



FORMATIVE EVALUATION AND IMPLEMENTATION REVIEW OF THE PSD INITIATIVE

A report for the Pacific Community (SPC) and the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

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July 2021

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1. LIST OF ACRONYMS

SPC	The Pacific Community
MFAT	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
PSD	Improving Access to Pacific Statistics and Data Initiative
SDD	Statistics for Development Division
PDH	Pacific Data Hub
SDG	Sustainable Development Indicators
NMDI	National Millennium Development Indicators
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
ToC	Theory of Change
IS	Information Services Division
PICTs	Pacific Island Countries and Territories
TYPSS	Ten Year Pacific Statistics Strategy
SPL	Strategy, Performance and Learning
SPREP	Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Synergia and Sound Research would like to acknowledge the support of key stakeholders for sharing their expertise and insights to support the evaluation of the Improving Access to Pacific Statistics and Data (PSD) Initiative. We appreciate the time stakeholders took to participate in the interviews and group workshops.

We would also like to recognise the time and support from SPC and MFAT staff throughout the evaluation. We would particularly like to recognise the time and expertise Evaluation Steering Group. We hope that our collaborative approach to this work maximises the value, relevance and use of the evaluation for you.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2.1 The Pacific Statistics and Data (PSD) programme

In 2019, SPC received a 4-year activity grant from the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) for an activity known as the Improving Access to Pacific Statistics and Data (PSD) Initiative. This programme of work is led by the Statistics for Development Division (SDD) and the Pacific Data Hub (PDH) and supports interconnected streams of work for SDD and the PDH.

The overarching goal of the initiative is to improve evidence-informed decision making in the Pacific through increasing access to, and capability, to utilise quality and timely data and statistics. The programme involves a number of workstreams, including the development and strengthening of the PDH platform as the source of Pacific Evidence, as well as support to regional Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) data collection and monitoring, improvements to National Statistics Office (NSO) websites and dissemination, data curation (including microdata curation), improved data governance (within SPC, member governments and a Pacific data ecosystem), and capacity development for evidence-informed decision-making at national and regional level.

2.2 Overview of the programme context

The PSD Initiative is an integrated, cross-organisational programme of work with the entirety of SPC in service to the Pacific Region. Both SPC and MFAT recognise that the PSD, while building on existing streams of work, is a “regional first” in both its implementation approach and intended outcomes. As such, SPC and MFAT have agreed to use an adaptive approach to the management and implementation of the PSD.

The programme is working towards a range of short, medium, and long-term outcomes, which collectively describe the interconnected nature of the PSD Initiative. The outcomes of the programme are:

Short Term Outcomes

- A greater range of regional and national Pacific data (statistical, administrative, indicator data and microdata) and Research/Evaluation Publication is curated and available through the PDH
- Pacific national and regional stakeholders are more willing to collaborate and share data with the PDH
- Pacific national and regional stakeholders are increasingly accessing the PDH and tools, products and services
- PDH is a robust, secure, user centred platform, underpinned by partnerships, data governance, data management, and data sharing standards.

Medium Term Outcomes

- Improved quality of evidence used in PICT and regional policy development, monitoring and evaluation, including the SDGs, regional policies and indicators
- Decision makers and other stakeholders are championing data sharing and evidence use for policy development and evaluation
- A network of Pacific stakeholders have strengthened skills, knowledge and commitment to access, appraise, communicate and use PDH data and evidence for decision-making
- PDH and statistical tools and datasets are supporting application of multi-disciplinary data to complex development challenges
- SPC and member countries have improved practices of data management and harmonisation.

Long Term Outcomes

- Improved evidence-informed policy development by Pacific governments, Development Partners, and regional and international agencies
- PDH is a secure, trusted and valued central repository for finding open and restricted access Pacific data.

To achieve these outcomes, the PSD Initiative relies upon a breadth of relationships both internal to SPC and stretching out across the Pacific region to member countries, and multilateral organisations.

2.3 Purpose of this review, scope, design and limitations

Part way through the PSD's grant funding, the overall purpose of the evaluation is to understand how well the PSD is being implemented, and how the PSD initiative can be refined and improved in the remaining time of the programme funding. The insights and evidence from this evaluation are expected to:

- Support the ongoing adaptive development of the PSD initiative
- Review of the implementation arrangements including the Theory of Change (ToC) and the Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) framework
- Evaluate progress toward intended outcomes and consider where and how the PSD initiative is effective and where improvements might be needed.

The scope of this evaluation is the PSD Initiative, which is jointly led by Information Services (IS) and the Statistics for Development Division (SDD) with activities being undertaken by PDH and SDD. Also within the scope of the evaluation are the PSD Initiative are the programme Theory of Change and the PSD Initiative MEL framework.

The evaluation design included:

- **Evaluation preparation** guided by documentation review and a theory of change workshop
- **Data collection** consisting of group interviews, one on one interviews and documentation analysis
- **Sensemaking sessions** to both review the progress of the group interviews and one-one-one interviews and to socialise the emerging findings alongside the theory of change.

The evaluation included participation from 48 people via either individual or small group interviews and two Theory of Change workshops with programme implementation stakeholders.

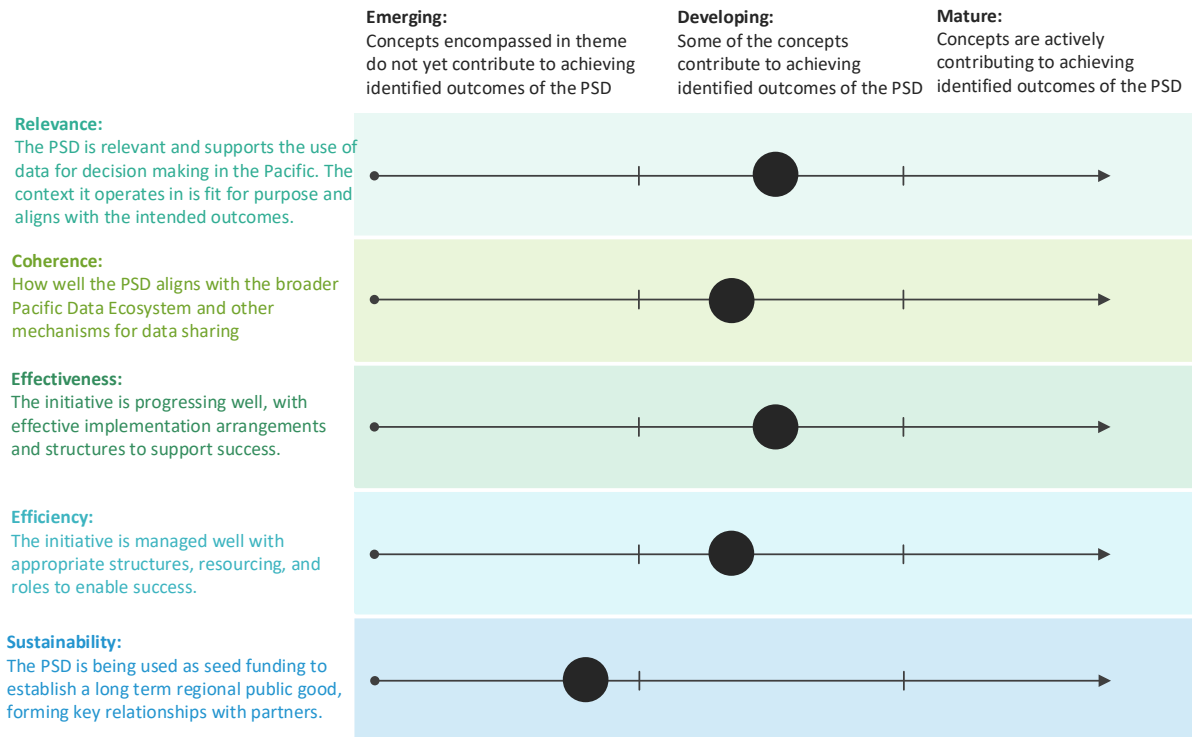
The intended audience for this evaluation is The PSD Steering Committee (comprising SPC, MFAT and Pacific Community member country representatives), MFAT, SPC Senior Leadership, the PSD Technical Working group, SPC internal divisions, and partner agencies.

The consultancy team acknowledge the methodological limitations of stakeholder availability and the lasting impact of Covid-19 and associated lockdowns. It was envisaged that a 'light touch' online literature review of would provide examples of regional data hubs which could used to explore and compare the implementation journey of the PDH. However, there was limited translatable information relating to the implementation of these platforms publicly available when the online search was undertaken. Where possible, the findings that were generated through this workstream have been woven through the findings.

2.4 Key findings

The overall finding of the evaluation is that PSD Initiative is on its way to achieving its intended outcomes, with the overall perception of the project largely positive. Evaluation stakeholders were quick to speak to the importance of this landmark piece of work, particularly the PDH, and with it,

the significant opportunities it has going forward. Using evaluative judgement, the evaluation identified that the PSD, for most key evaluation questions, is in an emerging to developing stage of maturity. There are some identified push and pull factors, such as building trust through a data governance framework, actively creating and facilitating relationships with key stakeholders in the Pacific way, and managing the initiative in a more strategic way, that would support these judgements to be moved along the scale to a more mature space.



2.5 Recommendations

The following recommendations provide both the funder and the implementor some considerations for what the next steps are to ensure the continued success and positive experiences associated with the PSD:

- **Develop a data governance framework**
- **Elevate the strategic governance of the PDH to an appropriate strategic level within SPC to support sustainability**
- **Further explore arrangements for the operational management of the different workstreams of the PSD (specifically, the PDH), and where this may be best placed**
- **Further invest in and prioritise the development and maintenance of relationships with key stakeholders in the Pacific way**
- **Create and take up opportunities for socialisation with internal and external stakeholders to support awareness and use of PSD outputs.**

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 Overview of the Improving Access to Pacific Statistics and Data Initiative

In 2019, SPC received a 4-year activity grant from the New Zealand MFAT funded for an Activity known as the Improving Access to Pacific Statistics and Data Initiative. The activity grant covers the period 2019 – 2022 and the grant implementation is carried out in close partnership with MFAT and SPC.

The PSD programme of work is led by the Statistics for Development Division and the Pacific Data Hub and supports interconnected pillars of work for SDD and the PDH. These pillars are:

- Dissemination, discoverability and useability of statistical products and services
- PICT and regional capacity development for data analysis and uptake
- Pacific Data Hub platform and partnerships.
 - The PSD initiative is widely understood by stakeholders as providing funding for the establishment of the Pacific Data Hub, a central, online repository of data **about the Pacific** and **from the Pacific**. The PDH is a platform which serves as a gateway to data and information about the Pacific and is part of an emerging **Pacific Data Ecosystem** to promote greater coordination in data management, dissemination, and uptake of initiatives.

Over the course of the grant funding these interconnected streams of work are expected to deliver the following outputs:

1. Pacific development indicators including Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) (Database, dashboard, and progress wheels), the reviewed/revised list of National Millennium Development Indicators (NMDI) and other regional indicators are kept up to date and available to users through PDH .stat, supported by relevant metadata and documentation
2. SPC SDD website redeveloped and kept-up to date with statistical products and data services accessible for national, regional, and international users
3. Assistance provided to Pacific countries in
 - i. Compiling data for their SDG Voluntary National Reviews
 - ii. Production of analytical briefs, policy papers and fact sheets
 - iii. Data and information dissemination via their National Statistics Office websites
4. The Pacific Data Hub (PDH) – Implemented by the Information Services Division at SPC
 - a. “PDH established as a single authoritative repository and point of access for all Pacific data held by Pacific Agencies and other agencies that may wish to be linked; including with a strong focus on data management and governance.”
5. Establishment of networks of “Pacific Data Champions” and pilot uptake activities with three Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs).

The PSD Initiative has been guided and evaluated against a Theory of Change which links the program outputs with short-, medium- and long-term outcomes. The Theory of Change is also aligned with the MEL framework which evaluates the progress of the initiative. It is important to note that both the Theory of Change and the MEL framework of the PSD Initiative have been revised since the inception of the programme as part of a commitment to adaptive management principles.

Figure 1: PSD Initiative Theory of Change¹



Supporting achievement, monitoring and reporting against

The SDGs

Pacific Regional Frameworks

PSD Long Term Outcomes:

Improved evidence-informed policy development by Pacific governments, **Development Partners**, and regional and international agencies

PDH is a secure, trusted **and valued** central repository for finding open and restricted access Pacific data

PSD Mid Term Outcomes :

Improved quality of evidence **used in** PICT and regional policy development, monitoring and evaluation, including the SDGs, regional policies and indicators

Decision makers and other stakeholders are championing data sharing and evidence use **for policy development** and evaluation

A network of Pacific stakeholders have strengthened skills, knowledge and commitment to access, appraise, communicate and use **PDH data and evidence for decisionmaking**

PDH and statistical tools and datasets are supporting application of multi-disciplinary data to complex development challenges

SPC and **member countries** have improved practices of data management and harmonisation

PSD Short Term Outcomes :

A greater range of regional and national Pacific data (statistical, administrative, indicator data and microdata) and **Research/Evaluation Publications** is curated and available through the PDH

Pacific national and regional stakeholders are more willing to collaborate **and share data with the PDH**

Pacific national and regional stakeholders are **increasingly accessing** the PDH and tools, products and services

PDH is a robust, secure, user centred platform, underpinned by partnerships, data governance, data management, and data sharing standards

Outputs :

(OP1) Pacific development indicators (including SDGs, reviewed NMDIs and others) kept up to date and available to users through .stat, (supported by relevant metadata and documentation)

(OP2) SDD web site and platforms kept up to date with statistical products and data services accessible for national, regional and international users.

(OP3) Assistance provided to Pacific countries in the **Analysis, Dissemination and use of data**

(OP5) Pacific Data Hub supports 3 pilot PICTs with **information management, Dissemination and uptake**, and builds the capacity of a network of network of Pacific data champions

(OP4) Pacific Data Hub **platform and partnerships** develop an authoritative point of entry for all Pacific data **and knowledge products** held by Pacific agencies; including a strong focus on data management & governance

Key principles:

**Pacific Ownership, collaborative approaches, user and stakeholder engagement, partnership development
Data governance and security, peoplecentred approach**

The overarching goal of the initiative is to improve evidence-informed decision-making in the Pacific through increasing access to and capability to utilise quality and timely data and statistics. To reach this goal, strong internal and external partnerships are required to collect, curate, and produce data and statistics to inform decision-making. Figure 1 illustrates that the foundations of the PSD initiative are the key principles of Pacific Ownership, collaborative approaches, user and stakeholder engagement, data governance security and people-centred approaches.

The PSD initiative is governed by a Steering Committee and guided by a project governance framework for the effective adaptive management, implementation, supervision, and monitoring of the PSD. The Steering Group also provides advice on the implementation of the project in accordance with and to achieve the objectives of the grant funding agreement. Membership on the Steering Group includes representatives from:

- The Director of SDD (co-chair)
- The Director of IS (co-chair)
- Director of SPL
- MFAT activity manager
- Two PICT government representatives
- The PSD Programme Manager (no vote)
- Manager, Data Analysis and Dissemination SDD (no vote)
- Observers from SPC's country members, international and regional partner organisations and SPC experts (by invitation only).

¹ Revised version from September 2020

4. EVALUATION PURPOSE AND DESIGN

4.1 Purpose

The overall purpose of the evaluation was to understand how well the PSD is being implemented, and how the PSD initiative can be refined and improved. The insights and evidence from the evaluation are intended to:

- Support the ongoing adaptive development of the PSD initiative
- Review of the implementation arrangements including the Theory of Change and the Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) framework
- Evaluate progress toward intended outcomes and consider where and how the PSD initiative is effective and where improvements might be needed.

4.2 Scope

This evaluation recognises that the PSD Initiative is an integrated, cross-organisational programme of work with the entirety of SPC in service to the Pacific Region. The evaluation has been designed with the cross-organisational nature of the PSD Initiative in mind, and within the scope of the evaluation are activities led by both the Information Services (IS) and Statistics for Development Division (SDD). These activities relate to:

The three interconnected pillars, as noted in the amended Theory of Change diagram:

1. Dissemination, discoverability and usability of statistical products and services
2. The PICT and regional capacity development for data analysis² and uptake
3. Pacific Data Hub platform and partnerships (multi-sector) were also reflected in the revised MEL framework.

The five intended outputs of the PSD:

- The development and strengthening of the PDH platform
- SDG data collation, analysis, and dissemination
- Improvements to National Statistics Office (NSO) websites and dissemination
- Data curation (including microdata curation)
- Improved data governance (within SPC, member governments and a Pacific data ecosystem), and capacity development for evidence-informed decision-making at national and regional level.

The amended Theory of Change and the PSD Initiative MEL framework are also within the scope of this evaluation.

4.3 Key evaluation questions

This evaluation has been guided by the following key evaluation questions (KEQ):

- KEQ 1 **Relevance:** Have there been significant changes to the relevance of the PSD services (across the five output areas and three streams of work) in terms of access to Pacific data for decision-making?

² Capacity development for data analysis is included in the PSD Theory of Change and relates to the PDH establishment of a network of Pacific data champion in 3 PICTS, however, the evaluation team acknowledges that there is a separate programme of work dedicated to capacity and capability building in the Pacific Region.

- KEQ 2. **Coherence**: How does the PDH complement and align with the broader “Pacific Data Ecosystem”, and other data-sharing platforms used by key stakeholders (e.g. researchers, evaluators, analysts, officials)?
- KEQ 3 **Effectiveness**:
 - How well is the PSD initiative progressing against the intended outputs and outcomes?
 - How effective are the implementation arrangements and structures in place to enable PSD to meet the desired outcomes?
 - What are the enablers and barriers to the achievement of outcomes? What are key anticipated delivery risks and/or challenges going forward?
- KEQ 4. **Efficiency**: How well are the project implementation and resources being managed? Are the budget, costed workplan, team structure and roles fit for purpose, appropriate to the programme's strategy, outputs, and outcomes?
- KEQ 5. **Sustainability**: How well is the PSD being used as “seed funding” for the Pacific Data Hub, to establish a long-term, regional public good?
- KEQ 6: what **improvements/adaptations** will help enhance the effectiveness of the PSD? This includes recommendations relating to the programme strategy, design, operational structure, resourcing, theory of change and MERL.

A comprehensive list of key evaluation questions and data sources is in Appendix 1.

4.4 Summary of methodology/design

The methodology for this evaluation comprised of three key stages; evaluation preparation, data collection and sense making.

4.4.1 Evaluation preparation

The preparation for this evaluation included:

1. Extensive consultation with the Evaluation Steering Group with representatives from MFAT, SPC, the Information Services division and the Statistics for Development division. This consultation focussed on the overall design of the evaluation and resulting evaluation plan and ensuring the right stakeholders were included in the right group workshops and interviews.
2. Key implementation, strategic and operational documentation review was undertaken to provide the evaluation team with insight and context to the PSD initiative. These key documents included:
 - The Improving access to Pacific Statistics and Data Grant Funding Arrangement
 - Improving access to Pacific Statistics and Data – Business Case
 - MFAT reporting documentation including Annual Outcome Progress Reports and mid-year reports
 - Pacific Statistics Data MEL Framework
 - Pacific Statistics and Data Theory of Change
 - Pacific Data Hub Operational Strategy
 - PDH communications strategy and supporting documents including feedback from interviews with stakeholders
 - SPC SDD User Focus Strategy Report
 - PSD Governance documentation including minutes and the Terms of Reference
 - SPC 2021 Transition Plan

- TYPSS and TYPSS Review documentation
 - Internal report from the Theory of Change reflection
3. A 'light touch' online scan for international examples of similar platforms to the PDH was also conducted. The purpose of this scan was to identify lessons to be learnt from the implementation of other initiatives. The scan also relates to selected evaluation questions in Appendix 1.

4.4.2 Data Collection and Theory of Change Workshops

The second phase of the evaluation included the data collection and Theory of Change workshops. The details of these data collection methods are outline below.

4.4.2.1 Small group interviews

These group interviews targeted key evaluation questions to specific groups engaged with the PSD initiative. The guiding interview questions for these group interviews included questions relating to the relationship that the groups have with the PSD initiative:

- What is the effectiveness of the PSD outputs and outcomes?
- How Accessible are the services and the data delivered by SPC?
- How usable are the PSD and other products?
- What benefits have resulted from these services / data products?
- How does the PSD initiative and the PDH aligns and complements existing activities, and how it works to contribute to the strategic goals of the Pacific region?
- How relevant is the PSD initiative and the PDH for end users?
- What context affects the relevance of the PSD initiative and the PDH?

The small groups were designed by the Evaluation Steering Group and relate to the area of expertise of the stakeholders (n=28):

- **Governance and management workshop.** (n= 9)
 - The purpose of this session was to understand and explore the governance and management arrangements of the PSD initiative.
- **Stakeholders with a technical focus workshop.** (n=3)
 - The purpose of this session was to understand the use of data for voluntary national reviews, academic research and policy makers. This interview was targeted towards end users and partners.
- **Partners of the SPC external to SPC workshop.** (n= 9)
 - The focus of this session was to hear the experiences and insights of those sharing data, promoting the PSD, and using data. This session looked to understand the Pacific data ecosystem, and how different actors relate to one another.
- **High level partners external to SPC and across sub regions workshop.** (n=0)
 - The purpose of this session was to collect the views of important national stakeholders, understand the level of evidence-informed decision making in the Pacific region and uncover opportunities for the PSD and the PDH. Whilst this interview was scheduled and participants registered their attendance via RSVP, on the day, no attendees joined the online workshop. Two participants made themselves available for individual interviews. This limitation has been discussed with the Evaluation Steering Group.
- **Stakeholders with a data use and production focus internal to SPC workshop.** (n=7)

- The purpose of this session was to gain insight from internal SPC divisions around how the PDH can support different divisions to achieve their objectives, how the PDH can support and facilitate sharing and uptake of data by SPC, as well as data management capability across the organisation.

4.4.2.2 Individual interviews

The consultancy team also conducted a set of individual interviews. The purpose of these interviews was to gather insights and understandings about the PSD initiative and the PDH platform. These interviews also provided an open space to explore the PSD Initiative and the PDH from the perspectives of those outside of the implementation of the project. On occasion, when a group interview participant was unable to attend the group session, the consultancy team was able to follow up with an individual interview. These interviews were guided by key evaluation questions set out in Appendix 1.

The individual interviews included representatives from the following external organisations and internal SPC divisions (n=20):

- DFAT
- Solomon Islands Ministry of Development and Planning
- MFAT
- The World Bank
- Maven Consulting
- SPREP
- Sustineo
- SPC FAME Division
- SPC IS Division
- SPC SDD Division
- SPC SPL Division
- Office of National Environment Palau
- Solomon Islands National Statistics Office
- Statistics New Zealand

4.4.2.3 Theory of Change workshop

The Theory of Change workshops brought together key stakeholders involved in the implementation of the PSD initiative and was guided by Dr Peter Carswell from Synergia. The stakeholders included in these workshops were representatives from both SPC and MFAT that had in-depth knowledge of the implementation of the PSD initiative from a governance and operational perspective. The Theory of Change workshop was part of the preparation for the subsequent data collection, as well as providing key insights during the data collection phase. The two workshops broadly focused on:

1. Theory of Change Workshop 1

- Understanding the current Theory of Change and progress towards outputs and outcomes, and its strengths and limitations
- Understanding governance and management arrangements as they affect project implementation.

2. Theory of Change Workshop 2

- Propose possible revisions to the Theory of Change and corresponding MEL system considering insights gained via other information collection channels.

4.4.3 Sense making sessions

Mid-way through the data collection phase the consultancy team held one session with PSD and MFAT [Evaluation Steering Group] to discuss the emerging findings and recommendations against the six KEQs. This sense making session was guided by a document "Summary of Key Insights from Data Collection", which is found in Appendix 3.

At the conclusion of the data collection phase, the consultancy team held an internal sense making session to identify the themes emerging from across the different data sources, align findings against the key evaluation questions, and make evaluative judgement about the success of the PSD initiative to date. This formed the basis of the reporting.

4.5 Limitations

The consultancy team acknowledge the following methodological limitations.

- **Stakeholder availability:** A zoom group interview was scheduled with the group comprised of 'High level partners external to SPC and across sub regions', despite several participants registering their attendance, on the day there were no attendees to this workshop. Where possible, individual interviews were arranged with partners external to SPC across the sub regions of the Pacific.
- **COVID 19:** During the project there were two COVID 19 lockdowns, one in Auckland, New Zealand where the consultancy team is based, and one in Noumea, New Caledonia where the PSD initiative project team is based. These lockdowns resulted in some project delays.
- **Limitations of the 'Light Touch Literature Scan':** A 'light touch' online scan for international examples of similar platforms to the PDH was carried out as part of the evaluation to assess if there are lessons to be learnt from the implementation of other initiatives. During this process it was identified that specific details pertaining to the implementation of other initiatives of a similar nature to the PDH were not publicly available. Where possible, anecdotal insights have been provided under the key evaluation questions. It is likely that deeper understanding of the lessons learnt from other data platforms would be possible by building relationships with funding partners and international organisations.

5. FINDINGS

This section of the report builds the story of progress and achievement of the PSD programme and associated activity up to this mid-term point. The findings presented in this section align with the key evaluation questions presented in section 4.3.

The assessments in these sections have drawn on and refer to a range of data sources and methods, seeking to triangulate findings where possible:

- **Review of project documentation** (see section 4.4.1)
- **Group and individual interviews** with key stakeholders both internal to SPC and External.
- **Literature and document scan** of:
 - Key implementation, strategic and operational documentation as identified in section 4.4.1
 - International examples of similar platforms to the PDH.

This section is structured with headings for each evaluation question, and key thematic areas pulled out to form subsections. Each evaluation area also presents some key considerations for the PSD team to consider, to make the most of the remaining PSD development time.

Broadly, the initiative is on its way to achieving its intended outcomes, with the overall perception of the project largely positive. Evaluation stakeholders were quick to speak to the importance of this landmark piece of work, particularly the PDH, and with it, the significant opportunities it has going forward.

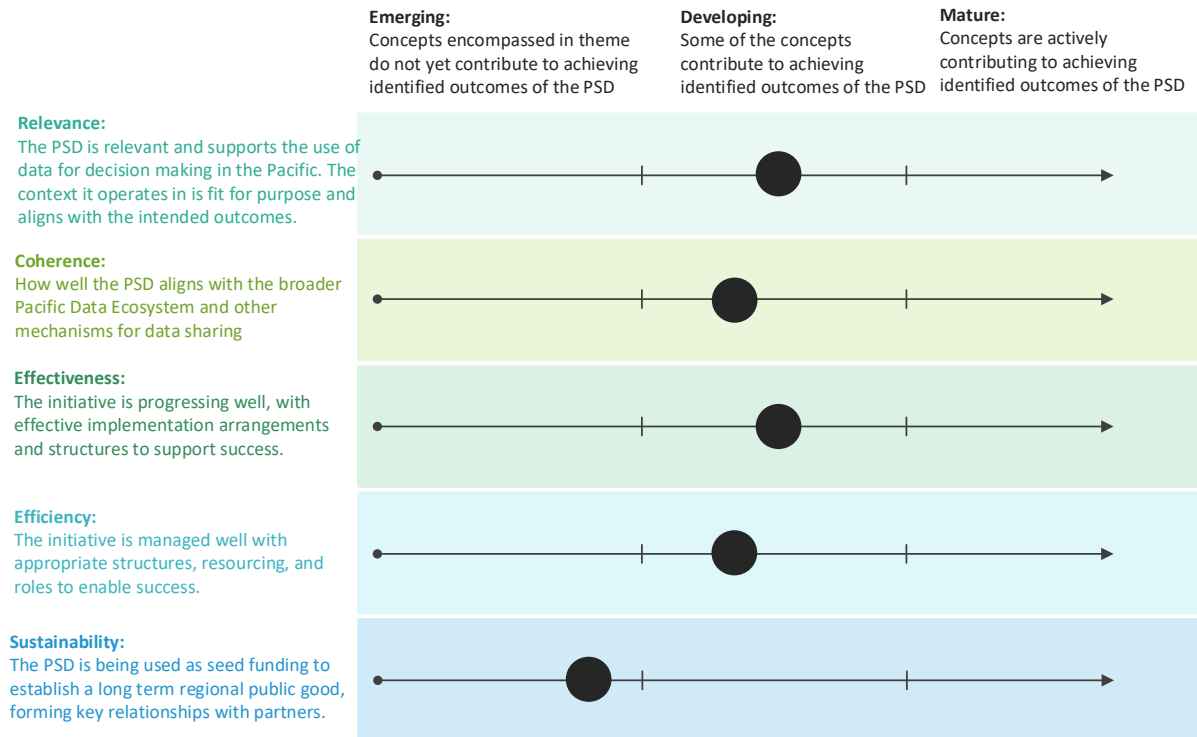
"It's important for us to acknowledge the value of the PDH already... and the potential for it to improve is exponential."
- Internal stakeholder

The figure on the following page presents overall evaluative judgements on the progression of the initiative against the key evaluation questions, based on the evidence collected as a part of this evaluation. Based on the analysis of the data and information available during the evaluation, judgements were made on the progression of the PSD initiative according to a scale from Emerging through to Mature. This scale was defined by the following criteria:

- **Emerging:** Concepts related to this theme do not yet contribute to achieving the identified outcomes of the PSD.
- **Developing:** Some concepts encompassed in the theme are contributing to achieving the identified outcomes of the PSD.
- **Mature:** Concepts are actively contributing to achieving the identified outcomes of the PSD.

Each evaluation question area was placed at some point along the scale. These judgements will be explored within the following sections individually, and key considerations will be presented to support shifting progress along the spectrum.

Figure 1: Evaluative judgement against KEQ domains

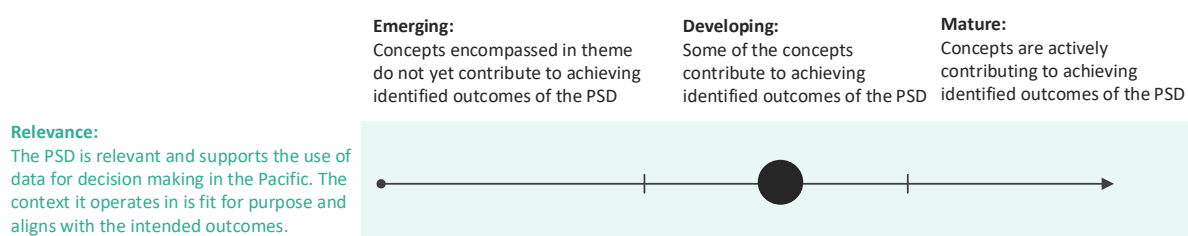


5.1 Relevance

The relevance section considers the place of the PSD programme within the context in which it operates, both within SPC and within the broader Pacific region. As guided by the 'relevance' evaluation questions, this section explores key changes to the context that affect the relevance of the PSD, including demand for data for decision-making and supply of statistics and data. It also explores linkages between the PSD programme and other players in the region forming part of the Pacific Data Ecosystem, including other data sources and platforms used by the audience of the PDH.

When considering the overall progression of the PSD programme within the concepts under the 'relevance' evaluation question, there is some evidence that these concepts are contributing to achieving the outcomes desired by the PSD. The evaluation also found, however, that there are some components that should be strengthened to support the PSD to achieve its outcomes. The figure below presents a graphical representation of the evaluative judgement in this domain.

Figure 2: Relevance evaluative judgement



The following sections explore the different factors that contribute to the PSD's relevance. This section concludes by identifying some challenges the PSD is experiencing with regards to relevance, and some clear opportunities for improvement.

5.1.1 Internal relevance and alignment within SPC

According to the Grant Funding Agreement, the PSD programme supports two interrelated technology platforms SPC has been developing, the Pacific Data Hub and an SDG Database and Dashboard built on OECD's .stat database platform. The .stat platform incorporates a wider development indicator database built on the existing set of National Minimum Development Indicators (NMDI) currently being reviewed and updated.

The PSD is also complemented by another initiative to strengthen Pacific capacity in Monitoring, Evaluation, Research and Learning (PAC MEL), which is being implemented in partnership between MFAT and SPC with other partners such as the World Bank, Asian Development Bank and DFAT.

The PSD is well aligned to existing and anticipated work streams at SPC to support the strengthening of the availability and use of evidence for decision making, monitoring, evaluation and research in the Pacific.

5.1.1.1 SPC leadership and support for the PSD

SPC has traditionally worked within the divisional structure of the organisation. The PSD programme represents one of the first large scale projects that has required a significant degree of cross-divisional collaboration, which is occurring predominantly in the SDD and IS divisions.

It is widely acknowledged that it is important that the PSD, and in particular, the PDH, succeeds. Through this evaluation, SPC leadership indicated that the PSD is a programme of strategic importance to the organisation. The way of working, and the area of development that the PSD brings is something that SPC has identified as important to invest in as a custodian of large amounts of Pacific data.

“SPC has invested in this work with extra resource to support its success. This is a signal of our aspiration that the PSD [PDH] becomes a platform to discuss open data in the Pacific, leading to good governance and getting the most value out of the data the region has.”

- Internal stakeholder

Investment in data infrastructure was noted as fundamental infrastructure to further the economic and digital activity in the Pacific region. Internal SPC stakeholders identified that the PSD is a great contribution to this space and holds great relevance in the data infrastructure realm in the Pacific.

Internal SPC stakeholders report being largely happy with the initiative, indicating that it is progressing well. From an SDD perspective, there has been significant positive progress and success with the SDG and .Stat work programme.

Divisions outside of SDD and IS have existing mechanisms for sharing data and information back with member countries and are excited about the prospect of joining these up through the PDH. There are also significant opportunities for SPC to leverage the work of the PSD to connect internal contextual data and information. Key areas for strengthening the PSD initiative by internal stakeholders were identified as:

- Making the data SPC has more available - SPC has a lot of contextual data and a lot of information is “under people's desks”
- Continue to build on the opportunity of cross divisional collaboration
- Strengthen the relationship and partnership between IS and SDD – for the PDH to flourish this relationship needs to be strong Relationship and partnership between IS AND SDD needs to be flourishing, cannot do it separately.
- Continue to build stronger relationships with divisions which already have data sharing platforms and/or other mechanisms for sharing data – these relationships are critical to ensure greater alignment across SPC and with member countries.

5.1.2 Relevance within the regional context

SPC is already the custodian of a large amount of data in the Pacific that informs the development and monitoring of progress toward regional and national policies and frameworks. There has been an acknowledgement, particularly by internal SPC stakeholders that more can be done to maximise the value of this data, which is often siloed, to inform policy development, implementation, and monitoring.

The PDH is one of the resources that support countries in achieving their goals as prescribed in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) framework. The programme makes a range of mechanisms available to country officials working on achieving SGDs. Some of the mechanisms are:

1. The platform for accessing data and information used in policy making and evaluation national and regional progress toward SDG targets, including the development of Voluntary National Reviews
2. A platform for dissemination of data and information created in the process of working towards achieving SDG goals and meeting the reporting requirements set under other regional and global commitments, including the SAMOA Pathway, CEDAW, CDC and Sendai
3. A set of tools that can be used in national policy analysis and development and in national decision-making processes
4. Capacity development initiatives aimed at building the capacity of country officials in using data and information in policy analysis, development and evaluation
5. A central one-stop-shop for country officials in accessing convenient, reliable, up-to-date and user-friendly data.

A successful launch of the PDH in December 2020 raised the visibility and profile of the PSD project and socialised opportunities to stakeholders both internally and externally. Following the launch,

the current and future potential value of the PDH in particular has clearly been recognised by both data producers and data consumers.

"[The PSD is a] game changing initiative in the region. There is clearly a need for what it brings and what it can bring... Data produced for and by the Pacific." - External Stakeholder

It was acknowledged that the PSD and PDH are a "building block investment", that are supporting and engaging the region in a conversation about collective strategy and the future of Pacific data. The programme is a platform to have conversations with member countries and data contributors about data governance, data management and how to shift the culture of data in the Pacific region so that it becomes more useful across the region. The PDH was regarded as aspirational and necessary for positive development in the Pacific region, being the first of its kind, and SPC was recognised by external stakeholders as the right organisation to support its delivery and implementation. Pacific Island nations have existing relationships with SPC with regard to data production, data sharing and advisory capacities, so this is a natural fit to facilitate and build on existing relationships in this space. SPC knows the context, is based in the Pacific, and builds from Pacific knowledge and expertise. Across the interviews, the PSD and the PDH were recognised being designed and implemented in a way that is "by the Pacific and for the Pacific".

"A key strength of what the PSD is, is that other data initiatives and 'hubs' are not tailored to the needs of the Pacific. They're often sort of paternalistically put together with data on the Pacific. The data hub we're talking about though, it has been designed and built in the Pacific. There's huge value there." -External stakeholder

In regard to opportunities to strengthening regional relevance, the evaluation identified that more work needs to be done to understand the needs and ways of working in PICTs. Internal and external stakeholders both acknowledged that ways of communicating information, using data for decision-making, and transferring knowledge varies considerably across SPC's member countries. According to some external stakeholders more work is needed to understand the diversity of contexts across the Pacific region and to build this knowledge into the PSD so that the value of the initiative is realised, and it is responsive to the needs of different PICTs. Stakeholder's provided insights on how PDH can more effectively respond the needs and ways of working in the Pacific region. These included:

- Ensuring that data included on the PDH, is presented in appropriate formats and is useful for a range of contexts and users including governments, multi-lateral organisations, researchers, students, local councils and individuals
- Ensuring that the PDH is part of the ongoing conversations relating to gaps in particular country and industry data sets
- Building on existing relationships that SPC has with PICTs with regard to data production, data sharing and advice to enhance understanding of the nuances of different data sets and users.

5.1.3 Demand for data for decision making

There has been a general trend towards increasing technical capacity and statistical capability, and evidence-based decision-making in the Pacific and with major Pacific development partners in recent years. The Ten-Year Pacific Statistics Strategy (TYPSS) for example, was developed in 2010 in recognition of the need for a comprehensive plan to drive the improvement and development of statistics in the Pacific region. TYPSS provides a longer-term framework for improvements in the collection and utilisation of statistics. The PSD initiative and the PDH align with the TYPSS and build upon the vision to positively contribute to evidence-based decision making. The demand for timely, reliable, repeatable, and quality data was repeated across the interviews. It was also recognised by external stakeholders, that the PDH is responding to the unmet, and increasing

need for data in the Pacific region and has been designed to support ease of access to information for decision makers.

“There's always been a huge demand for data, which has been massively unmet in the Pacific historically.”
- Internal stakeholder

Covid-19 has also brought a new wave of data requirements and the PSD tracking of Covid-19 was noted by many stakeholders as the most useful product produced last year. In addition, it was recognised by some stakeholders that Covid-19 brought more awareness to public consumption of data. COVID 19 was also identified by some stakeholders in the region as an inhibitor of data collection in some Pacific contexts.

The light touch literature scan revealed that the PDH is aligned to other regional programmes which seek to respond to the demand for data for decision making. These include the Micronesian Government 2003 – 2024 Strategic Development plan, ADB Country Partnership Strategy for Fiji 2019 – 2023, Ministry of Information, Communication, Transport and Tourism Development and State-Owned Enterprises Kiribati Ministry Strategic Plan, the Strategy for the Agenda for Building Capacity in Statistics 2014–2020 and the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent. A key message across these documents was that digital connectivity, access to reliable data and capacity and capability building are critical to maximising the use of evidence for decision making in the Pacific.

5.1.4 Trust and data quality

Stakeholders discussed the importance for both data producers and consumers to trust the quality of the data collated into the PDH. SPC has a high level of trust with member countries through existing relationships and historical engagements, yet the organisation holds this trust across different divisions, individuals and networks. Relationships that exist between SDD and external country partners appear to be primarily with NSOs. Internal and external stakeholders spoke to the need for these relationships to be expanded to those involved in data collection and curation across different sectors. Expanding and strengthening these relationships were seen as central to supporting the sustainability of the PSD and building the necessary trust that data is being well managed and in good hands.

Linked to the point above, there was some concern raised by users outside of SPC of the PDH around the quality of data contained within the infrastructure. It was noted by some external stakeholders that in order to recognise the true value of the PDH, higher quality data products would be beneficial. It is better to have higher quality information and have less of it, than have This speaks to the careful curation needed to build and maintain consumers' trust in the initiative.

“We need to be able to trust in the data, trust we can access the data, and trust that what we're looking at is the most up to date, accurate information available... And that's a big job.”
- External stakeholder

5.1.5 Considerations

Some considerations for the PSD during the next phase of work, with particular application to the 'relevance' evaluation question include:

- Continue to build strong internal SPC relationships between the PSD team and other divisions. These relationships are required to ensure the initiative remains relevant at an internal level and provides some insight into the external climate around data for decision making. Within SPC it is important that divisions recognise their role in supporting the PDH with quality data curation and meta data.
- There is a strong appetite for this programme of work to succeed – stakeholders acknowledge the need for this work, and there is a general sense of excitement about the potential of the PSD, particularly the PDH. This should be capitalised on by the PSD team

through continuing to build strong internal relationships, seeking out opportunities for socialisation and connections with new or existing initiatives.

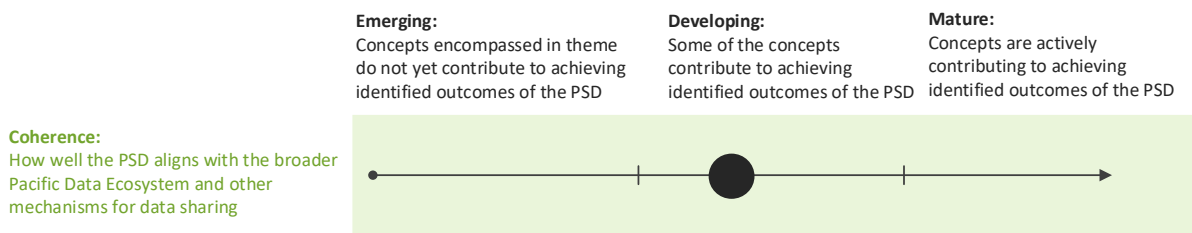


5.2 Coherence

The coherence section examines how the PDH complements and aligns with the broader Pacific Data Ecosystem, and other data sharing platforms used by key stakeholders. As previously mentioned, SPC has a strong regional reputation for providing access to statistics and technical advice to member countries. From this perspective, the PSD initiative is building upon this reputation and developing partnerships to support the overall coherence of the PDH.

When considering the overall progression of the PSD programme within the concepts under the 'coherence' evaluation question, there is some evidence that the alignment of the PSD with the broader Pacific data ecosystem is developing. For example, the PDH collaborated with the Climate Change and Environmental Sustainability division on Data Management Assistance to the NDC Hub, is part of an ongoing collaboration with SPREP and is, mapping policies and procedures involved in data acquisition and data dissemination. In addition, the PDH is also looking for opportunities to explore new opportunities for partnerships and collaboration with organisations such as the OECD, Open Data Institute, Global Data Barometer, Open Knowledge Foundation, Open Government Partnership and GovLab. The evaluation also found, however, that there are some components that should be strengthened to support the PSD to achieve its outcomes. For example, greater communication about the way the PSD aligns with existing initiatives, both internal and external would better support stakeholders understanding of the different components of the PSD. The figure below presents a graphical representation of the evaluative judgement in this domain.

Figure 3: Evaluative judgements around the Coherence KEQ



The following sections explore the different factors that contribute to the PSD's coherence with the broader Pacific Data Ecosystem. This section concludes by identifying some considerations the PSD should reflect on, with regards to coherence to ensure continued success.

5.2.1 External and internal alignment

One notable example of strengthening external coherence is the SPC and SPREP relationship. This partnership has successfully created a regional structure for new partnerships to leverage and build upon. This partnership was recognised by some stakeholders as responding to the organic nature of the PDH and that building relationships with organisations external to SPC is central to the ongoing success and sustainability of the PSD initiative and the PDH. From a coherence perspective both internal and external stakeholders recognised that the prioritisation of relationships which feed into the regional data infrastructure will enable:

- A reduction in duplication
- A Limiting in competition for funding
- An Advance in regional coordination of data governance

The strategic documentation, MEL framework, and progress updates also provide a strong example of conceptual coherence of how the PSD initiative is located and situated within the SDD's work and SPC's broader data work and efforts and data management and governance. Supporting this, the PSD Steering Group membership structure is also well positioned to strengthen

coherence across SPC and outwards to the region. This mechanism will ensure continued coherence of the PSD.

It was noted by internal stakeholders that cross divisional structure of the PSD is a landmark initiative and that the breadth of the internal collaboration across divisions is a new way of working for SPC.

“SPC is well placed to carry out and lead this work. Their internal divisions have strong existing relationships across all sectors... The challenge is to join these dots up.” - External stakeholder

Whilst progress has been made to join up the dots it was noted by internal stakeholders that the connections between the PSD Initiative, the PDH, and across the SPC divisions require further development of internal partnerships and increasing the understanding of the PSD initiative and the PDH. Across the interviews a strong finding was that the PSD and PDH are widely understood to “one in the same” instead of the PDH being one work stream of the PSD initiative. An opportunity exists to boost internal coherence and alignment to ensure the PSD and PDH complement and contribute to the strategic goals of SPC. In doing so, the infrastructure to support external coherence can be strengthened when there is internal alignment and understanding of the PSD structure and workstreams.

“In general, I think SPC does well to integrate Pacific statistics initiatives in the way they do, particularly given their funding structures and ability to integrate.” - Internal stakeholder

5.2.2 Working internally with SPC divisions

There is a wealth of knowledge and experience across SPC's varying divisions. Many of these have experience in engaging with member countries, holding and maintaining relationships with the 'influencers' and other donor organisations. The breadth of SPC spans a considerable relationship landscape, and the networks and layers of relationships are thus quite complex. It is key that the PSD forms relationships with people in the right roles, at the right level of influence to facilitate awareness and use of the PDH in particular. Tapping into the existing networks, learning from past experiences of engagement and considerations around data from each of the divisions in SPC would be a good way forward for the PSD team.

“We're open for more communication and connection points with them, to be honest. But the communication should be a dialogue, rather than a one-way communique... They should be asking ‘what can we learn from you?’” - Internal stakeholder

There was an acknowledgement that Pacific ways of connection, and the development of strong and enduring relationships are founded on face-to-face interactions; Covid-19 has disrupted the ability for these interactions to occur, and so relationship building has had to occur in a more challenging environment. Despite the challenges of limited access to face-to-face interactions and in-country visits the PSD adopted the use of telecommunication technology to build new partnerships and maintain existing relations; provide products, services, and advice; and launch the PDH to an international audience. This agility demonstrates positive applications of adaptive management principles.

5.2.3 Considerations

Some considerations for the PSD during the next phase of work, with particular application to the 'Coherence' evaluation question include:

- Purposeful internal engagement between SDD and the PSD team with other divisions to carefully communicate the PSD initiative. This will support continued coherence of the programme and allow organic opportunities to consolidate and align with other workstreams.

- Where possible, face-to-face engagements with country partners to socialise and raise awareness of the work occurring in the PSD would be beneficial for profile raising and building networks.

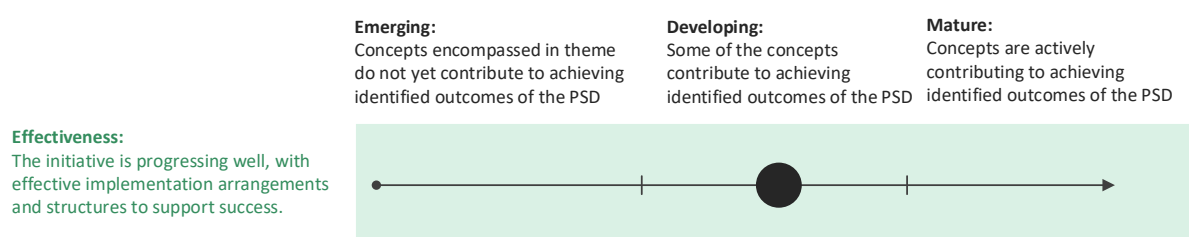


5.3 Effectiveness

The effectiveness of the PSD programme was assessed against progress towards its intended outputs short term outcomes as identified in section 2.1. In addition, section also considers how the implementation arrangements and structures which surround the PSD are enabling the achievement of the desired outcomes. Barriers and enablers to success and anticipated risks and challenges are also presented in this section.

Overall, in regard to programme effectiveness there is evidence from both the evaluation interviews and the background documentation which demonstrates that the PSD programme is progressing well against intended outputs and outcomes. Overall, the initiative is progressing well and there are effective implementation arrangements and structures to support success. However, the evaluation also found that there are some opportunities for improvement. The figure below presents a graphical representation of the evaluative judgement in this domain.

Figure 4: Evaluative judgements relating to the effectiveness KEQ



The following sections explore the different factors that contribute to the PSD's effectiveness and structures to support success. This section concludes by identifying some considerations for the PSD with regards to effectiveness to support the achievement of the identified outcomes.

5.3.1 Progression against MEL framework

The PSD programme uses a monitoring, evaluation and learning framework which is derived from the PSD Theory of Change. The PSD MEL framework is used as a reference for operational planning, monitoring of progress towards the objectives and for evaluating overall performance and impacts. From the perspective of the evaluation team, the MEL framework is well developed and captures useful evidence against all output areas and short, medium, long term outcomes. The MEL framework is also well integrated into reporting systems and reflection workshops to facilitate learning opportunities. For example, the 2020 mid-year monitoring, learning and reflection workshop provided the PSD implementation team with the opportunity to reflect on the design of the ToC and MEL and make refinements to support the ongoing implementation of the initiative. In addition, these refinements have been included in the Second Annual Activity Progress Report, December 2020. This report contains strong evidence of progress against target outputs and outcomes and also provides variance explanations against each of the indicators.

Key areas of success against the MEL output indicators include:

- Continued growth in datasets available
- Continued growth in indicators, infographics, dashboards, knowledge products and published reports available
- New Population Grid (COVID-19 Pacific Data) to monitor the impacts of COVID-19 on the SDD website
- Assistance to 5 PICTS in analysis, dissemination and use of data
- Development of quality management mechanisms
- User feedback was sought and incorporated into the PDH to enhance utility, useability and relevance
- Data sharing across organisations and ongoing collaboration within SPC, and with Regional Pacific organisations

- Progress towards the development of the Pacific data champions

The implementation supporting documentation also provides evidence, ToC and MEL review cycles support the adaptive management of this initiative.

5.3.2 Identified enablers, barriers and challenges

This section brings forth the perspectives of both the internal and external stakeholders to highlight the existing enablers and barriers to effective implementation. Perspectives were also gathered on the stakeholders' perspectives of key challenges to programme delivery.

Across the individual and group interviews participants provided clear examples of key push and pull factors that influence the use of the PDH. These examples are explored below:

- **Familiarity and behaviour change:** Stakeholders who have historically used different platforms to access data on the Pacific acknowledged that it can be challenging to change their behaviour and habits to use a different platform. This historic familiarity can inhibit willingness to use the PDH, at least in the short term. In the future the PSD could benefit from more targeted promotion, socialisation and communication about the benefits of the PDH over these other sources.

"If I was looking for economic data, for example, I'd go to the World Bank first. But that's only because I've always gone there, you know? I'm familiar with it and it's front of mind. But that's not the fault of the PDH."
- External stakeholder

- **Pacific regional culture around data:** Stakeholders noted the challenge in the culture of data use, collection, and sharing in the Pacific. Understanding how decision makers normally receive information to inform their decisions needs to be a key area of focus the PSD team. The process will need to be cognisant of different practices around data dissemination for member countries, such as verbal information sharing, in person engagements and workshops require a different approach to data dissemination.
- Across the interviews both external and internal stakeholders noted that a key challenge is that the value of sharing knowledge and data is not uniformly accepted nor prioritised both internally at SPC and in the wider Pacific region.
- **Benefit to member countries:** It was noted by most stakeholders that the Pacific region has historically been, and continues to be, over analysed. It was recognised by some stakeholders that components of the PSD have the potential to act as a filter and a buffer between development partners requiring data and information directly from the Pacific nations. Further, the PSD is also well positioned to reduce duplication in investment in data infrastructure. It is important that the PSD communicates these benefits of the PSD in this way. It is anticipated that in doing so, PICTs will continue to support the PSD and PDH and by sharing data and increasing the use of the initiative's outputs.

"I would say there's significant benefit for them [Pacific nations] to fully back the PDH... It can act as a sort of buffer between them and development partners who need their data. It would reduce their burden significantly once it's fully developed."
- External stakeholder

It is important to note that in the domains of behaviour change, data culture, and communicating benefits to member countries the PSD implementation team is making positive advances to support this momentum. For example, user surveys have been undertaken to understand behaviour and use of data platforms, collaborations with NSOs are already underway and align with the work around the Pacific Data Champions, and the risk of duplication of infrastructure is well understood by the partners in the Pacific Eco System.

5.3.3 Value of the Pacific Data Hub

Across the interviews both internal to SPC and externally to SPC stakeholders were very positive about the significant value that the PDH brings to the region. The increase in accessibility of Pacific data, having it collated in a single access point has been noted as a key benefit of the PDH as it is now, and what it will become. The official launch of the PDH and ongoing conversations with PICTs and regional partners were identified as key influential factors in supporting the understanding of the value of the PDH. The analysis of the perceived value of the PDH identified by the stakeholders elucidated two key areas of value; value for the data producer, and value for the data consumer:

- **Value for the consumer:** data is curated, all in one place. The PDH pulls together different data sets, sources and contexts into a single searchable platform. In addition, quality meta data provides the consumer with reliable information which contributes subsequent analysis and understanding. This has the benefit of saving time searching for information across multiple places. In future, the PDH may also have the ability to place quality controls and validate the data it harvests. The value of this would be that consumers can have high trust in the accuracy and quality of the data. It was noted by stakeholders that the quality of NSO data in particular, across the region can be highly variable. This type of screening function could support the standardisation of quality. External stakeholders also noted that they required data which is credible, reliable, and long lasting.
- **Value for producer:** Stakeholders noted that for member countries, it may be far more efficient to share data with the PDH to support dissemination and potent analysis than having to invest in their own systems to respond to the rising demand for data. Use of the PDH as a mechanism for sharing data across the region means that individual PICTs may not have to invest in their own data infrastructure to the same degree. Further, the demands for data from stakeholders external to the Pacific are ever-increasing. The PDH has the potential to act as a single point of contact and reduce the burdens of direct data requests made to PICTs.

5.3.4 Considerations

For the PSD initiative to reach the long-term outcomes the building upon the momentum and effectively leveraging the systems, process, and relationships that have been created since the beginning of the implementation is critical. Some considerations for the PSD during the next phase of work, with particular application to the 'Effectiveness' evaluation question include:

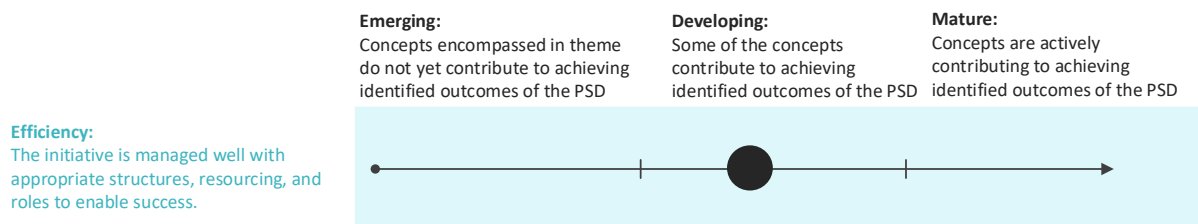
- Creating a shared understanding of what 'data' is, what is most useful and of most value for stakeholders is required to ensure the PSD continues to develop into a trusted programme of work in the data accessibility space. This will involve examining the PDH and what it holds in terms of raw data and knowledge products.
- To streamline effective development, the implementation team could consider focusing on certain aspects of development as a phased approach. The PDH, in particular, encompasses a broad range of information and has, to date, attempted to do a lot at once.
- Careful curation of information that is located on the PDH platform is critical to maximise efficiency. The PSD team should be prepared to make calls on conflicting knowledge products and reports, accepting the ones that they think provide the most up to date, accurate information at any point in time.

5.4 Efficiency

This section explores how well the PSD programme is being implemented, how well the associated resources are managed and how structures in place around the programme are functioning to support the achievement of intended outcomes. Key threads include data governance, project governance and management and leveraging relationships.

When considering the overall progression of the PSD programme within the concepts under the 'efficiency' evaluation question, there is evidence that some of the concepts related the structures, resourcing and roles are on their way to supporting the achievement of the PSD's outcomes, but there is some room for development across these concepts. The figure below presents a graphical representation of the evaluative judgement in this domain. It was clear that the initial set up and start of implementation took longer than expected, with the activity slow to get moving in the beginning. Internal stakeholders indicated that challenges in recruitment and resourcing constraints were the root cause of this, with these issues soon overcome. Further contextual challenges related to COVID-19 then arose, with a reprioritisation of funds and resources to respond to the pandemic. This has resulted in additional constraints placed on the prioritisation of data collection and socialisation of the PDH.

Figure 5: Evaluative judgement related to the efficiency KEQ



5.4.1 Implementation arrangements for the PSD

The PSD is a complex, broad and interdisciplinary programme. The governance and operational implementation arrangements that surround this programme have formed somewhat organically since inception and have at times, according to internal SPC stakeholders, been unclear and less supportive than what could be considered optimal. This section delves into some particular aspects of PSD initiative implementation that were raised by evaluation stakeholders as either successes or challenges.

For this section, it is important to note that the implementation arrangements include governance at the following levels:

- High level Project Steering Committee – oversees overall activity, and includes SDD, IT, MEL, PICT representative and MFAT activity manager
- The Technical Working Group – reviews progress and advises MFAT on progress of the initiative. Includes representatives from SDD, PDH and MEL teams within SPC
- Budget and financial management – predominantly led by SDD.

The implementation of the PSD was recognised by internal SPC stakeholders as not being as smooth as it could have been. According to these stakeholders there was a lack of coherence, clarity, and difference of opinion around what the PSD was trying to achieve and what it has been trying to do since the beginning of implementation. This lack of shared understanding was highlighted across the data collection with internal SPC stakeholders, external stakeholders and the programme funder. One example which was shared relates to the prioritisation of the

technical elements of the programme instead of simultaneously recognising the value of both technical elements and the centrality of relationships.

"The PSD had to recognise the need for both the relationships and the technical aspects... In the beginning that wasn't quite clear... but the PSD learnt that lesson." - Internal stakeholder

5.4.2 Project governance and management

Project governance and operational management was an area that was commented on by many stakeholders. The programme was originally intended to be governed jointly by SDD and IS. While the operational management of the broader PSD is jointly led, for example, .stat, the operational management of the PDH has so far been led predominantly by PDH, as the technical build of the PDH has been a key priority in the early stages of implementation. Questions were raised by stakeholders internal to SPC about whether the positioning of the PDH in the IS division is the fit for purpose in the long term. It was recognised that the cross divisional composition of the PSD initiative is new to SPC, and that in the future, strategic conversations are needed to discuss the most effective, coherent and sustainable organisational location of the PDH. For some internal stakeholders, now that the PDH has been built and is functioning well on a technical level, consideration should be given to ensuring that the operational, budget and financial management, and overall governance are placed within the right place, to play to the different strengths of the implementation partners.

"It [the PDH] has been sitting within the tech team for a while now, and while that may have been the best place for it during the, you know, initial development of the hub, it might be an opportune time to let Stats [SDD] take the lead now." - Internal stakeholder

The recent change in leadership of the PDH has been encouraging for stakeholders, with an acknowledgement that the current lead brings a new, refreshed change of emphasis for the PDH. An increased focus on relationship building, purposeful and careful curation of data and information were credited as part of the refreshed leadership.

"The new lead has brought a change in emphasis which I think was needed... It's [the PDH] heading in the right direction." - Internal stakeholder

In terms of programme governance, the initiative is operating in an environment where there appears to be limited clear strategic governance at an organisational level surrounding the work. This makes it challenging to prioritise and allocate effort, as well as fully understand the needs of internal and external stakeholders.

5.4.2.1 Adaptive management

The PSD is employing adaptive management approaches to the implementation of this programme. The approach has been designed to improve collective understanding of how the PSD works collectively to achieve its objectives and respond quickly to emergent challenges. Adaptive management styles are supported and recognised internationally as an effective management style. Clear benefits of this approach have been articulated by internal stakeholders, including the provision of a framework for decision making in an adaptive way, learning from previous decisions, and working to a quality improvement frame. The implementation team is a strong advocate of this approach and believe the management style to have been a key enabler of the progress made so far.

5.4.3 Data governance

Despite the general excitement about the prospects of the PDH, some concern was raised from internal and external stakeholders about the security, management and governance of data filtering in. Further to this, a lack of clarity around the quality of data, who owns it, who manages it and the processes for how this is done added to some hesitation to engage fulsomely.

"There is a general excitement about the potential of this initiative – all its components – but I don't think there's a huge amount of clarity anywhere about the security and privacy issues. It does create some hesitation."
- External stakeholder

Several stakeholders shared the perspective that there is a hesitancy amongst the PICTs to share data and information and there is a tight desire for organisations and countries to keep control of their national data. It was acknowledged that what is most beneficial for the region now, is a single entity to support bringing data and information together for the broader good of the region. Stakeholders were open in indicating that SPC is in a good position to take on this role, and that their divisional relationships across varying sectors and PICTs can support the sharing of data. It was also acknowledged that the addition of strong and robust data governance frameworks that are representative of Pacific values are necessary to support the future development of data sharing in the region.

"Pacific nations don't want to see their data exploited in any way. We need the reciprocal nature of the Pacific to be present here."
- External stakeholder

Maintaining the trust of providers and security of data is critical for any data infrastructure development and success. There is international recognition that effective governance, storage and use of data is essential to development, and for this to occur, users of the data need to have a level of trust in the processes that surround it. To date, the implementation team has had little capacity to develop additional data governance and management processes beyond those which have been historically in place with SDD. Additional capacity and support may be required to ensure this is actioned.

Within this finding, the evaluation team also identified the opportunity for SPC as an organisation to explore its own data governance and management processes and develop cross-divisional consistency in this space. Stakeholders spoke to the importance of working towards creating linkages between frameworks developed for the PDH and strengthening these with connections to SPC strategy around data to facilitate increased understanding about the value of sharing data, when done appropriately.

5.4.4 Considerations

Some considerations for the PSD during the next phase of work, with particular application to the 'efficiency' evaluation question include:

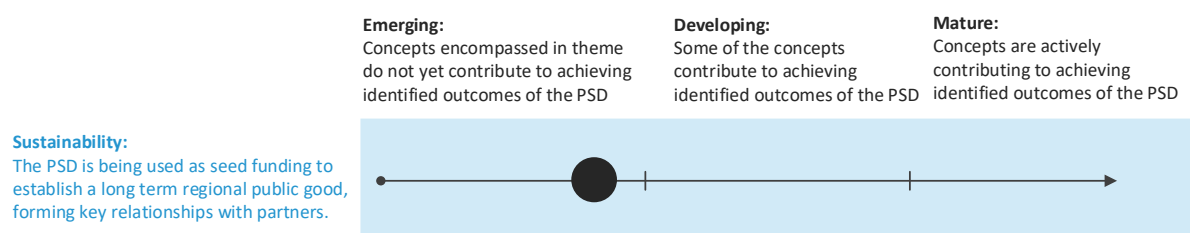
- Development of robust data governance and management frameworks will support the PSD to build and maintain trust with stakeholders, and provide assurance that the programme is upholding best practice when it comes to data security and management.
- The governance and oversight of the PDH should be elevated to a strategic level to ensure it has an appropriate strategic, sustainable and operational framework surrounding it. This will ensure the PDH is fit for purpose and accountable to the aspirations for it to become a long-term regional public good.
- Ongoing conversations should occur regarding the operational management of the PSD, and particularly the PDH. Consideration around which divisions are best placed to support different components and workstreams of the PSD should be explored further with a focused set of stakeholders. Optimal management placement would continue to support and strengthen the data curation, management, prioritisation, analysis and dissemination of PSD outputs. Partnerships between different divisions will be required to maximise the efficiency, implementation and achievement of goals.

5.5 Sustainability

This section explores how well the PSD programme is on track to being sustainable, how well the initiative is generating further seed funding for development in the Pacific region and how well it is generating and maintaining relationships.

When considering the overall progression of the PSD programme within the concepts under the 'sustainability' evaluation question, the evidence from the stakeholder interviews suggests that this is largely a developing space. There are some elements of relationship building and facilitation that are on their way to supporting the achievement of the PSD's outcomes, but there is some room for development across the remaining concepts. The figure below presents a graphical representation of the evaluative judgement in this domain.

Figure 6: Evaluative judgement on the sustainability KEQ



Ensuring the sustainability of the PSD initiative beyond the MFAT funding is critical to reaching the overall goal **to improve evidence-informed decision making in the Pacific through increasing access to and capability to utilise quality and timely data and statistics**. Furthermore, the ongoing longevity of the PSD across the different workstreams requires strong partnerships with development partners and strong buy in from member countries. Being able to demonstrate success against project outputs and outcomes with these audiences is central to the sustainability of the programme.

The Improving Access to Pacific Statistics and Data Business Plan identifies two key focus areas for sustainability. Firstly, the PSD initiative is responding to SDDs growing demand for data analysis and dissemination. In the environment of funding shortages, the PSD initiative has responded to the need to ensure that SDD can maintain it is 'business as usual' functions and develop new products to meet growing demand for both data and knowledge products. Secondly, the PSD initiative seeks to create and maintain a new data platform which can respond to the wide needs to users across the region over the long term. The sustainability of both the SDD services within SPC and their services across the region and the PDH are heavily reliant upon strong funder and membership relationships.

5.5.1 Challenges to sustainability

Across the interviews, there was a strong desire amongst the stakeholders for the PSD to succeed; both internally at SPC and from donors and other partners. There are many champions of the PSD, and especially the PDH, however, sustainability of the PSD initiative was identified as a main challenge for success. For example:

- Pacific development funding is programme focussed with project lifecycles that do not support the longevity of programmes. This causes a reluctance of stakeholders and potential users of the initiative to fully commit to investing time into engaging with the initiative because programmes often cease to exist beyond their initial funding.

- Linked to the above point, there is a fear and risk that if a programme is not embedded and committed to as a strategic priority, that new initiatives will take over the investment and the longevity of programmes are short lived.
- It is widely accepted that to realise the fullest potential of the PSD initiative and sustainability depends upon the capacity and capability of the region to use the data to inform evidence-based decision making. Supporting the region to build their data collection and consumption capacity and capability is required to ensure the investment is worthwhile.
- Internal and external stakeholders shared the view that unfortunately, data is frequently perceived as being solely in the area of information technology and statistics as opposed to recognising the centrality of data to development. Acknowledging that data is development, is a culture that is not yet embedded in the Pacific region.

“There needs to be a resource mobilisation strategy. At this point, to support future buy-in, people need to know how it will continue to be resourced.”
- Internal stakeholder

The challenges to sustainability were well understood by the PSD implementation team and key stakeholders. In addition, the internal documentation reflects routine analysis of the sustainability of the PSD initiative beyond the funding lifecycle. During the interviews it was also clear that SDD and PDH have been successful in forging or strengthening several major partnerships for the launch and early implementation of the PSD programme and its components. In addition to adequate funding, the PSD has also built partnerships with other major local organisations working on data for development; these include:

- MFAT- New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
- ANU - contributions in kind from ANU's Asia Pacific Data for Development initiative (D4D)
- SPREP - open data collaboration agreement
- APTC - developing the Pacific Skills Portal
- FFA - publishing Maritime Boundaries data
- PIFS - strengthening regional data governance and enabling greater data sharing between CROP agencies
- pacificwomen.org - migration of data to PDH for project close-out
- Link Digital - technology partner
- Data61 - technology partner
- Open Data Charter – ODC Implementation Working Group; contributed to COVID-19 data cards initiative: Building a Data Taxonomy for Pandemic Preparedness
- USP, UWA, ACIAR - Livelihoods and Landscapes project
- University of Melbourne – publishing of Pacific Regional Inclusive Education Framework (PRIEF) research papers
- UN Resident Coordinator in Fiji
- World Bank
- UNICEF – on MICS and disability
- UNFPA – on census for PICTs
- FAO – on food systems and food security
- ILO – on labour and employment
- OECD – on the development and implementation of .Stat
- SBS – collaboration on .Stat development
- University of Wollongong – on regional food trade

5.6 Theory of change (ToC)

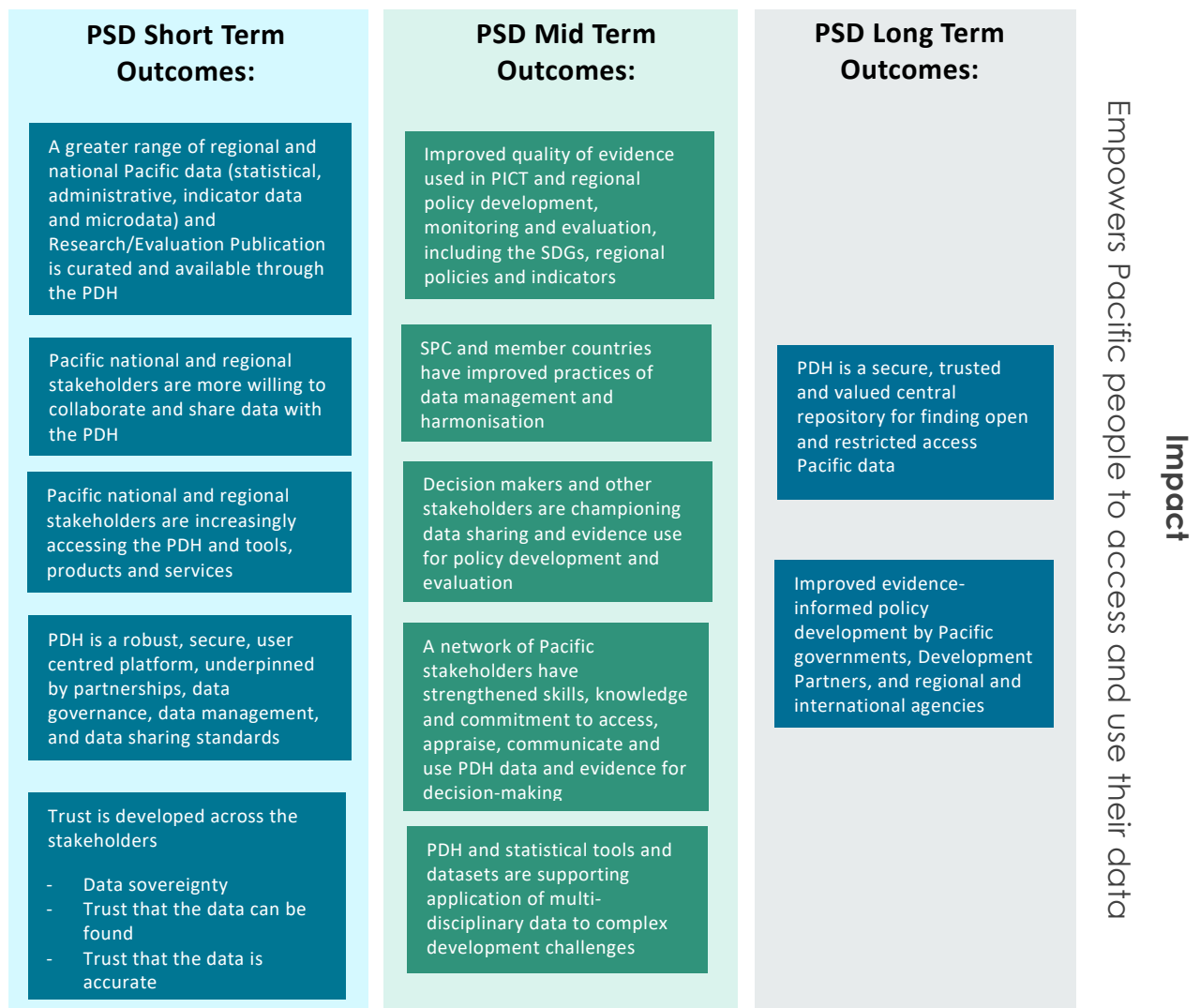
In this section we report on the outcomes of the process to refine the ToC that the SPC had developed to guide the implementation of the PSD. The process we followed to do this is outlined in section 3.2.4.3.

The ToC provided a frame to highlight critical domains that would contribute to the desired outcomes. These domains were explored further in the interviews to build a deeper understanding of why they were important, and to whom. In this way the final ToC helps synthesise the findings and frame it up into a model that can guide further implementation of the programme of work.

5.6.1 The initial model

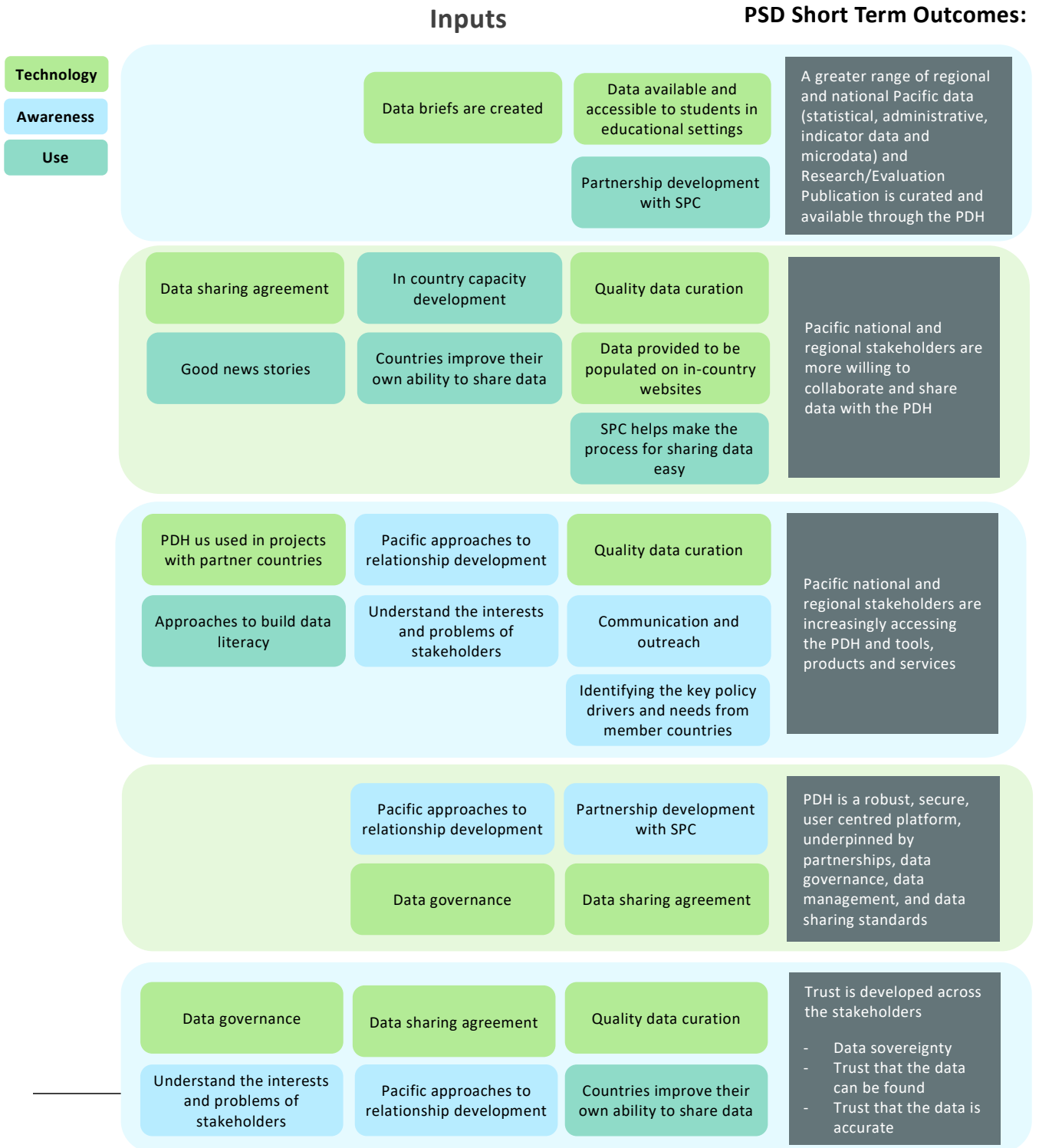
A theory of change provides a step wise process to explain how an intervention is to work. It defines the inputs that are needed to support the intended short-, medium-, and long-term outcomes. Finally, it clearly identifies the intended impact and aim of what the program is designed to achieve.

The initial theory of change documented the outcomes intended. Through exploring this in a workshop environment we identified a range of critical inputs that were needed to support these outcomes. We also identified a clear impact the PSD was design to achieve. The figure below illustrates the initial ToC along with the impact and an additional short-term outcome that was added at the workshop.



5.6.2 Feedback and adaptations to the Theory of Change

The two Theory of Change workshops identified a range of inputs that were needed to help support the short and medium term outcomes. These are illustrated below. In presenting these inputs we have coded them against the three areas that the project brief asked the evaluation to focus on – awareness, useability, and the technology³.



³ 'Technology' here is used to describe how the people and processes need to interact to achieve the outcomes in the PDH ToC.

6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It is widely acknowledged by all stakeholders, internal to SPC and external, that it is important that the PSD, particularly the PDH, succeeds. The success of the PDH is viewed as important for the reputation of both the funder and implementer. The PSD is a critical programme of work to ensure that data is available to support evidence-informed decision making for the sustainable development of the Pacific region.

On the whole, the initiative is progressing well. Reporting documentation aligns with the qualitative insights from stakeholders, indicating that all aspects of the PSD initiative are on track to reach their intended outcomes. There are, however, significant opportunities for continued effort, changes and points for consideration that have been raised during the course of this evaluation.

There is an understanding that the PDH in particular, is aspirational. While it is certainly on its way to becoming, and providing, the enduring regional public good it is envisioned to be, elements such as socialisation, genuine engagement and relationship building are needed to be strengthened in order to reach these aspirations. Attached to this, is the need for more coherent messaging about the implementation, function and outputs of both the PSD and PDH internally to SPC stakeholders and with external partners.

The following recommendations provide both the funder and the implementor some considerations for what the next steps are to ensure the continued success and positive experiences associated with the PSD.

- **Development of a data governance framework:** As the PDH begins to attract more use and more data, the need for a formal data governance framework becomes increasingly important. Stakeholders spoke of how critical it is for sustainability to generate trust, reliability, transparency and comfort in the PDH. For it to evolve and work towards its aspirations, a data governance framework will support future proofing the willingness of data contributors to be associated with the infrastructure. The vision of several internal stakeholders is to take this framework for the PDH and create alignment at an organisational level on best practice data management, governance.
- **Elevate the strategic governance of the PDH to an appropriate strategic level within SPC to support sustainability:** For data infrastructure investment to be viewed as an area of strategic importance, governance of the initiative should sit at a strategic level. SPC leadership indicated that the longer term vision for Pacific Statistics and Data is strategic. An investment in data is an investment in development. As such, strategic guidance and governance should sit at the highest level, with Division Leads across the organisation forming a part of this group. All divisions have an interest in the PDH and have insight into the strategic direction of data for decision making of key external stakeholders.
- **Further explore arrangements for the operational management of the different workstreams of the PSD (specifically, the PDH), and where this may be best placed:** There was general consensus from stakeholders that the PDH has reached a development stage where the operational management of the initiative should be reviewed. The PSD has a range of different workstreams and it may be that some of these are best managed by different divisions and/or teams. Consideration and further discussion should be had at PSD governance levels to explore this. Of particular note, there were several stakeholder concerns around the curation, management and organisation of data and knowledge products in the PDH to date. For the PDH to continue building momentum and maintaining a trustworthy brand, the quality and organisation of the information it holds needs to be of a satisfactory standard. Stakeholders also spoke to the immense value in the PDH holding knowledge products of already analysed data in a way that allows decision makers to

access the information they need in the most efficient way possible. A clearer partnership model for management the PDH could be considered.

- **Further invest in and prioritise the development and maintenance of relationships with key stakeholders in the Pacific way:** Relationships in the Pacific need to be done right. Purposeful, reciprocal relationships with the right people is key to continue the trajectory of the PSD. This means the implementation team is connected with the data producers, decision makers and those translating evidence into practice within each of their stakeholders. Stakeholders identified that relationship building, socialisation and engagement may not have been prioritised to date. People are the key to increasing uptake, use and sustainability of initiatives like the PSD.
- **Create and take up opportunities for socialisation with internal and external stakeholders to support awareness and use of PSD outputs:** To increase the awareness, use and value of the PSD, the implementation team should be actively creating and taking up opportunities to showcase their work. While it is acknowledged that Covid-19 has restricted much international travel, and the ability for in person workshops and interactions to occur with key stakeholders, there may be other opportunities that can support the transition to the PDH and other aspects of the PSD becoming business as usual points of reference.

7. APPENDIX 1

7.1 Key Evaluation Questions and data sources

	Data source
<p>KEQ 1 Relevance: What significant changes (if any) have there been to the relevance of the PSD services (across the five output areas and three streams of work) in terms of access to Pacific data for decision-making?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What (if any) are the key changes to the context that affects the relevance of the PSD including demand for data for decision making (including the context of Covid19) and supply? • What has changed in the context such as national challenges for data management, analysis and dissemination? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal and external documentation (including project design documents, theory of change, six monthly and annual reports and reporting against MEL indicators, SPC 2021 Transition Plan, PDH Communications Strategy and supporting stakeholder engagement documentation) • Exploration of similar data platforms and literature and a set of key interviews to gather learnings about international best practice • Interviews with internal SPC and MFAT stakeholders to explore the positioning of the PSD within broader work programmes and perceived demands • Interviews with end users to understand context and demand.
<p>KEQ 2. Coherence: How does the PDH complement and align with the broader "Pacific Data Ecosystem", and other data-sharing platforms used by key stakeholders (e.g. researchers, evaluators, analysts, officials).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How is the project located and situated within the rest of the SDD's work and SPC's broader data work and efforts and data management and governance? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual and group interviews with internal SPC and MFAT stakeholders • Documentation review of relevant internal documents related to the PSD and the PDH • Interviews with key informants, development partners, and stakeholders involved in the wider "Pacific Data Ecosystem"
<p>KEQ 3 Effectiveness:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How well is the PSD initiative progressing against the intended outputs and outcomes? • How effective are the implementation arrangements and structures in place to enable PSD to meet the desired outcomes? • What are the enablers and barriers to the achievement of outcomes? • What are key anticipated delivery risks and/or challenges going forward? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PSD progress reports and MERL framework • Group and individual interviews with MFAT and internal SPC stakeholders to explore progression towards intended outcomes • Group interviews with key stakeholders from member countries/other target users • Documentation review of internal management and implementation documents relating to the PSD initiative to understand information collection and use of data • Exploration of similar data platforms and literature and a set of key interviews to gather learnings about international best

	practice, to inform what good looks like for the PDH
<p>KEQ 4. Efficiency: How well is the project implementation and resources being managed? Are the budget, costed workplan, team structure and roles fit for purpose, appropriate to the programme's strategy, outputs, and outcomes?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does the structure and management of PSD compare to global best practice and management? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual and group interviews with internal SPC and MFAT stakeholders to understand adaptive management processes • Documentation review of international literature relevant to the PSD
<p>KEQ 5. Sustainability: How well is the PSD being used as "seed funding" for the Pacific Data Hub, to establish a long-term, regional public good? Understanding the efficacy of the data, information, outputs, products, services and sustainability of the PSD.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How well is the PSD forming relationships with key partners to enhance the sustainability of the programme? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group interviews with key stakeholders from within SPC and from member countries to understand the impact • Individual and group interviews with internal SPC stakeholders to understand current processes, challenges and risks related to sustainability.
<p>KEQ 6: what improvements/ adaptations will help enhance the effectiveness of the PSD? This includes recommendations relating to the programme strategy, design, operational structure, resourcing, theory of change and MERL.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theory of Change workshop with internal SPC and MFAT stakeholders to understand fit for purpose and review intended outcomes and assumptions • Documentation review of international literature relevant to the PSD to understand benchmarking against relevant global practices

8. APPENDIX 2: PARAMETERS OF THE DOCUMENTATION REVIEW

The documentation review component of this evaluation included two key sections:

1. A review of key implementation, strategic and operational documentation. The purpose of this component was primarily exploratory, as a mechanism to orient the evaluation team to the PSD initiative and understand the context that it is operating within.
2. A light touch online scan for international examples of similar platforms to the PDH. The purpose of this online scan was to assess whether there are any lessons to be learned from the implementation of other initiatives.

Key implementation, strategic and operational documentation scope included all documentation provided by the SPC project team during the course of the evaluation.

The light touch online scan scope was defined by the areas of the key evaluation questions where insights would be useful. This included:

- Relevance: international context around data, COVID-19 and demand for data, general demand for data in the Pacific region.
- Effectiveness: Effective implementation arrangements, international best practice around implementation of a similar data platform.
- Efficiency: Structure and management of the PSD.

The online scan was guided by these key questions and conducted over a period of three weeks from mid-April to early May 2021. The scan was limited to what was publicly available and accessible in an online format. Findings and insights from the online scan were woven through the findings and brought together with the interview data to inform this report.

APPENDIX 3: INITIAL EMERGING FINDINGS DOCUMENT

Summary of key insights from data collection

May 2021

1. INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

Synergia and Sound Research were jointly commissioned by the Pacific Community (SPC) and the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) to design and lead a formative evaluation and review of the PSD initiative. The PSD is close to its mid-term and is at a critical juncture in implementation. The review is designed to support the work for the remainder of the project.

The overall purpose of the evaluation is to understand how well the PSD is being implemented, and how the PSD initiative can be refined and improved. The insights and evidence from the evaluation are expected to:

- Support the ongoing adaptive development of the PSD initiative.
- Review the implementation arrangements including the Theory of Change and the MEL framework.
- Evaluate progress toward intended outcomes and consider where and how the PSD initiative is effective and where improvements might be needed.

The following document presents a summary of the data collection phase, including the stakeholders interviewed and early emerging themes from this phase of the project.

2. SUMMARY OF DATA COLLECTION METHODS

The data collection phase of the review was guided by a set of co-designed key evaluation questions and stakeholder lists [refer to Evaluation Plan]. The planned data collection phase included a preparatory workshop which explored the Theory of Change, five key stakeholder group interviews, and a series of individual interviews.

Due to the availability of participants, the individual interviews are ongoing, and are expected to be completed by 10 May 2021. As such, the findings presented in this summary document are emerging, and are expected to develop following the remaining interviews and analysis period. It is expected that when data collection concludes, a total of 46 individuals will have shared their perspectives and insights (several participants were involved in both group interviews and individual follow up interviews).

The following tables identify who has been consulted with as part of the data collection.

The **Theory of Change** workshop was held on Wednesday 14th April 2021 for a duration of two hours. The purpose of this workshop was to understand the current Theory of Change related to the PSD, including the intended objectives and outcomes. The workshop was designed as part of preparation for the subsequent data collection. Key insights gathered from this workshop have informed the initial summary analysis of data collected.

Participants who attended this workshop include:

Name	Org	Role	Area of expertise
Epeli Waqavonovono	SDD	Director	Statistics
David Abbott	SDD	Manager Data Analysis and Dissemination	Statistics
Phil Bright	SDD	GIS, Innovation and Dissemination Lead	Statistics
Denis Grofils	SDD	Statistics Adviser-Data Systems	Statistics
Mei Lin Harley	MFAT	Programme Manager	MERL and Project Management
Sioeli Tonga	ISD	PDH Programme Manager	IT
Edward Boydell	SPL	Programming, Design and Learning Adviser	Policy and Mel
Bas Berghoef	ISD	Director	IT
Scott Pontifex	SDD	Micro data curator and dissemination Adviser	Statistics
Alison Culpin	SDD	Demographer/Social Statistician	Statistics
Stanislas Ozier	SDD	Web Developer-Dissemination	IT
Saideh Eshraghi	ISD	Data Advocacy and Policy Advisor	Data Advocacy
Sandra Gianini	SDD	Finance and Administration Officer	Budget
Elizabeth Ragimana	SDD	MERL Advisor	MERL

There were five group interviews that were scheduled as a part of the data collection phase.

The **Governance and Management** group interview was held virtually on Thursday 15th April 2021. The purpose of this group interview was to understand and explore the governance and management arrangements of the PSD initiative.

Attendees included:

Name	Org	Role	Area of expertise
Cameron Diver	Executive	Deputy Director General, operations and integration	
Andrew Jones	GEM	Director (Lead for Digital Earth Pacific)	Geoscience, Environment
Neville Smith	FAME	Director	Fisheries
Stuart Minchin	Executive	Director General	Governance
Emily Sharp	SPL	Director	Strategy
Karen Mapusua	LRD	Director	
Vuki Buadromo	Executive	Principal Advisor	
Bas Berghoef	ISD	ISD	Information services, IT
Epeli Waqavonovono	SDD	Director	Statistics

The **Technical Focus** group interview was held virtually on Wednesday 19th April 2021. The purpose of this session was to understand the use of data for voluntary national reviews, academic research and policy makers. This interview was targeted towards end users and partners.

Attendees included:

Name	Country	Organisation	Role	Area of Expertise
Mereia Carling	NZ	MFAT user representative	Youth Senior Adviser	
Hayden Everett	NZ	MFAT user representative	Economics Senior Adviser	
Nemani Tebana	Kiribati	Kiribati Tourism Authority	Senior Research and Statistics Officer	Research and Statistics

The **Partners of the Pacific Data Hub** group interview was held virtually on Wednesday 19th April 2021. The focus of this session was to hear the experiences and insights of those sharing data, promoting the PSD, and using data. This session looked to understand the Pacific data ecosystem, and how different actors relate to one another.

Attendees included:

Name	Country	Organisation	Role	Area of Expertise
Alfred Schuster	Fiji	APTC	Development Effectiveness Adviser	Development
Api Malu	NZ	Marven Company	Managing Consultant	
Mr Henry Cocker		PIFs	Engagement Adviser – Sustainable Development	Adviser
Dr. Julianne Biddle		ACIAR	Director Multilateral Engagement, Research Strategy	
Annette Bastaja		ABS	Assistant Director International Relations and Regional Statistical Development Section	
Mats Henrikson	Australia	CSIRO's Data61	Group leader Geoscience	Geoscience, geospatial systems
Susan		ABS		
Christina Leala-Gale	Samoa	SPTO	Sustainable tourism and research manager	Sustainability
Hugh Stehlik	Australia	ABS		.stat

The **Data Production and Dissemination** group interview was held virtually on Thursday 20th April 2021. The purpose of this session was to gain insight from internal SPC divisions around how the PDH can support different divisions to achieve their objectives, how the PDH can support and facilitate sharing and uptake of data by SPC, as well as data management capability across the organisation as a whole.

Attendees included:

Name	SPC Divisions	Role	Area of Expertise
Malakai Vakautawale	GEM	Maritime Boundaries Adviser	Geoscience, Environment, Maritime
Andrew Hunt	FAME	Data Analyst / Trainer	Fisheries
Augustin de la Varga	EQAP	Principal Adviser	Education
Katy Soapi,	PCCOS	PCCOS Coordinator	
Gregory Keeble	EQAP	Education Statistician	Education
Litea Biukoto	GEM	Disaster Risk Team Leader	Geoscience, Environment, Maritime
Kim Robertson	Social Development Programme	Team Leader-Gender Equality and Social Inclusion	Gender Equality and Social Inclusion

The **High-Level partners** group interview was also scheduled for Thursday 20th April 2021. The purpose of this interview was to collect the views of important national stakeholders, understand the level of evidence-informed decision making in the Pacific region and uncover opportunities for the PSD and the PDH. Whilst this interview was scheduled and participants registered their attendance via RSVP, on the day, no attendees joined the online workshop.

This limitation has been discussed with the Evaluation Steering Group and the consultancy team understands that this is not unexpected due to the nature of the roles these participants hold.

Individual interviews have been held with key stakeholders to gain further insight and contribute to answering the key evaluation questions. These interviews are still in progress due to the availability of interviewees. The following table describes all participants, and a status of which interviews have been completed and which are still to occur.

Name	Country	Organisation	Role	Area of Expertise	Completed status
Ishara Davey [Nominated by Alison Carrington]	Australia	DFAT	Consul, Australian Consulate General	Use of PDH and PSD.	Yes
Dr Ofa Ketu'u	New Zealand	Stats NZ (include 3 others from the Stats NZ)	Pacific Programme Manager	Programme Management	Yes
Susan Sulu	Solomon Islands	Ministry of Development and Planning	Permanent Secretary	Development and Planning	Yes
Sandra Hamilton	NZ	MFAT representative	SPC high level focal point.		Yes
Mei Lin Harley	NZ	MFAT representative	SPC high level focal point.		Yes
Taufik Indrakesuma		The World Bank Banque Mondiale		Economist Data Scientist	Yes

Tara de Sousa	NZ	MFAT representative	Gender and Development Advisor	Gender and Development	Yes
Api Malu	NZ	Marven Company	Managing Consultant		Scheduled
Paul Anderson	Samoa	SPREP	INFORM Project Manager	Management	Scheduled
Nicky Thatcher	Australia	Sustineo	Executive director	Use of the PDH	Scheduled
Neville Smith	New Caledonia	SPC FAME Division	Director FAME		Scheduled
Professor Tarcisius Kabutaulaka	Hawaii (original from Solomon Islands)	University of Hawaii's Center for Pacific Islands Studies	Associate Professor and Director	Using data for teaching his students. Example of data use.	No response
Lagipoiva Cherelle Jackson		Pacific Environment Weekly	Editor of Pacific Environment Weekly,	Media	No response
Stuart Minchin		SPC	Director General		No response
Bredina Drollet		Cook Islands ADB	Directors Advisor ADB	Adviser to contextualising this project with ADB's Pacific Data work.	No response

3. EMERGING THEMES

The data collection phase has revealed emerging themes for further exploration and development. Preliminary alignment against the key evaluation questions has taken place, though it is expected that this will be refined as the analysis process continues. In the table on the following page, the review team has highlighted key emerging themes, along with key descriptors, enablers, and inhibitors. It is important to note that these are preliminary, and it is expected that these will be refined, further developed, and expanded over the remainder of the project.

The themes were developed following an internal sensemaking session, where the interview notes were reviewed with a thematic lens to understand and draw out the key messages that have been heard. These have then refined and written up and presented in this document.

The **descriptors** include points that give context to the theme, with points that came up frequently under the particular theme area.

The **enablers** are items that support the PSD initiative to achieve its intended outcomes with relation to the specific theme area.

The **inhibitors** are items that present challenges to the PSD initiative in achieving its intended outcomes with relation to the specific theme area.

This table is a way of organising emerging information and understanding how different factors, experiences and insights give context to the key evaluation questions identified in this review.

The complexity of the PSD initiative is reflected in the overlapping emerging findings, which is particularly obvious in the domains of engagement and socialisation, relationships and trust, and, value. The initiative is on its way to achieving its intended outcomes, with the overall perception of the project largely positive. Stakeholders were quick to speak to the importance of this landmark piece and with it, the significant opportunities it has going forward.

A set of key messages for consideration have also emerged during these conversations. These may also be further developed and refined as the analysis continues.

These include:

- It is widely acknowledged that it is important that the PSD, particularly the PDH, succeeds. The success of the PDH is viewed as important for the reputation of both the funder (MFAT) and implementer (SPC), and to ensure that data is available to support evidence-informed decision making for the sustainable development of the region.
- More coherent messaging is needed about how the PSD and PDH are being implemented and governed both internally at SPC and with external stakeholders.
- The PDH is aspirational and on the way to providing an enduring regional public good, however, more socialisation, engagement and relationship building is needed so that producers and users understand the value of the PDH.
- A lack of alignment between the aspirations of the PDH and the realities of the contracting funding agreement present challenges to implementation and perception of the initiative.
- Technical experiences and usability of the PDH are related to stakeholders' perceptions and relationships with the platform.

Table presenting key emerging themes.

Key Evaluation Question Domain	Theme	Descriptors	Enabler	Inhibitor
Relevance Efficiency	Context: The contextual factors that influence the way the initiative is developed and delivered.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Position of PSD and PDH in SPC - A unique and diverse Pacific region in a COVID 19 context - Time bound programme funding - Capability and capacity of both producers and users of data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pacific Island countries have an existing relationship with SPC in regard to data production, data sharing and advice. - The PDH is regarded as aspirational and necessary for positive development outcomes in the Pacific region. - The PDH is the first of its kind in the region, there is genuine interest in the work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There are a large number of stakeholders to build relationships with. - The region is complex and diverse therefore, a fit for purpose approach is challenging. - The value of sharing knowledge and data is not uniformly accepted nor prioritised both internally to SPC and in the Pacific region. - The re-prioritisation of funds and resources because of COVID-19 is placing further constraints on the prioritisation of data production and socialisation of the PDH.
Effectiveness Efficiency Sustainability	Management and Governance: The implementation, governance, and management of the initiative in terms of strategy and operations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implementation architecture within SPC - Strategic alignment within SPC - The Pacific region and funder's priorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Across SPC there are many champions of the PSD initiative and the PDH. - Funder recognises that it is important for the PDH to succeed. - Steering Group with country representatives has been established. - Champions of the PSD initiative within the funding organisation. - International and regional recognition that effective 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Initial set up took longer than expected with some human resourcing challenges. - Resources to develop and adapt the Theory of Change, MEL systems and reporting may be underfunded. - Lack of understanding internally and externally about the differentiation and connections between the PSD initiative and the PDH. - Questions being raised about the position of the PDH within the IT division

			governance, storage and use of data is critical to development.	with suggestions that it would be better positioned within SDD.
Relevance Relationships Impact Sustainability	Engagement and socialisation: Stakeholders understanding and connection with the PSD and the PDH.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Visibility and understanding - Centrality of relationship building. - Centrality of understanding the different 'users' and 'producers'. - Socialisation - Outreach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SPC has longstanding and positive relationships via different divisions to be leveraged for the PSD and the PDH. - A successful launch of the PDH in 2020 which raised visibility of the project and socialised the opportunities to stakeholders. internally and externally to SPC - Current and future value of the PDH is recognised by both data producers and data consumers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Integration across SPC divisions is still under development. - COVID-19 disrupted "face to face" relationship building and socialisation which is best practice in the Pacific region to develop strong and enduring relationships.
Relationships	Relationships and trust: The connections that the initiative has across the data system, and the perceptions that data providers, users and decision makers have about the initiative.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Connections across system - Perceptions of the initiative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Trust between implementation and funding partners. - End users trust in the data, the analysis, the reporting, the storage, and management of data. - Decision makers trust the outputs / products. - Dashboards, visualisations, and COVID-19 reporting has created new connections between users and the PDH. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of engagement with country partners (challenges in reaching people with high level influence). - Regionalised data governance arrangements are not yet developed and in place. - Limited shared understanding of what "data" is and how it can inform evidence-based decision making.
Impact Sustainability	Value: The connection between what end users and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Perceptions of value - Longer term funding for adaptations and updating, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strong relationships with key influencers in the data production and consumer space. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Limited resourcing and capacity for visualisation and in house analysis. - Many different types of users who will value a large variety of outputs.

	<p>decision makers see as a valuable output and what the PSD initiative and PDH is producing.</p>	<p>visualisations outputs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Communication – outreach. - International conversations around data governance and what it means for the PSD. - Ensuring outputs of initiative are of highest value to users. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strategic governance of the initiative will allow for anticipation what is of highest value to end users. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Challenges of making a fit for purpose data hub when there are many purposes across the region.
<p>Sustainability</p>	<p>Sustainability / longevity: The factors that contribute to the initiative being long lasting, and on its way to being the aspirational regional public good.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continuity - Maintenance – dedicated resource for maintenance and analysis. - Funding for sustainability – futureproofing the initiative. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Good data governance, management and filtering of information included in PDH. - Secure funding going forward. - Dedicated resource for maintenance and analysis of data in PDH. - Having the most recent and up to date data on the Pacific – direct access to source. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Future resourcing of the PSD is unknown. - Relationships with producers and users still in the beginning of development. - Prioritisation of engagement, promotion and relationship building, and future funding opportunities is under resourced. - Limited ability to influence data producers.

