialist will be responsible for providing advice, written inputs and other assistance to the team regarding:

- the education policies, priorities and interests of SIG and their implications for the review;
- the context and practice for the education sector in Solomon Islands;
- the wider social, political and cultural context of the Solomon Islands, and their implications for the review; and
- the meaning of culturally-nuanced messages and insights conveyed during the in-country interviews.

Under direction of the Team Leader, the Post Representative will be responsible for providing advice and other assistance to the team regarding relevant DFAT development priorities, interests and processes and their implications for the review.

Review principles and standards

Consistent with the New Zealand Aid Programme review principles, the review will deliver useful, credible findings relevant to the purpose of the review. The recommendations will be pragmatic and actionable, and presented in a way that promotes learning

In conducting the review, the review team will work with our partners to increase ownership and use of review. The review team will be transparent and independent. They must have no vested interest in the outcomes of the review and be independent of those responsible for policy making, design, delivery and management of the development intervention.

All processes and outputs are required to be robust and independent (carried out in a way that avoids any adverse effects of political or organisational influence on the findings) and transparent (process open and understood by all parties).

Quality standards

A list of MFAT quality standards for reviews/ reviews is presented in Appendix C. These are based on the OECD-Development Assistance Committee (DAC) set of quality standards for development review.

When conducting the review, the review team will comply with the MFAT's Code of Conduct

Review governance and management

The review will be commissioned by MFAT and the review team will be accountable for its performance to MFAT.

Key responsibilities of the MFAT Activity Manager will include agreeing the Terms of Reference, review plan and review reports.

The Activity Manager Dana Avram is responsible for day-to-day management and administration of the review. Responsibilities include contracting; briefing the review team; managing feedback from reviews of the draft report; and liaising with the team throughout to ensure the review is being undertaken as agreed.

Ownership of information

All the key deliverables and the data/information collected will become the property of MFAT.

APPENDIX 2: INTERVIEW GUIDES

Interview Guide (Lead Agencies/High Level Administrators)

These questions relate to the review objectives. The Key Review Question (KRQ) under each criterion is the most important question. Some of the sub-questions under each category will be broadly relevant or used to inform answers for other questions in the review. Each of the sub-questions would act as prompts that can be used to encourage stakeholders to provide further information to aid the collection of evidence to answer the KRQs. Not all sub-questions will necessarily be asked in each interview. The sub-questions serve only as a guide and will be tailored to different stakeholders.

Relevance

Key Review Question

1. To what extent does NZ's support to education remain a priority for Solomon Islands and the New Zealand Aid Programme?
 - a. To what extent do the goals, focus and approach of NZ's support still align with the current needs of the sector?
 - b. Have there been significant changes in the needs and challenges since the 2016 design?
 - c. Is the current focus of the basic education programme still relevant?
 - d. Are the current modalities (budget support, technical assistance and project funding) still relevant?

Effectiveness

Key Review Question

2. To what extent are outputs and outcomes being achieved, or likely to be achieved?
 - a. What progress is being made in achieving the short term and medium-term outcomes? (for each area of support - budget support, technical assistance and LEAP)
 - b. What factors have influenced the achievement or non-achievement of outcomes? (for each area of support - budget support, technical assistance and LEAP)
 - c. Has the support been delivered as intended? (for each area of support - budget support, technical assistance and LEAP)
 - d. Have there been any unintended results?
 - e. How well is the support addressing inclusiveness objectives?
 - f. How effective has the Caritas Activity with Solomon Islands Rural Training Centres been?

Efficiency

Key Review Question

3. How efficiently has NZ's support been implemented?
 - a. To what extent have activities and outputs been delivered to agreed quality standards, on time and within budget?
 - b. How well does the programme complement other development partner support in this sector?
 - c. Has the funding modality worked well, or not? (for each area of support - budget support, technical assistance and LEAP)

- d. What monitoring and evaluation has occurred, and has it been effective?
- e. What financial reporting has occurred, and has it been effective?
- f. What key challenges/issues (if any) are hindering the performance of NZ support? (for each area of support - budget support, technical assistance and LEAP)
- g. What can be done to improve efficiency?

Sustainability

Key Review Question

- 4. To what extent will any benefits continue after NZ support for the current basic education programme ends?
 - a. To what extent would the Solomon Islands Government be able to sustain the skills, management capacity and funding for the LEAP initiative without continued assistance?

Future Design and Support

Key Review Question

- 5. What should NZ do to support education in the Solomon Islands in future?
 - a. What future support to education (including but not limited to basic education) is needed in Solomon Islands?
 - b. What are key priorities, options, delivery modalities, and improvement opportunities for NZ support post December 2019?
 - c. What activities should NZ support continue, refine or cease (including types of modalities, approach, interventions)?
 - d. Are there any other recommendations to inform the future direction of NZ's support for education in the Solomon Islands?

Interview Guide (Schools or TVET Providers)

These questions relate to the review objectives. The Key Review Question (KRQ) under each criterion is the most important question. Some of the sub-questions under each category will be broadly relevant or used to inform answers for other questions in the review. Not all sub-questions will necessarily be asked in each interview. These sub-questions serve only as a guide and will be tailored to different stakeholders. These questions are mainly designed for people working in education providers such as schools or tertiary education organisations.

Each of the sub-questions would act as prompts that can be used to encourage stakeholders to provide further information to aid the collection of evidence to answer the KEQs.

Relevance

Key Review Question

- 6. To what extent does NZ's support to education remain a priority for Solomon Islands and the New Zealand Aid Programme?
 - a. To what extent does NZ's support still align with current needs in education as you see them?
 - b. Have there been any significant changes in needs or challenges in the last two years?
 - c. Is the current focus of the basic education programme still relevant?

Effectiveness

Key Review Question

7. To what extent is better education being achieved through the basic education programme, or likely to be achieved?
 - a. What progress is being made in achieving the short term and medium-term outcomes?
 - b. What factors have influenced the achievement or non-achievement of outcomes?
 - c. Has the support been delivered as intended?
 - d. Have there been any unintended results?

Efficiency

Key Review Question

8. How efficiently has NZ's support been implemented?
 - a. To what extent have activities and outputs been delivered to quality standards, and on time?
 - b. How well does the programme fit with other development partner support in education?
 - c. Has the way funding has been delivered worked well, or not?
 - d. What monitoring and evaluation has occurred?
 - e. What key challenges/issues (if any) are hindering NZ budget support performance?
 - f. What can be done to improve efficiency?

Sustainability

Key Review Question

9. To what extent will any benefits continue after NZ support for the current basic education programme ends?

Future Design and Support

Key Review Question

10. What should NZ do to support education in the Solomon Islands in future?
 - a. What future support to education (including but not limited to basic education) is needed in Solomon Islands?
 - b. What activities should NZ support continue, or cease?
 - c. Are there any other recommendations you have to help the future direction of NZ's support for education in the Solomon Islands

APPENDIX 3: AIDE MEMOIRE 1 – REVIEW OF SOLOMON ISLANDS EDUCATION SUPPORT 2016-19 – INTERIM FINDINGS

In-country Review Team members: Vince Catherwood, Mei Lin Harley (MFAT M&E Adviser)

New Zealand based Review Team members: Ned Hardie-Boys, Jacqui Haggland

Purpose

This Aide Memoire outlines the interim findings of the review of the Solomon Islands Education Support 2016-2019 (SIES – basic education programme). The review considers the success and challenges of each of the components of the basic education programme, and potential options for the delivery modalities and priorities for New Zealand support post-December 2019. Stakeholder engagement was undertaken in-country during 26 November – 6 December 2018 with:

- the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT),
- key administrators in Solomon Islands Government (SIG) agencies for education, and
- interested stakeholders, including other development partners, a range of education providers, and the community.

Review approach

The Review is being undertaken using the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) Criteria to underpin and focus the assessments being made.

Criteria	Key review questions
Relevance	To what extent does NZ's support to education remain a priority for Solomon Islands and the New Zealand Aid Programme?
Effectiveness	To what extent are outputs and outcomes being achieved, or likely to be achieved?
Efficiency	How efficiently has NZ's support been implemented?
Sustainability	What evidence exists to demonstrate that sustainability aspirations for the Basic Education programme are likely to be fulfilled?
Future design and support	What should NZ do to support education in the Solomon Islands in future?

The initial findings from the review are briefly outlined below, under the three key areas of support. This approach has been used as the focus for this Aide Memoire, in order to:

- present emerging issues,
- ensure findings and conclusions can be verified, and
- clarify the focus for the second in-country visit in early 2019.

While this review has taken place near the projected end of the 2016-2019 cycle, it should be considered a 'mid-term' review rather than an 'end-of-term' review. Delays in implementing key components of the support programme have meant that some outputs have not yet been completed, and more time will be needed before outputs have been achieved.

Leaders and Education Authorities Project (LEAP)

- MFAT has a contract for NZ\$9.96 million with a consortium (Auckland UniServices Ltd (lead contactor), the University of the South Pacific School of Education (Tonga), and the

Fellowship of Faithful Mentors (a Solomon Islands based faith group)) to deliver the LEAP project from April 2017 to November 2019. *Outcomes* expected for LEAP include:

- long-term outcomes (improved literacy learning outcomes; improved Provincial Education Authority (PEA) management and leadership of, and support to schools; improved school leadership),
 - medium term outcomes (improved skills and motivation of existing teachers; school managers lead teaching and learning in schools; improved parent body support for schools), and
 - short-term outcomes (PEAs support and supervise school managers and teachers to improve leadership and teaching; school leaders support improved teaching; schools and PEAs engage parent bodies).
- The strengths of the LEAP programme include its sound philosophical and research base (including its grounding within Solomon Islands culture and emphasis upon the concept of '*tok stori*⁷'), and that it uses classroom data and contextual school-based evidence to inform school and provincial improvement plans. Other strengths include the decentralised focus on the provinces, use of mentors to support schools in leadership development and literacy improvement, targeting of leadership both at the school level and in the PEAs, and engagement of parents and the community. LEAP includes a focus on delivering school-based professional development training and support to teachers in classrooms via experienced mentors, with an emphasis on the teaching of writing.
 - There is a value for money question about the LEAP model. From financial reporting by UniServices, the Review Team have been unable to ascertain what the balance of expenditure has been to date, between spending on salaries for mentors who are working in provinces, and fees for advisers working at an academic and strategic level. Provincial delivery by mentors absorbs less than 50 percent of the fees, and is too expensive in its current form to replicate across all Solomon Islands communities.
 - There is a strong sense that the concept of LEAP should be continued if possible, with more cost-effective arrangements. A Senior Officer in the Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development (MEHRD) stated that the programme could be extended with one programme manager and two professional learning and learning development facilitators, and school mentors and PEA Mentors.
 - The LEAP 2018 Annual Report lists a number of key achievements (mainly outputs), including induction and mobilisation of school leadership and PEA mentors across the six LEAP provinces, and various associated activities such as meetings and workshops that the mentors have supported. Due to delays in initiating many of these outputs, it is too early to ascertain if the outcomes will be achieved in the timeframe of the support.
 - Key challenges for LEAP personnel included the need to move swiftly from research and collection of data, to the provision of direct practical support to leaders and teachers in schools. These delays in mobilising delivery have resulted in an inability to demonstrate practical results with measurable outcomes. LEAP needs a longer incubation period and more time to see delivery of outputs/outcomes that meet targets.

⁷ *Tok stori* is a Solomon Islands Pijin term that refers to allowing people in-context to story their lives, to use a storied approach to change and or improve themselves; and to story their own futures based on their storied pasts and presents. Within LEAP, *tok stori* is a core mechanism that will enable engagement with teachers, leaders, PEA staff in a way that enables and affirms them. (*Tok Stori – A Philosophy and Method for People Enabling and Improvement*. Adapted from Sanga, 2015).

- The Review Team heard mixed results from PEAs about the success of the LEAP support. One PEA shared that selected LEAP schools report that they had teachers receiving new skills in teaching writing, that they had seen improvements in children starting to read and write, and that school boards were working well with schools. However, another PEA noted that expectations had not been met and that communication with the PEA by LEAP mentors had not been effective.
- MEHRD also had mixed views on the effectiveness of LEAP. Most of those interviewed suggested the programme had initiated innovations that would improve student performance. However, a few reported no tangible evidence of improvements in the quality and timing of PEA reports, that annual work plans were not adequate, and that some PEAs not receiving LEAP support were doing better than those that were.
- The outsourced approach has the considerable benefit in that LEAP mentors are able to access funding for travel as required to support their schools, unlike their counterparts in the Literacy Programme Management Unit (LPMU) who are held up by SIG processes. The ongoing implementation of LEAP support needs to be transferred to MEHRD so that the LEAP initiative is owned by MEHRD and becomes sustainable.

Literacy Budget Support

- MFAT signed a Grant Funding Arrangement with the Solomon Islands Government in November 2016 to implement the Solomon Islands National Literacy Plan through funding for the LPMU. A total of NZ\$5.67 million is available. There are three outputs expected: (i) teaching and learning materials are developed and available in schools; (ii) LPMU training and support equips teachers with knowledge and skills to use the new curriculum and materials; (iii) LPMU training and support equips teachers with knowledge and skills to use assessment data.
- Use of Provincial Literacy Trainers (PLTs) for school-based support is a good model. The decentralised model of having embedded trainers who both live in the provinces and are supported by PLTs in Honiara is appropriate.
- New Zealand support has also paid for the development of Nguzu Nguzu learning materials (graded readers for use in primary schools) that are a good fit with the Solomon Islands new school curriculum.
- The approach for budget support through LPMU to improve literacy through school-based support is a good one, and is sustainable because it supports the national curriculum. However, the implementation of the strategy through MEHRD has not worked. Having all the funds delivered through MEHRD has slowed up desirable activity due to the inefficient funding distribution processes in place. Temporary officers such as PLTs are not permitted by SIG to operate an imprest account.
- A special arrangement has recently been negotiated between MFAT and MEHRD to allow PEAs to access up to SBD50,000 at a time, with a requirement that the funding must be deposited in a designated separate bank account, and the funding be “retired” (i.e. accounted for) before a new tranche of funding can be advanced. Whether this arrangement will actually work, without undue delays, needs to be monitored and reviewed by MFAT before 31 March 2019. If the special arrangement is working, the roles of the PLTs could be extended for a further year until the end of 2019/ early 2020, based on a fiscally neutral arrangement.
- Some PLTs are able to work together with LEAP mentors, and travel to nearby non-LEAP schools when the LEAP mentors travel using LEAP resources. This cooperation is a sensible

approach, and is a good example of alignment and mutual support between the two programmes. However, the Review Team noted that this cooperation was not consistent.

- The decision by New Zealand and Australia to use SBD10 million of unspent aid funds to co-fund the purchase and reprinting of curriculum materials for distribution to schools through Pearson is an appropriate one, as was the decision to use unspent funds for the construction of a girls' dormitory.
- A small grants facility for Education Authorities (up to SBD100,000 per application) is available to support initiatives at the provincial level to improve literacy. Two grants have been made to date to PEAs with 14 applications currently being considered in the latest round of applications. The uptake of these grants should be monitored.

Other support for education in Solomon Islands, including technical advice

- Two technical assistance positions were funded by New Zealand: an Education Sector Adviser and a Literacy Adviser. The technical assistance provided to support MEHRD did not work effectively. The recruitment process did not identify people with the right relationship skills to work effectively in the Solomon Islands context.
- There is still a need for effective technical assistance to support MEHRD. The LPMU staff in Honiara have indicated a need for further technical assistance, although they are capable of undertaking and managing their own operation themselves. The support required could be provided through an extension of the job description for the School Leadership LEAP Coordinator.
- Several interviewees indicated that pre-service teacher training in the Solomon Islands National University (SINU) College of Education did not adequately cover literacy. The Head of Education at SINU noted that pre-service teacher education suffered because few of the SINU staff had qualifications in teaching literacy, and that the students themselves enter their teacher training with a low level of literacy. Improved engagement between LEAP and SINU is important for the sustainability of the programme.

Future design and support

- The existing programmes being supported by New Zealand focus largely on improving the quality of education in the classroom. While this approach is appropriate, there is also a need to improve access to education. The completion rate for primary schooling in Solomon Islands is below 50 percent. These low reported completion rates mean the Solomon Islands education system is currently failing many of its children.
- A further area that deserves consideration for additional support is skills training in the post-school education sector. There is a large population of unemployed and disaffected youth in the Solomon Islands. Support for this group is essential if a goal of social cohesion in Solomon Islands is to be achieved. New Zealand currently provides some support for Caritas, an NGO that works with rural training centres.
- The use of examinations at the end of Year 6 could be targeted for reform as they effectively bar some children from progressing further in the education system. Consideration should be given to other aspects of secondary education where improvements are needed to facilitate better access.
- The school environment in some Solomon Islands schools is also a barrier to access (e.g., poor access to clean water, sub-standard sanitation, dilapidated classrooms, limited access to electricity), with the result that the necessary pre-conditions for effective learning in

schools are not present. The challenging environment is also a contributor to teacher and student absenteeism, both significant issues in Solomon Islands.

Focus for second in-country engagement trip

- The second field visit in late January/early February 2019 will investigate the issue of technical and vocational training in Solomon Islands (and specifically the support for rural training centres through Caritas and the START programme) in more detail.
- The second visit will be timed to enable liaison with the Australian-funded team, established to develop the design for funding support to education in Solomon Islands from 2020 onwards. This is to ensure that New Zealand and Australian funding is, as far as possible, complementary, and that effective targeting and alignment occurs of the different donor funding streams available to support Solomon Islands education.
- The opportunity will be taken to visit secondary schools to identify what support is being provided and discuss issues relating to low attendance/completion rates (37 percent at the end of Year 9, 30 percent at the end of Year 10, and 15 percent at the end of Year 12).

Preliminary conclusions

The New Zealand support to education in Solomon Islands has had mixed success to date. Nevertheless, the SIES remains a high priority for SIG and MFAT. The goals, focus, and approach of New Zealand's support (specifically, basic education) remains entirely appropriate, and are well aligned with the priorities of MEHRD. The provision of technical assistance to support MEHRD is necessary, but implementation problems have prevented the assistance provided to date from being as effective as it should have been. There is a need to ensure that MEHRD has (and is seen to have) a central role in the next phase of education support post-2019.

The mixed-modality funding (project funding for LEAP, budget support for literacy improvement, and provision of technical assistance) is a pragmatic response to needs in the Solomon Islands, given MEHRD challenges in managing programmes, and improving capacity.

Although the LEAP initiative has been slow to mobilise, the feedback of data gathered and provided back to school communities has been well received. While it is too soon to see concrete evidence of achievement of expected LEAP outcomes, there have been positive developments. The 'sense-making' and use of *tok stori* as a technique for enabling communities to discuss their needs and perspectives is empowering, and has a sound basis in Solomon Islands culture.

The budget support for LPMU, designed to improve literacy, is a positive strategy, but has not worked as well as it might. This is due to system and process barriers that have prevented the funding being accessed by PLTs to do their work in the provinces.

Initial recommendations

1. Better alignment in order to support literacy improvement is needed. Especially in the work of the PEAs, between the LEAP mentors in the provinces in which they are working, and the work of the PLTs funded by budget support in the LPMU.
2. Consideration should be given to steps that can be taken in 2019 to support the transition of the LEAP initiative to MEHRD, to ensure sustainability in the long term. Steps to support this could include:
 - a. the LEAP Management Team should work with MEHRD Senior Management, to develop a clear transition plan to transfer responsibility for planning and

- implementing the programme to SIG. This would need to integrate the strengths of the LPMU and LEAP into a coherent programme that is economical and fit for purpose. MEHRD may consider outsourcing of some components to a partner.
- b. the LEAP Management Team should ensure greater engagement of key MEHRD personnel, including senior managers of teaching and learning, in the governance and implementation of the LEAP initiative.
 - c. the LEAP Facilitators with responsibility for the PEA Mentors and School Leadership Mentors should work closely with senior MEHRD officers with responsibility for education to develop and deliver a professional development programme for MEHRD staff, in order to achieve better understanding of LEAP philosophies and approaches, and to promote better understanding of approaches to literacy improvement.
 - d. the LEAP Management Team should endeavour to improve the communication with PEAs about LEAP.
 - e. MFAT should provide technical assistance to MEHRD to assist in the design and implementation of the next phase of work to follow the LEAP initiative.
3. LEAP Management should consider increasing the number of mentors in provinces that have only one School Leadership mentor, to two, in order to increase the frequency and effectiveness of school-based training and classroom visits in remote schools.
 4. In recognition of the slow start to the LEAP initiative, MFAT should consider negotiating a fiscally neutral extension to the end date of the LEAP contract. This would ensure that outputs and short-term outcomes could be satisfactorily delivered by the LEAP contract termination date.
 5. MEHRD should monitor the proposed new arrangements for PLT access to funding in a timely way, to ensure that these arrangements are working effectively and efficiently to support the LPMU's work in provinces.
 6. MFAT should monitor the uptake of Education Authority Special Grants to ensure that the process is appropriate.

APPENDIX 4: RURAL TRAINING CENTRES: CONTEXT

Some context is necessary to understand the position and role of Rural Training Centres in the Solomon Islands. There are approximately 60 rural training centres in the Solomon Islands, of which 48 are registered RTCs. The RTCs are not Government institutions: all the RTCs are Church-owned, and are run and managed by five Solomon Islands churches. These churches are the Catholic Church, the Anglican Church of Melanesia, the South Seas Evangelical Church, the Seventh Day Adventist Church, and the Uniting Church. The Government provides funding for the salaries of tutors at the registered RTCs, and also provides a small annual grant (the grant is calculated on a per capita basis on the basis of SBD400 for each residential student enrolled. The amount of the grant is lower for day students). 200 Government scholarships are being offered for the first time in 2019 for students at RTCs. Some tutors are awarded scholarships to access DFAT training.

The programmes mainly target young people who are “pushed out” of school and do not complete their secondary school education. The purpose is to provide these disadvantaged young people with practical and/or entrepreneurial skills that will enable them to make a successful transition either into the workforce, or back into their communities. Some may proceed to further education at institutions like Solomon Islands National University or University of South Pacific. Some of the programmes target the development of basic literacy and numeracy skills, and life skills such as budgeting and financial management. Most of the target student population has a very low level of skill and quite acute upskilling needs. The RTCs graduate between 3000 and 4000 students each year. The number of RTCs has tripled since 2002 when there were only 20 RTCs, because communities see the value of the skills that RTCs develop.

All the RTCs struggle to manage financially, and many engage in entrepreneurial activity (e.g. pig farming, poultry farming (sale of eggs), furniture-making, etc) in order to supplement their revenue. Most of the RTCs are poorly resourced and equipped, are located in isolated parts of the Solomon Islands and are therefore hard to access. They are supported by principals and tutors who themselves have not been highly educated and whose skills and capacity in many cases are limited.

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APPENDIX 6: LEAP SCHOOL CLUSTERS - 6 PROVINCES

GUADALCANAL –		GUADALCANAL –	
MARAU Kaekae Primary Makina Primary Kopiu Primary Potau Primary	TENAKONGA 1 Tenakonga Primary Numbu Primary	TANDAI 1 Vaturanga Primary Tamboko Primary	TANGARARE 1 Beaufort Bay Primary Kusumba Primary
	TENAKONGA 2 Turarana Primary Bemuta Primary	TANDAI 2 Marara Primary Lunga Primary	TANGARARE 2 Ghove Primary Tulagi Primary
MALAITA –		MALAITA –	
SOUTHERN Rokera Primary Maka Primary Takaito Primary Tawairoi Primary	CENTRAL Kwarea Primary Kakara Primary Auki Primary Faubaba Primary	NORTHERN Mbita’ama Primary Fo’ondo Primary Kafoasila Primary Fulifo’oe Primary	EASTERN Atori Primary Aikuku Primary Kwaiafa Primary Kunuabu Primary
CENTRAL –		TEMOTU –	
SMALL GELA Dende Primary Dota Primary Koilovala Primary Henry Koga Primary	SANDFLY Haroro Primary Soso Primary Siro CHS Primary	NORTHERN COAST Akaboi Primary Black Rock Primary Bimbir Primary Nangu Primary Nela SDA Primary	REEF ISLANDS 1 Nenubo Primary Gawa Primary Maina Primary Balipa’a Primary
	BIG GELA Silas Primary Marvin Memorial Primary McMahan CHS Primary		SAVO Pokilo Primary Paposi Primary
	RUSSELL Nukufero Primary Fly Harbour Primary Yandina CHS Primary		
ISABEL –		RENNELL & BELLONA	
MARINGE / KOKOTA Kmaga Primary Hoffi Primary Guguha Primary Garanga Primary Jejevo Primary	GAO / BUGOTU Tamahi Primary Tatamba Primary Lilura Primary Nagolau Primary	BELLONA Mataiho SDA Primary Angaiho Primary Siva Primary 	RENNELL 1 Kanava Primary Tahanuku Primary Kagua Primary Tupuaki Primary
	HOGRANO Lepi Primary Magotu Primary Gagaolo Primary		HAVULEI / KIA Kesao Primary Baolo Primary Bolitei Primary

APPENDIX 7: STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT LIST OF INTERVIEWS

DATE	AGENCY / ORGANISATION	STAKEHOLDERS INTERVIEWED
16-Nov-18	MFAT Wellington	Sally Waswo, Hera Jawed, Mei Lin Harley, Anabel Lusk (MFAT officers); Dana Avram, Second Secretary, NZHC (by phone) Vince Catherwood, Jacqui Haggland (Allen & Clarke)
21-Nov-18	MFAT Wellington	Sally Waswo, Hera Jawed, Meenakshi Sankar, Fiona MacFarlane, Mei Lin Harley (MFAT Officers) Vince Catherwood, Ned Hardie-Boys (Allen & Clarke)
22-Nov-18	MFAT Wellington	Susanna Kelly (M & E Adviser), Mei Lin Harley Vince Catherwood (Allen & Clarke)
22-Nov-18	MFAT Wellington	Nicci Simmonds, Manager Solomon Islands Desk Fiona MacFarlane, MFAT Officer Vince Catherwood (Allen & Clarke)
26-Nov-18	NZ High Commission	Dana Avram, Second Secretary Development
27-Nov-18	Annual Joint Review	Multiple attendees
28-Nov-18	Education Authority CEOs and PEOs	Focus Group Discussion (21 CEOs and PEOs from Government and Church Education Authorities)
28-Nov-18	MEHRD	McGreggor Richards, Finance Adviser
28-Nov-18	DFAT	Melissa Stutsel, Acting Deputy HOM Leah Horsfall, First Secretary Education
28-Nov-18	Helen Rose	Education Sector Management Adviser
29-Nov-18	MEHRD	Constance Nasi, Under Secretary, National Education Services
29-Nov-18	MEHRD	Linda Wate, Director Teaching and Learning
29-Nov-18	MEHRD	Pauline Maeniuta, LPMU Team Leader
29-Nov-18	PEA, Malaita	Jackson Rahemae, Professional Teacher Training Development Officer Joyce Watakari, Provincial Literacy Adviser
29-Nov-18	Auki Primary School, Malaita	Raphael Augii, Head Teacher George Foliseh, Primary teacher Dickson Warakohia, Chairman PTA Reginald Hou
30-Nov-18	Bitakaula Community High School, Malaita	Mary Lulutaloa, Principal Delight Saefo'oa, Secondary teacher Moses Daoni, Secondary teacher Mahlon Mootele, Primary teacher Henry Tuni, PTA
30-Nov-18	Alota'a Community High School	Ronnie Butala, Class teacher John Selwyn Haluwate, Class teacher Christina Sam, Class teacher Timothy Dick, Class teacher

		Edith Mary, Class teacher
3-Dec-18	Solomon Islands National University	Naolah Pitia, Head of School, Education Faculty
3-Dec-18	Ministry of Finance & Treasury	Dean Hunter, Finance Adviser
3-Dec-18	LEAP	Irene Poulsen, Programme Manager, LEAP
3-Dec-18	LEAP	Focus Group Discussion (14 LEAP PEA and School Leadership Mentors)
3-Dec-18	LEAP	Stanley Houma, LEAP Facilitator
3-Dec-18	MEHRD	Linda Wate, Director Teaching and Learning
4-Dec-18	Guadalcanal Provincial Education Authority	Maesac Suia, Chief Education Officer Fred, Provincial Literacy Trainer Reinik, Training Officer Julie McLaren, Australian Volunteer
4-Dec-18	Lunga Community High School, East Guadalcanal	Joy Cornelius, Principal Joel Trotter, Deputy Principal Clement Natoei, Board Member David, Past Chair of Board Emilia Paisa, Deputy Head Teacher
4-Dec-18	Tamboko Primary School, West Guadalcanal	Hugo Bugoro, Head Teacher Michael, Board Chair
5-Dec-18	MEHRD	Franco Rodie, Permanent Secretary
5-Dec-18	MEHRD	Joe Ririmae, Manager M&E Richard Adomana, Manager Planning
5-Dec-18	MEHRD	Merrylyn Kodokele, Chief Finance Officer
5-Dec-18	LEAP	Emilie Sililailai, LEAP Facilitator
5-Dec-18	MEHRD	Ambrose Malefoasi, Under Secretary, Education Authorities Group
5-Dec-18	MEHRD	James Bosamata, Deputy Secretary
5-Dec-18	LEAP	Focus Group Discussion (7 LEAP PEA and School Leadership Mentors)
6-Dec-18	NZ High Commission	Debrief with Dana Avram, Second Secretary Development
11-Dec-18	MFAT Wellington	Amy McAteer, Lead Adviser, Education
19-Dec-18	MFAT Wellington	Presentation of Aide Memoire 1 to Nicci Simmonds, Amy McAteer, Anabel Lusk, Fiona MacFarlane (MFAT) Vince Catherwood, Jacqui Haggland (Allen & Clarke)
15-Jan-19	Wintec	Nick Borthwick, Former Manager Caritas (by phone)
15-Jan-19	LEAP	Rebecca Spratt, Former Co-Lead, LEAP (by phone)

17-Jan-19	Caritas Aotearoa	Marion Ferguson, Senior Programme Co-ordinator
18-Jan-19	LEAP	Jeffrey Nikoia, LEAP Contract Manager of Uniservices Auckland (by phone)
30-Jan-19	LEAP	Kabini Sanga, Associate Professor, Victoria University of Wellington
30-Jan-19	Caritas Aotearoa	Marion Ferguson, Senior Programme Co-ordinator
4-Feb-19	NZ High Commission	Anabel Lusk, Second Secretary Development
5-Feb-19	NZ High Commission	Don Higgins, High Commissioner
5-Feb-19	DFAT	Melissa Stutsel, Acting Deputy HOM Leah Horsfall, First Secretary Education
5-Feb-19	LEAP	Joash Maneipuri, Chair Fellowship of Faithful Mentors, South Seas Evangelical Church Education Authority
5-Feb-19	MEHRD	Henson Makoani, Asset Manager
5-Feb-19	Solomon Islands National University	Jack Maebuta, Pro-Vice-Chancellor Academic and LEAP Lead
6-Feb-19	SIAVRTC	Billy Mae, Director, Solomon Islands Association of Rural Training Centres (SIAVRTC)
6-Feb-19	MEHRD	Franco Rodie, Permanent Secretary Anabel Lusk, Second Secretary Development, NZHC
6-Feb-19	LEAP	Irene Paulsen, LEAP Programme Co-ordinator Stanley Houma, LEAP PEA Facilitator
6-Feb-19	MEHRD	Helen Rose, Education Sector Management Adviser
6-Feb-19	NZ High Commission	Waitangi Day celebration
7-Feb-19	Skills for Economic Development	Barry Peddle, Team Leader
7-Feb-19	San Isidro Care Centre (an RTC in West Guadalcanal)	Sister Maria Fe Rollo, Principal Billy Mae, Director, SIAVRTC
7-Feb-19	Don Bosco Technical Institute, Henderson, Guadalcanal	Father Srimal Silva, Rector
8-Feb-19	NZ High Commission	Anabel Lusk, Second Secretary Development
8-Feb-19	DFAT	Melissa Stutsel, Acting Deputy HOM Vivienne Sykes, Second Secretary Education
8-Feb-19	University of the South Pacific	Dr Patricia Rodie, Campus Lecturer, Education
11-Feb-19	Mbua Vale Community High School	Mary Inasimae, Principal Joseph Fakaia, Deputy Principal Nelrah Lumukana, 6 th Form Co-ordinator

11-Feb-19	King George VI Secondary School	Lionel Kakai, Principal
12-Feb-19	Board of SIAVRTC	Billy Mae, Director SIAVRTC Gideon Row, Vice-President Javin Rukia, SSECEA Christopher Mae, MEHRD TVET Lionel Vutluia, ACOMEA
12-Feb-19	Save the Children	Louise Hiele, Programme Development and Quality Manager Gary Ovington, Principal Education Adviser
12-Feb-19	MEHRD	Linda Wate, Director Teaching and Learning Pauline Maeniuta, LPMU Team Leader
12-Feb-19	SIAVRTC	Shirley Mana, Project Monitoring Officer SIAVRTC
12-Feb-19	Design Team (Cognition)	Phil Coogan, Consultant Rebecca Spratt, Consultant Vena-Liz Upton, Consultant Matthew Abel, Consultant
12-Feb-19	Breadfruit Consulting	Chris Elphick, Consultant
13-Feb-19	MEHRD	McGreggor Richards
13-Feb-19	MEHRD	Sense-making workshop (approx 25 participants)
14-Feb-19	NZ High Commission	Anabel Lusk, Second Secretary Development
22-Feb-2019	MFAT Wellington	Sokha Mey, Development Officer, Partnerships for International Development Fund
22-Feb-2019	LEAP Management	Jeff Nikoia, Contract Manager Uniservices (by phone) Rebecca Cameron-Turner, Director Future Learning Solutions, Uniservices (by phone)

APPENDIX 8: RESULTS MANAGEMENT TABLE

This Results Management Table (RMT) is Annex A from the Grant Funding Arrangement signed in November 2016. While the LEAP RMT is related to this table, it is not identical with it. The LEAP RMT has been progressively adjusted over time as part of Uniservices contract negotiations with MFAT. Reporting responsibilities in the table below are coded: MEHRD or LEAP.

Results	Indicator(s)	Baseline Information and Targets (disaggregated by province)	Methodology/ Data Sources (disaggregated by province) ⁸	Measurement Responsibility	Timing
4.0 Long-Term Outcomes: A Change in Service Delivery					
4.1 Improved Literacy Learning Outcomes	% of Grade 6 and Grade 4 students meeting literacy standards by 2020 Number of children assisted in primary and secondary education (through sector support) No., %, M/F) ⁹	Baseline: Literacy 2015 61.5% (Year 6). Year 4 t.b.c. 20 Numeracy: 85% (Year 6) Year 4 t.b.c. Target: t.b.c.	SISTA scores	MEHRD	Biennial (2017 & 2019)
4.2 Improved PEA leadership, management and support to schools	There is regular contact with most schools focused on improving management of learning ¹⁰ PEAs fulfil responsibilities as agreed with MEHRD, demonstrated through processing schools grant acquittals, timely school leader and teacher appointments, and appropriate data collection sent to Central Office ¹¹	Baseline: t.b.c. Targets for six provinces supported by LEAP will be developed by LEAP with MEHRD	LEAP contractor reports MEHRD EA Services	LEAP with input from MEHRD EA Services and Inspectorate	Six monthly
4.3 Improved School Leadership	School leaders demonstrate understanding of professional	Baseline and targets for six provinces supported by LEAP will be developed by	LEAP contractor reports	LEAP with input from MEHRD Finance and EA	Six monthly

⁸ Disaggregation of data by province will allow comparison of the six provinces LEAP is working in with national support provided through the Literacy Programme Management Unit (MEHRD)

⁹ IDG SRF Education Direct Results Indicator 1C, 1D

¹⁰ Indicator 2.6 Draft Capacity Evaluation Framework: Capacity Evaluation of Provincial Education Authorities August 2016

¹¹ Adapted from Indicator 2.5 Draft Capacity Evaluation Framework: Capacity Evaluation of Provincial Education Authorities August 2016.

Results	Indicator(s)	Baseline Information and Targets (disaggregated by province)	Methodology/ Data Sources (disaggregated by province) ⁸	Measurement Responsibility	Timing
	accountability requirements though Financial understanding and accountability (retirements are received by MEHRD on time ¹²) Staff appraisals and development and training of staff ¹³	LEAP with MEHRD	MEHRD EA Services PEA Inspector Reports	Services (supported by NZ Technical Advisers)	
3.0 Medium Term Outcomes (behaviour change)					
3.1 Teachers use available information to improve classroom teaching	Teachers demonstrate effective Use of data to improve teaching and learning	<u>Baseline:</u> To be collected in Year 1 <u>Target:</u> for cluster schools: 70% of schools by 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LEAP contractor reports MEHRD Inspectorate Unit's teacher practice reports (where available) 	LEAP with input from MEHRD Inspectorate Unit	Six monthly
3.2 Improved skills and motivation of existing teachers	1. Quality of teaching indicators 4.3 ¹⁴ 2. Teacher attendance	<u>Baseline:</u> T.b.c. Unapproved absenteeism is estimated at over 20% <u>Target:</u> To be developed (LPMU) Unapproved absence is less than 7% in PEA schools in LEAP provinces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LEAP contractor reports Principals appraisals PEA Inspectors' reports 	LEAP with input from Principals and PEA inspectors	Six monthly
3.3 School leaders lead teaching and learning in	School managers demonstrate leadership of teaching and learning	<u>Baseline:</u> Unknown. T.b.c. <u>Targets:</u> for six provinces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LEAP contractor reports 	LEAP with input from PEA	Six monthly

¹² Objective 2.2 'School finance and management of grants' *SIG Appendix 3: Targets for Performance Matrix*

¹³ Indicators 3.4 & 3.5 for 'School Leadership and Management' *Solomon Islands Government MEHRD School Inspection Evaluation Framework 2017-2018 Handbook*

¹⁴ Indicator 4.3 for 'Quality of Teaching' *Solomon Islands Government MEHRD School Inspection Evaluation Framework 2017-2018*

Results	Indicator(s)	Baseline Information and Targets (disaggregated by province)	Methodology/ Data Sources (disaggregated by province) ⁸	Measurement Responsibility	Timing
schools	through: Instructional leadership ¹⁵	supported by LEAP will be developed by LEAP with MEHRD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PEA Inspectors' reports 	inspectors	
3.4 Improved parent body support for schools	Parent representative body support school managers ¹⁶	<u>Baseline:</u> Zero <u>Target:</u> 80% of schools in the provincial clusters report at least 2 meetings of the parent body in the second year of the cluster	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LEAP contractor reports PEA Inspectors' reports 	LEAP with input from PEA inspectors	Six monthly
2.0 Short-Term Outcomes					
2.1 Teachers use new curriculum and materials as designed	People using skills/knowledge received from education related training six months later (No., %, M/F) ¹⁷	<u>Baseline:</u> Year 1 data (% of teachers observed teaching who are using the materials as designed) <u>Target:</u> t.b.c.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LPMU monitoring LEAP contractor reports 	LPMU LEAP with input from PEA Inspectors	Six monthly
<i>Suggested indicator to be monitored by MEHRD following implementation of the Solomon Islands Government MEHRD School Inspection Evaluation Framework 2017-2018</i>	<i>Teachers use the national curriculum in lessons¹⁸</i>	<u>Baseline:</u> T.b.c. <u>Target:</u> 65% of trained teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MEHRD Inspectorate Unit's teacher practice reports 	<i>MEHRD Inspectorate Unit</i>	TBC
2.2 PEA supports and	EA schools receiving support from	<u>Baseline:</u> Year one data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LEAP Contractor 	LEAP with input	Six monthly

¹⁵ Indicator 3.3 for 'School Leadership and Management' *Solomon Islands Government MEHRD School Inspection Evaluation Framework 2017-2018 Handbook*

¹⁶ Indicator 2.7 *Draft Capacity Evaluation Framework: Capacity Evaluation of Provincial Education Authorities* August 2016

¹⁷ MFAT Strategic Results Framework Education Capacity Development Indicator 1.4

¹⁸ Indicator 8.2 'The National Curriculum in Lessons' *Solomon Islands Government MEHRD School Inspection Evaluation Framework 2017-2018*

Results	Indicator(s)	Baseline Information and Targets (disaggregated by province)	Methodology/ Data Sources (disaggregated by province) ⁸	Measurement Responsibility	Timing
supervises school leaders and teachers to improve leadership and learning	Education Officers and Inspectorate (number; %) Percentage of schools with teacher appraisals completed Absenteeism forms completed and submitted to PEAs	<u>Target:</u> 75% of schools under PEA authority in LEAP supported schools	reports • PEA inspector reports	from, PEA inspectors	
2.3 School leaders support improved teaching	Head Teachers support teachers to assess and improve their teaching practice	<u>Baseline:</u> Year one data <u>Target:</u> 80% of schools in LEAP clusters	• LEAP contractor reports	LEAP	Six monthly
2.4 Schools and EAs engage parent bodies	Parent representative bodies are familiar with the School Plan and Grant spend Percentage of schools in clusters engaging with parents ¹⁹	<u>Baseline:</u> Year one data <u>Target:</u> 80% of schools in the LEAP project principal clusters	• LEAP project reports	LEAP	Six monthly
1.0 Outputs					
1.1 Teaching and learning materials developed and are available in schools	Readers and teacher guides published Schools with new teaching and learning materials available (% nationally)	<u>Baseline:</u> Zero <u>Target 1</u> 4400 teacher guides and 240,000 student readers produced <u>Target 2</u> NEAP target: Materials reach 80% of schools by 2018 LEAP target: Materials reach 100% of LEAP schools by	• LEAP contractor reports • LPMU (MEHRD) • Logistics and supplies records and reporting (MEHRD)	LEAP with input from MEHRD logistics and supplies	Six monthly

¹⁹ Indicator 4.3 'School Board Involvement' *Draft Capacity Evaluation Framework: Capacity Evaluation of Provincial Education Authorities* August 2016

Results	Indicator(s)	Baseline Information and Targets (disaggregated by province)	Methodology/ Data Sources (disaggregated by province) ⁸	Measurement Responsibility	Timing
		2018			
1.2 LPMU training and support equips teachers with knowledge and skills to use new curriculum materials	Teachers trained in use of materials provided (No., % nationally, M/F) and schools (No., % nationally) ²⁰ Teachers demonstrate they have acquired the knowledge and skills to use new curriculum materials at the end of training (No., % (M/F))	<u>Baseline:</u> Year one data <u>Target 1:</u> 700 schools across 6 levels <u>Target 2:</u> 80% of teachers who receive training demonstrate that they have acquired the knowledge and skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MEHRD LPMU Trainers' evaluations²¹ LPMU 	MEHRD LPMU supported by NZ Literacy Adviser	Six monthly
1.3 LPMU training and support equips teachers with knowledge and skills to use assessment data	Training in use of assessment data provided (No., % nationally) ²² Teachers demonstrate they have acquired the knowledge and skills to use assessment data at the end of training (No., % (M/F)) ²³	<u>Baseline:</u> Year one data <u>Target 1</u> to be developed <u>Target 2</u> 80% of teachers who receive training demonstrate that they have acquired the knowledge and skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MEHRD LPMU and National Education Assessment Division 	MEHRD LPMU supported by NZ Literacy Adviser	Six monthly
1.4 Implementation of Skills Development Plans build PEA officers' knowledge skills and motivation to support improved leadership and	Skills Development Plans are planned and reviewed annually (No., % of LEAP supported PEA officers) PEA officers demonstrate effective support to principals and teachers ²⁴	<u>Baseline:</u> Zero <u>Target:</u> At least 60% of PEA officers in Provinces supported by LEAP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LEAP contractor reports 	LEAP	Six monthly

²⁰ MFAT SRF Education Direct Results Indicator 10.2D 'Teachers trained'

²¹ This could include NZ Literacy TA developing with LPMU a succinct post-training evaluation asking participants: 'What are the three key things you have learned?' 'What are you going to do in your classroom as a result of this training?'

²² MFAT SRF Education Direct Results Indicator 10.2D 'Teachers trained'

²³ This could include NZ Literacy TA developing with LPMU a succinct post-training evaluation asking participants: 'What are the three key things you have learned?' 'What are you going to do in your classroom as a result of this training?'

²⁴ Indicators 3.9 and 4.1 Draft Capacity Evaluation Framework: Capacity Evaluation of Provincial Education Authorities August 2016

Results	Indicator(s)	Baseline Information and Targets (disaggregated by province)	Methodology/ Data Sources (disaggregated by province) ⁸	Measurement Responsibility	Timing
teaching					
1.5 Implementation of Skills Development Plans build school leaders knowledge, skills and motivation to support improved teaching	Skills Development Plans are planned and reviewed annually (No., % of LEAP supported school managers) School Managers are applying the new management standards ²⁵	<u>Baseline:</u> Zero <u>Target:</u> At least 60% of LEAP schools satisfactorily apply the new management standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LEAP contractor reports on principal clusters PEA Provincial Inspectorates 	LEAP with input from PEA inspectors	Six monthly

²⁵ Teaching Services Handbook (MEHRD)

APPENDIX 9: COMMENTARY ON THE RESULTS FRAMEWORK

The SIES programme design was outlined in the Activity Design Document, which was included as an Appendix in the form of a Results Framework. This Results Framework incorporated three components: a Theory of Change diagram, a Results Measurement Table, and an M&E workplan. A further design document is the Grant Funding Arrangement (*Solomon Islands Education Support 2016-2019*) between MFAT and SIG (signed in November 2016). The Results Measurement Table (RMT) from the Grant Funding Arrangement is attached above, since it is the document on which the funding for the SIES programme was based. This RMT is consistent with, although it differs slightly from, the RMT in the original Activity Design.

It was difficult for the Review Team to assess the strength and reliability of all the components of the Results Frameworks, since there has been only limited consistency in these basic documents over the time frame of the review. The Review Team concluded that there was a need for a simpler more manageable Results Framework design, improved coordination among components of the various Results Frameworks, better integration of programme design activities (for example, between LEAP and LPMU), and improved coherence and coordination of monitoring and reporting. Earlier more extensive consultation at the design stage between MFAT officials, LEAP contractors, and MEHRD officers who were involved in gathering information and reporting against targets would have been beneficial.

Further detail about some of the issues that are related to the Results Framework and its components are outlined below.

Theory of Change documents

The Review Team has identified several “Theory of Change” documents that relate to SIES: these include the first diagram under Appendix A of the SIES Activity Design Document (the SIES “Theory of Change”), the LEAP Results Diagram (4 October 2017), and the *NEAP Overall Theory of Change 2016-2020* from the *MEHRD Monitoring and Evaluation and Learning Plan 2017-2020*. This MEHRD “Theory of Change” document was different from the “Theory of Change” document included in the Review Team’s Terms of Reference. A Results Diagram (a “Theory of Change” document) also existed for the Caritas RTC project in its original Activity Design document.

The Review Team concluded that there is not a single integrated “Theory of Change” document that provides a basis for the SIES programme. In addition, changes to the various “Theory of Change” documents over time have meant that they have become “moving targets”. Because there has been no consistency over time, it has been difficult to assess the strength and effectiveness of the various theories of change. The best of the theories of change is the LEAP “Theory of Change” document (dated 17 October 2017). The weakest of the “Theory of Change” documents is the one included in the terms of reference for this review, although it is acknowledged that this document was changed over time.

Results Management Table documents

Similarly, several different Results Management Tables exist, such as the RMT reproduced above from the GFA, the earlier RMT from the original Activity Design, the LEAP RMT, and the MEHRD Literacy Plan (*NEAP 2016-2020: Literacy Initiative*). The RMTs are important because these documents provide the basis on which monitoring and reporting on the programmes is undertaken.

The RMT from the GFA appears to have derived from the RMT in the Activity Design Document. There are clear similarities between these two documents, although they are not identical.

Reporting against the RMT (from the GFA) has been done through two related RMTs.

The LEAP initiative has been reporting against a (related but different) LEAP RMT that appears to have been changed over time as a result of contract negotiations. The Review Team noted that it is sensible for changes to be made to reporting instruments if, for example, indicators are found to be inappropriate, or if data is not available to be collected or analysed for reporting purposes. It is also acknowledged that the RMT (from the GFA) incorporates both LEAP outcomes and LPMU outcomes, and that it should not therefore be expected that it should be identically aligned with the LEAP RMT.

LPMU has been reporting against a different RMT, the MEHRD Literacy Plan (*NEAP 2016-2020 Literacy Initiative*).

In order to illustrate some of the differences between the RMT from the GFA and the LEAP RMT, the following are the main indicators against which LEAP reported in the February 2019 quarterly report. You'll note that longer-term are very similar to those in the GFA, the short-term outcomes are different from (although related to) those outlined in the GFA, and the medium-term outcomes and outputs are different from those outlined in Table 4 in the body of this report. Furthermore, the outputs are different from although related to indicators in the RMT (from the GFA)

Table 7: LEAP Indicators as outlined in the RMT

Long-term outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved literacy learning outcomes Improved PEA leadership and management Improved school leadership and management
Medium-Term Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved quality of literacy learning PEAs demonstrate improvements in identified focus areas School leaders demonstrate improvements in identified focus areas School leaders and school boards collaborate effectively to support student learning
Short-term outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved literacy knowledge of teachers and school leaders Improved knowledge and skills of PEA leaders to support and manage teaching and learning in schools Improved knowledge and skills of school leaders to lead and manage teaching and learning Improved committee-school relationships
Outputs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School cluster literacy workshops to strengthen teachers' literacy pedagogy PEA mentors work with school leaders to create and implement strategies to strengthen PEA support for teaching and learning in schools LEAP works with MEHRD to establish the EASGF and supports LEAP PEA to apply for and implement the Small Grants effectively School mentors work with school leadership to create and implement strategies to strengthen school leadership and management of teaching and learning School leadership team and mentors work with communities to strengthen the relationship between the school and the community

A similar exercise was undertaken in order to compare the indicators against which the LPMU was reporting and the indicators in the RMT (from the GFA). The indicators in the MEHRD Literacy Plan (*NEAP 2016-2020 Literacy Initiative*) are the following:

The outcomes for the LPMU are not specifically stated in the MEHRD Literacy Plan. They are presumably the outcomes listed in this report in Section 3.2.4 taken from the GFA. The following are the specific outputs listed in the MEHRD Literacy Plan.

Table 8: LPMU Outputs (broadly consistent with, but not identical to the outputs in the RMT (from the GFA))

Outputs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management of LPMU provides high level of support to EAs and MEHRD staff
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- Proven successful literacy project strategies mainstreamed, built into the revised curriculum and implemented across basic education (PPY to Y6)
- Develop an integrated approach to language, literacy and vernacular based on lessons learnt from literacy program and vernacular pilot
- Literacy PD delivered by literacy program
- Maintenance of early year literacy in schools
- Middle years literacy strategy implemented to build on early year literacy
- Building strong partnerships and networks with EA, schools and wider community
- Adequate and quality literacy materials

While these LPMU outputs are generally consistent with the outputs for the LPMU listed in the GFA, they are not identical to them. The reason for this is that the LPMU (because it is part of MEHRD) is reporting against NEAP outcomes and outputs, and against the Annual Divisional Work Plans that are derived from the NEAP. There is some apparent lack of alignment between the NEAP and the RMT document derived from the GFA (in so far as it relates to LPMU). This lack of alignment and resulting complexity has made it difficult, if not impossible, for the Review Team to track progress in reporting against achievement of the outcomes and outputs set out in the GFA.

Improved coordination is needed to establish a clear relationship between the various components of the different Results Frameworks that exist. Earlier more extensive consultation at the design stage between MFAT officials, LEAP contractors, and MEHRD officers who were involved in gathering information and reporting against LPMU targets would have been beneficial.

Because the M&E plan for MEHRD reflects the NEAP, and because the NEAP has a much wider scope than the SIES, a detailed analysis of the MEHRD M&E plan has not been undertaken. The current M&E plan for LEAP is essentially the LEAP RMT described above.