



MFAT Management Response to Review of the Pacific Sporting Partnerships Programme – Sports for Health

The Pacific Sporting Partnerships – Sports for Health Activity was established as a five year programme focused on increasing children’s’ access to sporting opportunities, and integrating healthy lifestyle messages and raising awareness of healthy lifestyle benefits to contribute to reducing non-communicable diseases. This programme is delivered in a partnership between the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Netball New Zealand and New Zealand Rugby, who jointly commissioned this mid-term evaluation. Other delivery partners include Oceania Rugby, Oceania Netball, national sporting organisations and non-governmental organisations in each of the Pacific island countries involved: Fiji, Samoa, the Cook islands, Tonga and Vanuatu.

This mid-term evaluation was completed at the beginning of Year Five of the Activity. At the time of commissioning this evaluation a significant Phase Two of the activity was under consideration. Therefore, recommendations were made in the report that would apply to a second phase of considerable size and scope. Since this time MFAT has determined that if there is a further phase, this will be at a significantly smaller scale than Phase One.

Since this evaluation was commissioned, a 12 month extension to the Activity was concluded, using unspent funds from Years Three and Four (available largely due to delays to the programme caused by the COVID-19 pandemic). The recommendations of this evaluation informed planning for this 12 month extension and will inform the final period of Activity delivery. This evaluation also provides relevant learnings for other sports for development activities supported by MFAT as well as MFAT’s sports diplomacy activities.

Recommendation (All outlined in section Five of the Mid-term evaluation report, from page 43)	Response and Action (Agree, Partially Agree, Reject)
Changes to the delivery model and approach	<p>Agree.</p> <p>The following changes are being, or have been, implemented with regards to this recommendation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MFAT governance arrangements have been modified to include a dedicated Health Senior Adviser to contribute to technical assessments of the programme and identify opportunities to incorporate relevant lessons from other health programmes supported by MFAT into the Activity, and share the lessons from Pacific Sporting Partnerships (PSP) across MFAT's other health programmes. • MFAT Activity Manager and DFAT (via GHD) have agreed to hold quarterly coordination meetings on sports for development activities to share lessons learned and identify opportunities for increased coordination and cohesion. • Netball New Zealand (NNZ) will explore incorporating Pacific pedagogical methods more explicitly into its healthy lifestyle messaging, and will share this experience with New Zealand Rugby (NZR). • NNZ to explore including more members of LGBTQ communities into its programming, in particular by partnering with local organisations working with people from these groups. • While children with disabilities currently participate in both the netball and rugby programmes, particularly those provided in schools, this is not a particular strength of either programme. The programme partners' preference is to continue consolidating progress to date and take opportunities to participate in programmes and initiatives for children with disabilities run by organisations more experienced in this area and learn through these experiences, rather than proactively target more children with disabilities by amending approaches in their own core programming for the remainder of Phase 1. • Through closer partnerships with Government stakeholders and increased coordination with partners (as described below) NNZ and NZR will continue to seek opportunities to better integrate healthy lifestyle messaging into school curricula where possible, and likewise draw upon existing relevant school curricula to ensure better integrated healthy lifestyle messaging. The approach will vary by country. <p>For example NZR and NNZ are working with the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Agriculture to explore how the programme could integrate better with their healthy lifestyle related activities. NZR will also explore the possibility of working with schools in Tonga to help them resource their weekly</p>

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	<p>movement and fitness class. NNZ is also working with Teachers Colleges in Fiji and Samoa to help integrate healthy lifestyle messaging into trainee teachers' curriculum. NNZ evaluates its programme against the relevant teachers college curriculum to ensure a match with healthy lifestyle messaging and the broader programme, and this is also done with the Fundamental Movement Skills Programme.</p>
Strengthen local providers' capacity and capabilities	<p>Agree.</p> <p>Upskilling/training of volunteer coaches, teachers and Rugby Union and Netball Association support staff remains a cornerstone of the programme. There will be a strong focus on this for the remainder of the programme.</p> <p>NNZ builds local providers' capabilities by collaboratively developing the work programme, including the budget. There is scope to provide greater mentoring for local providers to develop strategic planning skills looking across the sector, and both NNZ and NZR will explore opportunities to provide this support to key local providers in the remaining period. There are variable capability needs across partners, meaning that the support required for each is different and is continually assessed with partners during programme delivery. For example NZR will strengthen local providers' capacity to deliver a sustainable Saturday age grade club competition in Samoa and develop competitions in the Cook Islands to grow women's and age grade girls rugby. NNZ will focus on strengthening partners capabilities to build and sustain a volunteer coach developer network in Fiji and Samoa and a volunteer umpire coach network in Samoa, Fiji and Vanuatu. NNZ will also develop the capacity of the volunteer driven Netball Association based at secondary schools to support netball development in the schools and local community.</p>

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Build stronger relationships and partnerships with government agencies	<p>Agree.</p> <p>MFAT in New Zealand, NNZ and NZR will continue to work closely with the relevant New Zealand High Commissions (NZHCs) in each country to arrange meetings with Government agencies to share information on the activity, demonstrate links with these agencies' own objectives, and identify ways in which the programme can better support these objectives. NNZ and NZR will provide regular reporting to relevant government agencies using the Results Framework, updated quarterly, and shared at regular stakeholder coordination meetings) to show how the programme is adding value to the government agencies' own work programmes and priorities.</p> <p>To support these efforts NNZ and NZR will identify the latest strategy documents of each relevant government agency to better map programme outcomes to each agencies' objectives. This will ensure the programme can demonstrate close links to and support of these agencies' own objectives, and these programme successes could in turn be integrated into partner government agencies' own reporting.</p>
Improve coordination of local implementing partners and key stakeholders	<p>Agree.</p> <p>NNZ and NZR will endeavour to approach stakeholders jointly where possible (in particular, government agencies) and generally coordinate their efforts more closely for a unified programme approach.</p> <p>The cross-code model of stakeholder coordination that has been used in Tonga will be reinvigorated, and this model trialled in other PSP implementing countries. MFAT has agreed with DFAT to co-host these meetings in Tonga via the High Commissions and will explore this option in other countries where DFAT is a significant sports partner. MFAT will continue discussions with DFAT about supporting improved coordination of implementing partners of the sports programmes supported by these agencies.</p>

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Strengthen in-country partnerships to deliver Healthy Lifestyle messaging together	<p>Agree.</p> <p>This will be a key focus of improved stakeholder coordination, and efforts to embed sustainable outcomes into the programme during the extension period. Stakeholder meetings in the Cook Islands and Tonga to discuss this evaluation highlighted opportunities to: draw more regularly from government agency produced healthy lifestyle messages; incorporate the same healthy lifestyle messages into school curriculums and sports activities; and work more closely with local NGOs working on health related issues to incorporate their expertise in delivering healthy lifestyle messaging alongside sports activities.</p> <p>NZR will explore working with the Tonga Health Promotion agency (and other Ministries of Health/ health promotion agencies) to assist in training teachers, volunteers, and coaches to ensure consistency of healthy lifestyle messaging. NNZ and NZR will continue to invite input from relevant government agencies in particular, and other relevant in-country partners to healthy lifestyle manuals developed by the programme and will also continue to invite provision of government agencies own healthy lifestyles collateral to inform/use as curriculum in the programme. NNZ and NZR will ensure that local programme coordinators maintain working level contact with relevant health promotion agencies to share content on healthy lifestyle messaging.</p>
Increase contact with New Zealand Posts and other key stakeholders	<p>Agree.</p> <p>NNZ and NZR to allow time to meet with Posts when in-country, and to otherwise provide the opportunity for virtual updates and briefings on the programme around the time that quarterly reporting is submitted to MFAT. NNZ and NZR to ensure/facilitate regular briefings by in country coordinators of NZHCs (particularly in Vanuatu where the programme is newer).</p> <p>NNZ and NZR to share a joint Results Framework (updated quarterly) with in-country stakeholder groups at quarterly meetings as a way of updating on progress and challenges across both codes in the programme.</p>
Enhance communication/media outreach	<p>Agree.</p> <p>NNZ and NZR will take a more proactive approach with in-country partners to identify opportunities to profile events and stories of interest, in particular the role and achievements of the programme and related healthy lifestyle messaging.</p> <p>Delivery partners will seek opportunities to profile elements of the programme that support MFAT's Sports Diplomacy Framework.</p>

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Strengthen monitoring and evaluation	<p>Agree.</p> <p>MFAT is working with NNZ and NZR to review and refresh the Results Frameworks used for this activity. In particular activity partners will work together to identify more practical methods for measuring healthy lifestyle knowledge and behaviour change, and the links to reducing NCDs. Consideration will also be given to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adding a metric for contribution of the activity to increasing resilience amidst disasters • Aligning longer term outcomes more closely with national priorities (and metrics) related to NCD reduction. • Adding or amending a metric that links outcomes to MFAT's sports diplomacy framework (e.g. with a focus on institutional strengthening, and disaggregating data to include people with disabilities to demonstrate inclusive sport outcomes). <p>Progress against the Results Framework will be shared with Posts and in-country stakeholders via the coordination meetings referred to above.</p>