MFAT Management Response

Evaluation team members

Members of the evaluation team were:

Name	Role
Dr Evelyn Marsters	Director – Sound Research Ltd. Pacific Research Specialist. Project management and stakeholder engagement lead.
Dr Peter Carswell	Director – Synergia Ltd. Registered Organisational Psychologist. Lead consultant on the implementation science concepts to the review process and the exploration and analysis.
Jess Gasparini	Consultant - Synergia Ltd

Key findings/conclusions of the evaluation

The key findings/conclusions of the evaluation are:

- Improving access to Pacific Statistics and Data (PSD) Initiative Project should be viewed overall as largely positive with significant opportunities for the Pacific Data Hub (PDH), including the .Stat indicator database and the Microdata Library, in particular going forward. The PSD is on its way to achieving the intended outcomes and that important lessons were learned. It is also important, however, to keep PSD achievements in perspective as in many areas progress is mostly in the developing stage.

- Relevance: The PSD project is still in its developing stage in which some of the components should be strengthened to achieve the PSD outcomes. The Evaluation nevertheless found the PSD project to be relevant and there is sound evidence that its components are contributing to achieving the intended outcomes.

- Coherence: There is evidence that the alignment of the PSD with the broader Pacific data ecosystem is developing steadily. The evaluation also found, however, that there are some components that should be strengthened to support the PSD to achieve its outcomes.

- Effectiveness. The PSD project overall 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, particularly in the operational management of the PDH.

- Efficiency: There is evidence that some of the concepts related to 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.

- Sustainability. There is evidence that there are elements of relationship building and facilitation that are on their way to supporting the achievement of the PSD outcomes, but there is some room for development across the remaining sustainability concepts.

Lessons for MFAT

The findings and conclusions detailed in the Evaluation report point to several key lessons. These include:

No.	Lesson	SPC Response	MFAT Response
1.	Integration across SPC divisions needs to be strengthened and further development	SDD and PDH teams will continue to engage with other SPC divisions to encourage greater involvement in the PSD programmatic activities and workstreams.	MFAT endorses a focus on the internal engagement for the SDD and PDH teams especially for the purposes of ensuring sustainability. MFAT expects to see specific planning and monitoring of this and other engagement recommendations.
2.	Regionalised data governance arrangements are not yet developed and in place.	SPC will engage with development partners to elevate the importance of regional data governance to establish an enabling environment which supports greater sharing and reuse of data and statistics.	MFAT agrees data governance arrangements will be essential for the ongoing effectiveness and sustainability of the programme we see this lesson as applied through the planned establishment of the data governance framework.
3.	Limited shared understanding of what "data" is and how it can inform evidence-based decision making.	SPC will ensure capacity building programs focus on raising awareness and developing a shared understanding of what data is in the context of supporting sustainable development, data-driven policy and informed decision-making. The PSD project will continue to broaden its outreach through the Pacific Data Community of Practice and its series of Pacific Data Talanoa Sessions. The PSD project will also develop training and capacity building programmes targeted at improving data literacy among civil servants.	MFAT agrees that to see the effectiveness of this work there will be a necessary shift in the focus on the programme of providing quality evidence to seeing that evidence used. In further evaluations and reviews, we would like to see further examples and case studies of where the better evidence from the Pacific Data hub has led to improved policies, practice and programmes. This will include Case studies from MFAT and DFAT sector teams and the use of data in their bilateral programme development and monitoring.

No.	Lesson	SPC Response	MFAT Response
4.	Operational management of the PSD, in particular the PDH needs to be reviewed.	SPC will review the operational management arrangements to address this issue. This will occur alongside the development of other similar integrated programmes of work at SPC, that can draw valuable lessons from the PSD experience.	MFAT agrees there could be better internal management of the PDH that will be fit for purpose beyond this project for the sustainability of the programme, however we note the current project management is working relatively well.
5.	Engagement with country partners with high level influence need to be strengthen	SPC will continue to engage with Senior officials of member countries to encourage greater influence	MFAT endorses this continued engagement and note this focus will be essential in the use of data for decision making, which as mentioned we expect to see evidence of this improvement, including case studies from MFAT and DFAT sector teams and the use of data in their bilateral programme development and monitoring.
6.	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. Attention needs to be given to the long-term sustainability of this regional public good.	SPC will work to develop a resource mobilisation and sustainability plan.	MFAT is happy to work with PSD and PDH to ensure this programme is sustainable. MFAT will work specifically on internal messaging regarding the Data hub with activity Managers and Thematic advisers to advocate for increased use of the data and to gather Case studies from MFAT and DFAT sector teams and the use of data in their bilateral programme development and monitoring. MFAT also commits to advocacy with other donors and development partners who may be considering investing in the region and/or in statistics particularly.

Recommendations for MFAT

No.	Recommendation	SPC response	MFAT response
1	Development of a data governance framework	SPC accepts this recommendation. A formal data governance framework will be established for the PDH to support future data contributors and infrastructure aligned with best practice data management and governance. A Term of Reference for the Data Governance Framework Consultancy work has been drafted for finalisation.	MFAT endorses this recommendation and are glad SPC will establish a formal data governance framework.
2	Elevate the strategic governance of the PDH to an appropriate strategic level within SPC to support sustainability	SPC accepts this recommendation. Greater engagement of the SPC Executive will be pursued to support project governance and data management framework that will better serve and address the needs of member countries and governments.	MFAT endorses this recommendation and we welcome SPC elevating the strategic importance of the Pacific Data Hub for the sustainability of the programme. MFAT will continue to discuss the data hub at SPC-NZ Partnership level.

No.	Recommendation	SPC response	MFAT response
3	Further explore arrangements for the operational management of the different workstreams of the PSD (specifically, the PDH), and where this may be best placed	SPC accepts this recommendation. The PSD governance- the Steering Committee and the SPC executive will further explore arrangements for the operational management of the different workstreams of the PSD and where the PDH may be best placed. This will take place alongside the development of other integrated programmes of work at SPC, to support consistency and draw on the valuable lessons from the PSD's work. The PSD project team proposes that the curation and management of data is best situated within programme and technical teams who already serve as stewards and custodians of sectoral and domain-specific data. The PSD will continue to strengthen its partnership and collaboration with SPC divisions to ensure that the quality of data and metadata published on the PDH continues to improve. The PSD project team has already implemented several changes towards improving the quality of metadata in the PDH catalogue and enhancements to search functionality. The PDH will continue to seek feedback from users to improve the quality, relevance and utility of data, data services and tools provided by the PDH platforms.	MFAT endorses this recommendation and SPC's response. Subsequent to and alongside the improved strategic governance of the PSD we can see a shift to a better utilisation and management of the data hub and data at SPC, and focusing the curation of data with the programme teams to allow a greater focus for PSD and PDH is welcome and reflects progress.

No.	Recommendation	SPC response	MFAT response
4	Further invest in and prioritise the development and maintenance of relationships with key stakeholders in the Pacific way	SPC accepts this recommendation. SDD and ISD teams will take the necessary steps amidst the ongoing travel restrictions and lockdowns to interact more in creative online engagement with a view to supporting face to face engagement by the end of the programme. Strategic communication and engagement will be strengthened with support from SPC's corporate communications team and external consultants to assist in outreach, socialisation and strengthening of relationships with key stakeholders. PSD will explore emerging trends in data governance, data trusts and data collaboratives, drawing from a growing body of literature on these topics, to understand how cotemporary approaches to establishing trust in data and statistics, adapted for the Pacific context, can be used to strengthen and modernise existing data governance frameworks and practices, and change attitudes towards the sharing and reuse of data.	MFAT endorses this recommendation and SPC's response. We would encourage PSD to ensure this increased engagement is specifically planned and monitored to ensure the recommendation is meaningfully enacted. MFAT will endeavour to leverage their relationships through their posts, with development partners and multilateral agencies. MFAT activity managers and sectoral specialists will play a key role in encouraging use of data for evidence-based decision making and can provide valuable information on their own use of data in project development, and can encourage national authorities to share data through data licence agreements where SPC has assisted in the compilation of that data.
5	Create and take up opportunities for socialisation with internal and external stakeholders to support awareness and use of PSD outputs	SPC accepts this recommendation. SDD and ISD teams will take the necessary steps to ensure that internal and external stakeholders are fully engaged and aware of the value of the PSD outputs. The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has provided opportunities for new ways of engagement with partners and stakeholders, accelerated digital transformation and data innovation and continued support virtual modalities for engagement.	MFAT endorses this recommendation and SPC's response. We would encourage PSD to ensure this increased engagement is specifically planned and monitored to ensure the recommendation is meaningfully enacted.

MFAT follow up actions

This table lists actions that MFAT will undertake in response to the findings, lessons and recommendations of the evaluation.

Recommendation	Action	Who will action	When	Resource Implications
1. Development of a data governance framework	Draft TOR for the Data Governance Framework Consultancy work to be finalised	Manager PDH and Manager SDD DAD	Data governance policy and recommendations report to be delivered in late January 2022.	Estimated cost $66,000 NZD
2. Elevate the strategic governance of the PDH to an appropriate strategic level within SPC to support sustainability	Share evaluation with the SPC Director General and SPL and explore options for elevating PDH governance within SPC	Director SDD and Director IS	Ongoing	Support and engagement from SPC executive and senior leadership.
3. Further explore arrangements for the operational management of the different workstreams of the PSD (specifically, the PDH), and where this may be best placed	The PSD TWG will draft a concept note to be shared with SPC executive and the PSD Steering Committee. The concept note will provide an overview of current operational management challenges and opportunities to enhance the effectiveness of the PDH programme. This should be also discussed alongside the development of other integrated programmes at SPC.	Manager PDH and Manager SDD DAD and SPC executive	Ongoing	Time
4. Further invest in and prioritise the development and maintenance of relationships with key stakeholders in the Pacific way	Strengthen and monitor ongoing stakeholder engagement and partnership development	PSD Technical Working Group and MFAT	Ongoing	Requires sufficient time and resources
5. Create and take up opportunities for socialisation with internal and external stakeholders to support awareness and use of PSD outputs	Capacity building programs and Pacific Data COP Talanoa sessions promote sharing of knowledge and skills on evidenced based decision making.	PSD Technical Working Group and MFAT	Ongoing	PSD Technical Working Group and MFAT