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Transforming evidence into influence

Evaluation of the Mekem Strong Solomon Islands Fisheries programme Phase 3

Final Report

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Disclaimer

Executive Summary

The Mekem Strong Solomon Islands Fisheries Programme (MSSIF) Phase 3 is a NZD9.5million programme running from 31 October 2019 to 30 December 2024. The overarching goal of the current phase is to support "a sustainable fisheries sector that contributes to the socio-economic needs of all Solomon Islanders".

MSSIF is one of Aotearoa New Zealand's longest running partnerships with the Solomon Islands Government, and first started supporting fisheries management in 2006. MSSIF Phase 3 is focused on building capability and providing sector budget support to the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources (MFMR), thereby contributing to sustainable fisheries management, food security, and improved government revenue from fisheries in Solomon Islands. Specifically, during the current phase, MSSIF Phase 3 has supported two major projects, being the construction of a national freshwater aquaculture hatchery at Aruligo, northwest Guadalcanal, and progressing foundational elements for the establishment of the Bina Harbour tuna processing plant on Malaita, with the latter now managed under separate New Zealand supported projects. MSSIF Phase 3 is also supporting fisheries in the provinces via direct support to Provincial Fisheries Officers; and supporting ongoing institutional strengthening and staff training.

The expected long-term outcomes from MSSIF Phase 3 are that: Solomon Islands is a strong voice on issues of fisheries management in the Pacific region; Solomon Islands fisheries are managed more sustainably, and the sector diversified; Revenue from fisheries increasingly contributes to Solomon Islands' government revenue; and Growth in the fisheries sector providing more job opportunities, particularly for youth.

This evaluation has been commissioned by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade Manatū Aorere (MFAT) and was undertaken over March to June 2024. The evaluation approach focused on:

- Assessing progress against the goals and objectives for MSSIF Phase 3;
- Informing decisions on what the future direction, design and support should be; and
- Identifying improvements that can be made to managing, implementing and achieving results for MSSIF.

The evaluation was guided by the following four objectives:

1. To assess the extent to which the Activity design and outcomes remain relevant to Solomon Islands' development objectives
2. To examine the progress being made in achieving the MSSIF outputs and short- and medium-term outcomes
3. To review the value of MSSIF's delivery model
4. To identify the key learnings to increase positive impact in the future.

Overall conclusions

The evaluation finds that MSSIF Phase 3 has successfully provided crucial and highly valued support, enabling MFMR to deliver on its strategic priorities, and implement its operational workplans under its Corporate Plan.

One of MSSIF's key strengths is that, after nearly 20 years of New Zealand support, MFMR has integrated MSSIF funding into its planning mechanisms, resulting in strong ownership, robust

relationships and a demonstrably partner-led, adaptive approach. This approach and support during MSSIF Phase 3 were especially critical during the COVID-19 pandemic.

A notable strength of MSSIF has been its adaptability across its three phases, demonstrating a dynamic and responsive approach based on lessons learned. The focus of support has evolved alongside the development of MFMR. The successful use of sector budget support under MSSIF Phase 3 during COVID-19 underscores the importance of maintaining flexibility and openness to change to ensure the continued benefits of this modality, while systematically addressing its drawbacks. The longevity of MSSIF, the strength of the relationship, MFMR leadership and the skills and experience of MSSIF's staff have enabled this.

There is an ongoing need for sustained support to build on the successes achieved thus far and to ensure these benefits are preserved. By concentrating on MFMR itself, MSSIF Phase 3 has enabled this Ministry to raise its profile, and take better advantage of the many different donors that support it, the things they have to offer and enhancing overall impact of donor funding for the fisheries sector in Solomon Islands.

Ensuring the sustainability of achievements, particularly the embedding of structural and organisational reforms within MFMR, is foundational to ongoing success. The dual focus on large projects (such as the Aruligo Tilapia Hatchery and Bina Harbour) combined with widespread support for the implementation of MFMR's divisional work plans has proven to be a valuable approach under MSSIF Phase 3; but large projects and piloted approaches, once initiated, often require continuity and more deliberate consideration of sustainability factors.

MSSIF has the capacity to play a greater role in supporting future transformational change in strategic priority areas for both MFAT and MFMR. Moving beyond the current budget support mechanism would require intentional decisions and efforts from both MFAT and MFMR, with associated governance arrangements to support broader and more strategic discussions.

Summary of findings

Key finding 1: MSSIF remains a high priority for Solomon Islands and the New Zealand International Development Cooperation Programme, and is well-aligned with Solomon Islands Government priorities.

During Phase 3, **MSSIF significantly bolstered MFMR's capacity to achieve key strategic priorities for the Solomon Islands Government.** Two major projects exemplify this support: progressing foundational elements for the development of a Bina Harbour Tuna Processing Plant and the **Aruligo Tilapia Hatchery**. These initiatives are flagship projects for the Ministry, and their progression has been notably aided by New Zealand's support through MSSIF. MSSIF has consistently aligned its efforts with MFMR priorities by allocating resources according to MFMR's divisional work plans. This alignment ensures that the programme's activities directly support the strategic goals of the Solomon Islands Government.

Aruligo Tilapia Hatchery Pools, August 2023, Guadalcanal. Photo: Solomon Islands Government Communications Unit

During the COVID-19 pandemic, **MSSIF demonstrated much-needed flexibility by pivoting funding to support MFMR in maintaining essential operations during a challenging time**. This adaptability was crucial in mitigating disruptions caused by the pandemic. The availability of appropriated Solomon Islands' recurrent and development budgets continues to be impacted by these events. **MSSIF's ability to adapt remains pertinent and underscores its importance and flexibility in addressing emerging needs and priorities**.

The Solomon Islands Government, elected in April 2024, is focusing on economic growth, emphasising job creation and maximising economic returns from natural resources. The fisheries sector is seen as key to achieving this goal, with potential for expanded activity in offshore and inshore coastal fisheries, as well as aquaculture. The evaluation heard MFMR's forthcoming Corporate Plan will drive these priorities. MSSIF's modality of integrated planning positions it well to support future MFMR priorities and operational plans, ensuring it remains appropriate and relevant to the policy and delivery contexts of the Solomon Islands.

Embedded within a national fisheries Ministry, **MSSIF occupies a distinctive position that enables it to actively bolster New Zealand's pursuit of regional approaches in Pacific fisheries that support country level actions (and vice versa).** Fulfilling this potential necessitates more intentional internal coordination within MFAT and enhanced collaboration with external stakeholders.

Key finding 2: Progress toward achieving outputs and short-term outcomes has been proportionate and realistic considering the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Getting the Aruligo Tilapia Hatchery construction close to the point of completion is a significant achievement and realisation of a long-held aspiration of MFMR and the Solomon Islands Government is now in sight. By the end of MSSIF Phase 3, Solomon Islands will have a hatchery that is fit for purpose to supply farmers with Genetically Improved Farmed Tilapia subject to completion of associated infrastructure.

The corporate restructure of MFMR has significantly increased organisational capacity and capability and can be considered one of the key achievements of MSSIF Phases 2 and 3. The restructure has led to the establishment of over 70 new positions within MFMR with the last recruitment completed in 2023.

MSSIF funding and support has enabled the Provincial Fisheries Officers to deliver tangible benefits to communities, significantly strengthening the visibility and reputation of MFMR in the provinces. Management of inshore coastal fisheries is supported by multiple donors and organisations including World Bank PROPER, WorldFish, the Pacific Community (SPC) and the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA). Direct budget support to MFMR from MSSIF, including to the Inshore Fisheries team and the support to Provincial Fisheries Officers, has **enabled MFMR to better leverage the support provided by other organisations**.

Post-harvest fish handling training, June 2023, Temotu.
Photo: Malasy Malakia, Temotu Province

Although the development and implementation of aquaculture regulations was one of the planned outputs of MSSIF Phase 3, this work was significantly delayed due to COVID-19 and staff movements. Efforts to upskill and equip MFMR compliance officers were progressing well at the start of MSSIF Phase 3, including through support from the MFAT-funded Te Pātuitanga Ahumoana a Kiwa (Te Pātui) Programme[1] implemented by the New Zealand Ministry for Primary Industries, but this collaboration was greatly impacted by COVID-19 and staff movements.

There were expectations for a strong focus on gender equality under MSSIF Phase 3, however, this focus diminished in response to the prioritisation of other corporate plan activities, disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and opportunities for MFMR to receive support for gender equality from other partners, notably SPC and the Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA). There is a growing consciousness about the importance of engaging men, women and youth in the community, and across MFMR and the fisheries sector.

Key finding 3: For the most part, donor coordination works well; albeit with room for improvement to formalise coordination arrangements.

Overall **donor coordination rests with MFMR, with Divisional Heads responsible for coordinating donor support in relation to their division's work**. MFMR's Corporate Plan, updated on a 4-year cycle, and annual planning process provide a sound framework for MFMR to align donor support around its work plan.

There are a **large number of donors and organisations that provide support to the Solomon Islands in the area of fisheries** including the World Bank (budgetary support with a focus on infrastructure development), WorldFish (technical advice in relation to coastal fisheries management and gender issues), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) (technical support in relation to FADs and aquaculture), Japan (technical support on aquaculture and bêche-de-mer), FFA (offshore fisheries management, development, monitoring and compliance) and SPC (coastal fisheries, gender, fisheries science). Managing and aligning the inputs of this many donors is a significant task for MFMR. MSSIF's flexible funding has meant it can fill gaps not resourced by other donors and is more readily able to respond to immediate needs. The degree to which MSSIF is now embedded within MFMR is one of the real strengths of the programme. It is important that the Programme Manager has an understanding of all the donor programmes working with MFMR.

Key finding 4: Coordination across MFAT-supported regional and bilateral fisheries programmes has not been strong and relies on personal relationships and contacts.

Awareness of MSSIF's focus and activities is lacking outside of MFMR (for example, at the Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA), SPC, New Zealand Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI)). In the absence of formal structures or processes, the MSSIF Programme Manager has limited opportunities for engagement, coordination and influence in relation to MFAT's wider regional fisheries related funding support and associated objectives.

Key finding 5: The MSSIF delivery model is highly valued

The **flexibility and responsiveness of MSSIF's delivery model to MFMR's funding priorities has proved invaluable** during challenging fiscal periods for the Solomon Islands Government. The delivery of

[1] Te Pātui funds dedicated staff from the New Zealand Ministry for Primary Industries to provide capacity building support to Pacific countries with a focus on Compliance Officer training and fisheries management.

MSSIF has been integrated into MFMR work planning processes which has driven **strong ownership and high transparency of New Zealand's support within MFMR management**.

The close engagement between MFAT and MFMR via the Independent Steering Committee, along with accessible leadership within MFMR and strong oversight protocols, supports alignment and accountability in managing MSSIF funds. The engagement between the MFAT and MFMR through the Independent Steering Committee structure was described by both MFMR and MFAT as functioning well, with the Independent Steering Committee being an effective decision-making mechanism to support adaptive management during COVID-19. Outside of the Independent Steering Committee, the evaluation heard that the accessibility of MFMR leadership to discuss MSSIF implementation significantly eases the MSSIF programme office's work and ensures strong interaction and alignment.

Overall, **utilising Solomon Islands Government systems for MSSIF has empowered the Ministry with direct resource control, fostering ownership and strengthening New Zealand's standing as a trusted partner in the fisheries sector**. However, slow and complex financial and procurement processes, inconsistent engagement in budget planning, and difficulties in tracking expenditures have been a drawback to using a budget support modality. **The expertise of key MSSIF staff has been crucial in navigating these challenges.**

During MSSIF Phase 3, the shift to Solomon Islands Government procurement systems for recruiting technical advisors marked a departure from the MFAT-contracting of advisors under MSSIF Phase 2 when dedicated offshore and inshore fisheries advisers were embedded within MFMR under the direction of the MSSIF Team Leader. MSSIF Phase 3 saw a phasing out of this embedded advisory support as capacity had been built within MFMR. However, scope remained for the provision of short-term technical inputs for specific tasks such as corporate planning and legal drafting.

While this approach reflects the effectiveness of historical capacity development support, it has both benefits and drawbacks. The evaluation heard how the legacy of MSSIF-funded technical advisory support is the significant confidence building of Ministry staff, facilitated by the embedding of long-term technical advisors within the Ministry. The turnover of senior staff during Phase 3 has seen a new cohort of officers who have not experienced this on-the-job capacity development.

Summary of lessons

The following lessons, and possible future application, have been derived from a review of key documents and stakeholder interviews:

Lesson	Application
Integrating control over MSSIF resource allocation within MFMR has led to strong alignment between MFAT's support and the Ministry's changing needs and emerging priorities. Notwithstanding the slow and complex government systems, which have at times posed implementation risks, this new approach in Phase 3 has reaped benefits.	MSSIF phases to date have been adapted in line with the Ministry's organisational needs, emerging priorities and challenges. This has been a real strength, and an approach that should continue in future.
The nature of MSSIF supported strategic interventions (such as, Aruligo Tilapia Hatchery,	In general, the next phase should continue to support tangible projects as well as providing

Lesson	Application
Bina Harbour, support to PFOs) necessitates deliberate consideration of how impacts and results will be sustained in the medium to long term.	direct budget support for operationalising work plans. Building on the strengths of MSSIF and the strong trust established between MFAT and MFMR, decisions on which specific projects to include in a future phase should be progressed in collaboration with MFMR. Given the growth and diversification of the Solomon Islands fisheries sector, including a strong domestic offshore tuna fishing sector, onshore processing, marine and shore-based aquaculture, and increased engagement in community-based fisheries management, a future phase of MSSIF could usefully support MFMR to consider its long-term strategic direction, including investigating the option of establishing a national fisheries authority.
The regional nature of offshore tuna fisheries management relies on regional agreements and implementation. Strong actions by an individual country can put it at a disadvantage if not supported by collective action from others.	Given the number of countries and industry players involved, it is difficult to implement measures that impose a higher compliance burden and costs on industry without wider regional uptake of those same measures and associated standards for implementation. Binding agreement at the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission is effectively a prerequisite to national level implementation.
Effective coordination across the portfolio of New Zealand support to Pacific fisheries requires specific and deliberate mechanisms.	MFAT's coordination processes should be expanded to include direct involvement of the bilateral fisheries programme managers, such as the MSSIF Programme Manager, given the significant degree of overlap and the reach and influence of the regional support programmes. Such coordination should aim to raise awareness across the New Zealand funded fisheries programmes (including MSSIF) about the objectives and modality of the different programmes and how they intersect. This is particularly important for a programme like Te Pātui which involves close engagement between MPI and MFMR officers working together, as distinct from simply coordinating funding or activities.

Lesson	Application
Effective management of MSSIF's contribution to a wider work programme involving multiple donors requires greater awareness by all key players of respective roles and responsibilities.	Consideration could be given to how MSSIF can support more formalised, MFMR led, donor coordination processes such as an annual meeting involving all relevant donors, as MFMR develops its annual work plan. Developing a good understanding of the work of other donors and how they contribute to MFMR should be a requirement of the MSSIF Programme Manager position and would enable MSSIF to more actively support MFMR's leadership in this area.
Small amount of support to Provincial Fisheries Officers has brought about significant change and impact, but also highlighted the dynamic between MFMR headquarters and the provinces and the need for sustainable funding for provincial fisheries.	There is a need to consider how to best progress support to this critical area in any future phase of MSSIF. This will require strategic consideration of the relationship between MFMR headquarters in Honiara and the provinces, for example, what does this relationship look like in 5-10 years' time, what are the respective roles of the Provincial and Central governments, and what steps will be required to support any transition from current modalities?
Promotion of gender equity and gender mainstreaming needs to be consistent with the cultural and traditional contexts of Solomon Islands, with support and accountability measures to ensure sustained implementation.	Any future phase of MSSIF could consider the provision of long-term, locally-led capacity development and technical advice to support the effective implementation of MFMR's new Gender Strategy.

Summary of Recommendations

For the most part, MSSIF Phase 3 implemented the recommendations from the evaluation of Phase 2. The status of these can be found in Appendix E. Of the nine recommendations from the evaluation of MSSIF Phase 2, five were implemented in full. The remaining recommendations, some of which were disrupted by COVID-19, remain relevant for a future phase, and have been incorporated in the recommendations presented below.

Recommendation 1: MSSIF continues to use MFMR work planning processes to allocate MSSIF resources to MFMR priorities as outlined in its Corporate Plan.

Recommendation 2: MSSIF funds continue to be administered through a budget support model, supported by a dedicated project team which coordinates with MFMR, MOFT and the New Zealand High Commission to address inefficiencies as they arise.

Recommendation 3: MSSIF Phase 4 to continue support, including through provision of technical assistance where needed, to ensure the structural changes, and associated management and planning processes put in place under earlier Phases are sustained.

Recommendation 4: MSSIF Phase 4 to continue support to the Aruligo Tilapia Hatchery project to ensure momentum is maintained and that the anticipated economic and social benefits to farmers and to the wider Solomon Islands population are realised.

Recommendation 5: Consideration of future support to implementation of management measures in the offshore sector, such as electronic monitoring, needs to take full account of wider regional uptake and the potential costs and associated incentives placed on tuna industry partners.

Recommendation 6: MFAT to implement mechanisms (for example, regular meetings, newsletters, and/or an online information sharing platform) for coordination across its bilateral and regional fisheries portfolios.

Recommendation 7: MSSIF Programme Manager to participate in coordination efforts to leverage synergies, maximise opportunities for support to MFMR, and avoid duplication of efforts.

Recommendation 8: In line with the recommendation from the Phase 2 evaluation, MFAT to support MPI to formalise a support arrangement with MFMR under the MPI Pacific Fisheries Capacity Development Programme in order to create longer term institutional relationships between the fisheries administrations and integrate the MPI programme into MFMR work planning.

Recommendation 9: In line with the recommendation from the Phase 2 evaluation, MSSIF Phase 4 to consider and lead discussions with MFMR on how MSSIF can support a more formalised, MFMR led, donor coordination process involving all relevant donors and partner organisations.

Recommendation 10: MFAT to update the terms of reference for the MSSIF Programme Manager to include responsibilities for coordinating and networking with other donors.

Recommendation 11: MFMR to progress development of its Provincial Fisheries Strategy including consideration of the respective roles of MFMR headquarters and the PFOs, and associated long-term funding requirements, including from Provincial Governments and other sources.

Recommendation 12: MFAT commission a gender analysis, undertaken by local expertise in collaboration with MFMR, to inform the gender equity approach of the next phase of MSSIF.

Recommendation 13: In line with the recommendation from the Phase 2 evaluation, the design team for MSSIF Phase 4 to consider and lead discussions with MFMR on how inclusive development be considered explicitly and integrated into MSSIF management and review processes.

Introduction

MSSIF Phase 3 description

Fisheries is one of the most significant economic sectors in Solomon Islands. Fisheries, and particularly tuna, provides Solomon Islands with its second largest revenue stream and is one of the largest employers in the formal economy.

MSSIF is one of Aotearoa New Zealand's longest-running partnerships with the Solomon Islands Government, and first started supporting fisheries management in 2006.[2] MSSIF Phase 3 is a NZD9.5million programme running from 31 October 2019 to 30 December 2024. The goal of MSSIF Phase 3 is to support "a sustainable fisheries sector that contributes to the socio-economic needs of all Solomon Islanders".

The long-term expected outcomes are that:

- Solomon Islands is a strong voice on issues of fisheries management in the Pacific region;
- Solomon Islands fisheries are managed more sustainably, and the sector diversified;
- Revenue from fisheries increasingly contributes to Solomon Islands' government revenue; and
- Growth in the fisheries sector providing more job opportunities, particularly for youth.

In the medium-term, expected outcomes are:

- Fisheries interventions better reflect gender equity objectives within fisheries sector;
- More effective Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources (MFMR) (leadership, workforce, systems and processes);
- Diversified fisheries creating food security and supporting livelihoods;
- Communities making informed choices on fishing practice; and
- Onshore development at Bina creating jobs[3].

Short-term expected outcomes are:

- Increased awareness of gender in the workplace;
- Competent staff carrying out roles and responsibilities effectively;
- Socio-economic benefits (inshore and aquaculture) increasingly recognised;
- Raised community awareness around conservation and sustainable fishing practices;
- Improved knowledge and skills of inshore and offshore compliance team, and provincial officers; and
- Good governance and planning decisions aligned with 5-year plan.

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[2] Support started through the Solomon Islands Marine Resources Organisational Strengthening (SIMROS) programme (2006–2010). The MSSIF programme extended this support over MSSIF Phase 1 (2010–2014) and MSSIF Phase 2 (2015–2019).

[3] This medium-term outcome is no longer applicable, with New Zealand's support to Bina Harbour now separate to the MSSIF Phase 3 programme.

The outcomes and outputs for MSSIF Phase 3 are depicted in the Activity Logic Diagram (current as at May 2023) in Appendix A.

MSSIF Phase 3 is focused on building capability and providing sector budget support to MFMR, thereby contributing to sustainable fisheries management, food security, and improved government revenue from fisheries in Solomon Islands. Specifically during the current phase, MSSIF Phase 3 has supported two major projects, being the construction of a national freshwater aquaculture hatchery at Aruligo, Northwest Guadalcanal, and progressing foundational elements for the establishment of the Bina Harbour tuna processing plant on Malaita, with the latter now managed under separate New Zealand supported projects. MSSIF Phase 3 is also supporting fisheries in the provinces via direct support to Provincial Fisheries Officers (PFOs); and supporting ongoing institutional strengthening and staff training.

MSSIF Phase 3 is managed under a Grant Funding Agreement (GFA), signed in October 2019 between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade Manatū Aorere (MFAT) and two Solomon Islands Government ministries (the Ministry of Finance and Treasury (MOFT) and MFMR). The Solomon Islands Government has primary responsibility for the implementation of all MSSIF Phase 3 outputs and for the financial management of all funding provided under the GFA. MFAT engaged a Programme Manager, separate to the GFA, under a Contract for Services. The MSSIF programme office consists of the Programme Manager, the Manager Administration and Mentoring, the Chief Programme Administrator and the Assistant Programme Administrator.

MSSIF Phase 3 is part of New Zealand's wider engagement in the fisheries sector in Solomon Islands. As noted above, New Zealand is also supporting the Bina Harbour Tuna Processing Plant in Malaita. This includes funding Johnstaff International Development to deliver project management services, and funding MFMR's engagement with land rights holders in the Bina area.

Aotearoa New Zealand also supports wider regional activities in fisheries including:

- A sustainable coastal fisheries and aquaculture activity with SPC to improve food security and economic resilience through sustainable coastal fisheries and aquaculture.
- Support for all Pacific Island countries to manage shared regional tuna resources (through grant and project funding to the FFA).
- Funding the New Zealand Ministry of Primary Industries (MPI) to provide technical capacity building support to Pacific Island countries through Te Pātuitanga Ahumoana a Kiwa (Te Pātui) programme.

Context

Fisheries sector in Solomon Islands

Economic and food security importance

The fisheries sector contributes around 6 percent of overall gross domestic product in Solomon Islands. Government revenue from fisheries access and licensing amounted to over SBD346million in 2020, around 9 percent of total government revenue, second only to the forestry sector. COVID-19

had a significant impact on revenue collected, with SBD296.4million collected in 2021[4] and SBD196million in 2022.[5] The offshore fisheries sector employs over 3,000 people in processing, harvesting, observers and MFMR staff – the second highest total among all FFA member countries behind Papua New Guinea.

Fisheries are also hugely important from a food security perspective, with consumption of fish and seafood in Solomon Islands estimated at over 30kg per person annually. The importance of fisheries for food security increased during the COVID-19 pandemic with an increase in subsistence fishing as people moved out of Honiara and other urban centres and returned to villages.

Regional management of offshore tuna fisheries

Management of offshore tuna fisheries takes place within a broader regional framework governed by international legal instruments and heavily driven by collective agreements reached among Pacific Islands countries and fishing nations. Solomon Islands works alongside other Pacific countries within the Parties to the Nauru Agreement (PNA) and FFA to make decisions covering fishing within exclusive economic zones (EEZs) and to negotiate fishing rules for the high seas through the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission.

Collective action has been critical to the successful management of the region's tuna stocks, all of which are currently healthy and being fished at sustainable levels.[6] At the same time, the regional nature of tuna management can have negative consequences for leaders, or "first movers", if other countries do not follow suit.

Aquaculture

Small scale pond aquaculture of Mozambique tilapia is providing a degree of food security and some limited socio-economic benefits in term of resilience and occasional selling of fish. Seaweed farming, where seaweed is grown on ropes in shallow lagoon areas before being harvested and dried for export, primarily to China, has become an important commercial activity, supporting livelihoods in many remote communities without many alternative income sources.

Climate Change

MSSIF Phase 3 has taken place against the backdrop of increasing awareness and concern about the predicted impacts of climate change on both inshore and offshore fisheries in the Solomon Islands, and throughout the Pacific.

Climate-driven redistribution of tuna threatens the economies of many Pacific nations. A recent study predicts that by 2050, under high greenhouse gas emissions scenarios, tuna populations will gradually move from the EEZs of the PNA countries, including Solomon Islands, into high seas further east. The total biomass of the three main tuna species in the waters of ten Pacific states, including

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4 There are conflicting reported amounts. Solomon Islands Government. (April 2023). Year 2023 Approved Recurrent Estimates, reports this amount as SBD228.5million whereas Solomon Islands Government. (July 2022). 2021 Final Budget Outcome, reports this as SBD269.4million.

5 It was estimated that this would return to SBD302.5million in 2023 (Solomon Islands Government. (April 2024). Year 2024 Approved Recurrent Estimates). However, the evaluation was unable to confirm whether the actual revenue collected in 2023 matched this budget estimate.

6 SPC-OFP (2023) 2023 Tuna Fisheries Assessment Report, paper to twentieth annual meeting of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC20-2023-IP02).

the Solomon Islands, could decline by an average of 13% (range: −5% to −20%) with potential for an equivalent decline in government revenue from fisheries access.[7]

Climate change induced extreme weather events, ocean warming and acidification also pose a threat to inshore coastal fisheries that are already under pressure due to population increases and associated food security demands. The evaluation heard how the planned resettlement of populations from low lying atolls in the Malaita outer islands is expected to exacerbate these pressures. Against this backdrop, effective management of coastal fisheries is seen as essential, including active engagement by communities in adaptative management approaches, protected areas, and the exploration of alternative food sources and livelihoods, for example through pond aquaculture.

COVID-19 pandemic

While Solomon Islands was one of the last countries in the world to experience community transmission of COVID-19 (in late 2021), the global pandemic had a significant impact on Solomon Islands with international borders effectively closed from April 2020 and tight restrictions on movement within Solomon Islands being applied sporadically. When community transmission was detected, the situation deteriorated quickly, with transmission widespread in the capital. The global pandemic impacted on fisheries, and on MFMR and MSSIF, in a range of ways:

Reduction in small scale commercial fishing and tuna fisheries revenue

During the pandemic, many residents and students in urban areas, particularly Honiara, were instructed to return to their home provinces and villages, and the marketing of fish to Honiara was curtailed. Gillett (2023) notes that "during the COVID-19 period it is likely that there was a substantial decrease in coastal commercial fishing and a lesser increase in coastal subsistence fishing." A government decision to lift the ban on harvesting of bêche-de-mer in September 2021 for one year allowed Solomon Islanders in remote communities to engage in some additional economic activity during the pandemic.

While COVID-19 did not prevent tuna purse seine fishing fleets from operating during 2020 and 2021, it did have a significant impact on supply chains through delays in operations. Demand for Solomon Islands' fishing days under the PNA Vessel Day Scheme declined in 2021 and access revenue was affected accordingly. Fisheries observers were unable to work on foreign purse seine vessels for over two years from mid-2020 due to the risk of COVID-19 transmission, directly impacting the livelihoods of the over 300 Solomon Islands observers.

Despite the pandemic, MFMR was able to raise SBD346 million in revenue for the Government in 2020, close to the projected SBD369million initially budgeted for – testimony to the resilience of the sector, although the amount of revenue significantly reduced in 2021 and 2022.[8] Offshore tuna fisheries activity rebounded in 2022 as borders reopened around the world and lockdowns were lifted.

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7 Bell, J.D., Senina, I., Adams, T. et al. (2021). Pathways to sustaining tuna-dependent Pacific Island economies during climate change. *Nat Sustain* 4, 900–910. Accessed from https://doi.org/10.1038/s41893-021-00745-z

8 Information taken from Solomon Islands Government Budget Papers as MFMR Annual Reports for 2021 and 2022 were not provided to the evaluation team.

Reallocation of recurrent and development budget

The cost of efforts to prevent, detect, and respond to the threat posed by COVID-19 severely limited cash flow in the public sector. Much of the Solomon Islands Government's budget was reallocated to health emergency preparedness and response and strengthening national public health systems. Recurrent budgets were cut, or were often unavailable when an attempt was made to draw upon them. Outside of donor-supported development budgets, most ministries experienced severe contractions in recurrent and development budget availability, despite allocations remaining consistent, impacting actual expenditure against their allocations.

Table 1 Summary of MFMR Recurrent and Development Budgets 2019-2024 (in SBD million)

Budget	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Recurrent - Appropriated	23.9	21.5	22.9	23.9	25.1	26.6
Recurrent - Actual	21.0	21.1	19.7	8.1		N/A
Development - Appropriated	4.7	10.3	15	15	15	15
Development - Actual	3.1	4.8	6.3	6.6		N/A

Domestic economic activities remained broadly weak across all sectors from the time the global COVID-19 pandemic began in 2020. Additionally, job losses from the civil unrest in late November 2021 dampened private consumption. The COVID-19 outbreak also dented output in contact-intensive sectors, including services, which accounted for about 55 percent of output. This placed a burden on the country to support households, particularly those most vulnerable. By 2023, the Solomon Islands financial system regained some stability due to modest economic recovery. The domestic economy was projected to have grown by 4 percent in the year, up from 2.4 percent in 2022, driven by positive rebounds in key sectors such as mining, forestry, production, and manufacturing. However, despite this positive outcome, fiscal conditions remained fragile due to lower revenue collections amid mounting expenditure pressures, limiting the government's ability to pay its domestic suppliers on time.[9]

Remote work arrangements

The crisis led to increased use of digital tools and remote working solutions for tasks such as inspections, certifications, and training, to comply with health protocols and minimise physical contact. Where these were not available, it meant that inspections were unable to be carried out. For many staff in MFMR's Honiara office, remote working arrangements constrained their ability to undertake day to day activities, with many activities stalled.

[9] Central Bank of Solomon Islands (2023) Quarterly Review, December 2023. Accessed from https://www.cbsi.com.sb/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/December-Q4-2023-Report-Final.pdf

Gender Mainstreaming

Through the Ministry for Women, Youth, Children and Family Affairs, the Solomon Islands Government has developed national policies:

- The National Gender Equality and Women's Development Policy 2016–2020. The goal of the Policy is to advance gender equality in all areas of life and at all levels so that women and men in the Solomon Islands can fully enjoy their human rights to participate and access equal opportunities and development outcomes in order to fulfil their needs and support their well-being.
- The National Policy to Eliminate Violence Against Women and Girls 2016–2020.
- A National Strategy for the Economic Empowerment of Women and Girls 2016–2020.

In 2012, the Public Service Commission introduced gender mainstreaming key performance indicators in the employment contracts of permanent secretaries. These key performance indicators include: incorporating a gender implementation strategy in Ministry corporate plans, appointing a gender focal point, gender-sensitising recruitment processes, developing gender profiles of the sector, collecting and disseminating sex-disaggregated data, and developing a zero-tolerance policy towards sexual harassment in the public service. Following this, the Public Service Commission established gender focal points to be embedded in each Ministry across the public service.

The Ministry of Public Service, responsible for implementing decisions made by the Public Service Commission, received support from regional organisations to deliver on the Commission's decisions, its Women in Leadership Action Plan, and the Public Service Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Policy.

Regionally, Solomon Islands endorsed the Beijing Platform for Action and the Revised Pacific Platform for Action on Advancement of Women and Gender Equality (2018–2030) and the revitalised Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration in 2023. Regionally, Solomon Islands reports progress to the SPC, which coordinates and reports on regional development frameworks such as the Revised Pacific Platform for Action on Gender Equality and the Advancement of Women.

For MFMR and MSSIF specifically, MSSIF Phase 1 did not sufficiently prioritise gender in capacity development.[10] Phase 2 of MSSIF identified gender as a priority, although an independent evaluation found that implementation had not focused on gender. While some work on a gender assessment had been completed with support from SPC, there was no evidence of gender guiding implementation decisions in MSSIF, despite it remaining highly relevant.[11]

MFMR receives support on gender equity predominantly through SPC, with support from FFA and WorldFish. SPC commissioned a stocktake of gender analysis in the Solomon Islands Fisheries sector in 2018. The analysis made the following finding:

> *"In MFMR, while political will and support for gender mainstreaming has started to improve, there is still a lot of awareness and training needed to build the capacity of staff to do gender mainstreaming. Work culture and accountable mechanisms are not in place, and there are few available financial and human resources to enable gender mainstreaming."*[12]

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10 MFAT. (2014). Mekem Strong Solomon Islands Fisheries Phase 2 Activity Design Document.

11 MFAT. (December 2018). Mekem Strong Solomon Islands Fisheries Phase 2: Final Evaluation Report.

12 SPC. (2018). Gender analysis of the fisheries sector – Solomon Islands.

Methodology

Purpose

This evaluation will be used by MFAT and MFMR to:

› Assess progress against the goals and objectives for MSSIF Phase 3.

› Inform decisions on what the future direction, design and support should be. This should include consideration of whether the MSSIF Phase 3 outcomes remain relevant or could be adjusted for future phases of support.

› Identify improvements that can be made to managing, implementing and achieving results for MSSIF.

Evaluation Questions

The four evaluation objectives, and their associated questions, are:

Objective 1: to assess the extent to which MSSIF remains a priority for Solomon Islands and the New Zealand International Development Cooperation Programme (Relevance, Coherence)

› To what extent do the Activity design and outcomes remain relevant to Solomon Islands' development objectives?

›› How has the sectoral focus or operating environment of Solomon Islands Government changed since the design of MSSIF Phase 3? How might this impact future phases of support?

› Is the Activity design still appropriate and relevant to Solomon Islands and New Zealand policy and delivery contexts?

Objective 2: to examine the progress being made in achieving the MSSIF outputs and short- and medium-term outcomes (Effectiveness, Impact)

› To what extent has MSSIF achieved its short- and medium-term outcomes, and produced lasting benefits and results? What factors have enabled or hindered progress?

› How well has MSSIF coordinated with other New Zealand support under regional and sectoral arrangements (for example, MPI, FFA and SPC), as well as other bilateral activities (Bina Harbour Project Office, Bina Regional Arrangements for Governance (BRAG)? How well is MSSIF coordinated with other development partner programming?

› To what extent is the Activity effectively delivering New Zealand's International Cooperation for Effective Sustainable Development (ICESD) policy?

› How have the recommendations from the evaluation of MSSIF Phase 2 been implemented?

Objective 3: to review the value of MSSIF's delivery model (Efficiency, Sustainability)

› To what extent has MSSIF been managed efficiently and achieved good value for the investment and effort?

› To what extent are the governance mechanisms fit-for-purpose?

› What have been the benefits and drawbacks of the Technical Adviser function and the GFA modality?

- What lessons can be learned from the current management of the activity?

Objective 4: Lessons learned for improvement – to identify the key learnings to increase positive impact in the future

- What changes could be made to any future design and delivery (including modality) to enhance sustainability of outcomes and increase relevance?
- How can other New Zealand support under bilateral (for example, Bina Harbour Project Office and BRAG) and regional and sectoral programmes (for example, MPI, FFA and SPC) be better leveraged to support Activity outcomes? How could coherence across New Zealand-funded programmes be improved to strengthen engagement?
- Are there options for better alignment with other New Zealand strategy and policy (for example, the International Climate Finance Strategy)?

Approach

The evaluation of MSSIF Phase 3 was conducted by integrating summative and formative approaches. This dual approach enabled the assessment of progress towards outcomes and deriving lessons to inform future phases.

The evaluation used a theory-based methodology to test the appropriateness and consistency of MSSIF outcomes (as outlined in the MSSIF diagram at Appendix A). The evaluation also considered the processes by which MSSIF had been implemented.

The key tools used to guide the evaluation included, among others: the evaluation framework; tools to support data collection such as interview guides; analysis matrices; and NVivo (a qualitative research software) to support the analysis of data collected. Appendix B outlines full particulars of the methodology used for this evaluation.

The stakeholders for the evaluation were principally public sector officials from the governments of Solomon Islands and New Zealand. Interview guides were used to gather insights from key stakeholders in individual and group settings.

The evaluation team travelled to Solomon Islands from 27 May to 10 June 2024, and met with 66 stakeholders from 11 organisations in Solomon Islands. The evaluation team also interviewed regional and MFAT stakeholders via Zoom. See Appendix C for full details of the 84 stakeholders and 17 organsiations consulted for this evaluation.

Site visits were conducted at the Aruligo Tilapia Hatchery, Electronic Monitoring building, SINU Quarantine Facility, Tiaro Bay villages in Guadalcanal, and Provincial Government offices, Fiu Village and seaweed nursery in Malaita.

One of the strengths of this evaluaton was the reach of the consultations. The evaluation met with 41 staff from across all seven divisions of MFMR (out of a total staff complement of around 130).

Limitations

At the time of writing, the evaluation team had received MFMR's Annual Report for 2020, but not latter years, limiting the ability of the team to situate MSSIF's support within the achievements reported by MFMR.

The evaluation was unable to produce quantifiable measures of MSSIF Phase 3's impact due to the GFA modality and its integration within MFMR, which supports progress toward the Corporate Plan. Evaluating this would have required assessing MFMR's performance against its Corporate Plan and strategic direction. Assessing value-for-money of the contracts placed and managed through Solomon Islands Government procurement systems by MFMR using MSSIF Phase 3 funds (that is construction contracts at Aruligo Tilapia Hatchery) was outside of the evaluation scope.

The lack of quantitative data meant the evaluation relied on qualitative data, which may not robustly support all claims. To address this, extensive consultations and triangulation were conducted to enhance the validity and reliability of the qualitative data.

MSSIF's MERL Framework was not regularly updated to reflect realistic outcomes pursued in Phase 3. For example, outputs and outcomes were not revised after COVID-19 or once Bina was excluded from MSSIF Phase 3. Reporting against the MERL framework in MSSIF Phase 3 reporting was limited to outputs and short-term outcomes.

Findings

This chapter focuses on the first three evaluation objectives and sub-questions. Evaluation objective four has a separate Lessons chapter.

The extent to which MSSIF remains a priority for Solomon Islands and New Zealand International Development Cooperation Programme

MSSIF Phase 3 is aligned to the priorities of Solomon Islands

During Phase 3, MSSIF significantly bolstered MFMR's capacity to achieve key strategic priorities for the Solomon Islands Government. Two major projects exemplify this: supporting the establishment of the Bina Harbour Tuna Processing Plant project with a focus on project management support and addressing governance issues; and funding the construction of the Aruligo Tilapia Hatchery. These initiatives are flagship projects for the Ministry, and their progression has been notably aided by New Zealand's support through MSSIF.

MSSIF's approach to supporting strategic areas such as Bina Harbour and the Aruligo Tilapia Hatchery underscores its commitment to calculated risk-taking and maintaining a long-term perspective, even amidst challenging circumstances. The evaluation heard that the readiness of MSSIF and MFAT to engage in extensive planning and tackle complex issues, such as landowner negotiations and infrastructure development, highlights New Zealand's distinct role as a dedicated partner in these initiatives.

Aruligo Tilapia Hatchery Pools, August 2023, Guadalcanal.
Photo: Solomon Islands Government Communications Unit.

MSSIF has consistently aligned its efforts with MFMR priorities by allocating resources according to MFMR's divisional work plans. This alignment ensures that the programme's activities directly support the strategic goals of the Solomon Islands Government.

By facilitating the implementation of MFMR's divisional work plans, MSSIF has ensured support across a range of Ministry initiatives. Consultations with MFMR staff evidenced an extensive reach of MSSIF throughout the Corporate Plan, demonstrating its broad support and relevance to MFMR's priorities and its integral role in advancing the Ministry's corporate goals.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, MSSIF demonstrated much-needed flexibility by pivoting funding to support MFMR in maintaining essential operations during a challenging time. This adaptability was crucial in mitigating disruptions caused by the pandemic.

MSSIF Phase 3 has remained highly relevant in a challenging environment, marked by significant events such as the COVID-19 global pandemic. As outlined in the context section, the availability of appropriated Solomon Islands' recurrent and development budgets has been impacted by these events.

Strains on the Solomon Islands Government recurrent budget were further exacerbated in 2023 due to costs associated with hosting the South Pacific Games. The evaluation heard that not only did this drain government resources and delay Solomon Islands government processing times for payments, but it also meant that, in many instances, allocated recurrent budget was unavailable, having been redirected to the games.

MSSIF's ability to adapt and remain pertinent during these times underscores its importance and flexibility in addressing emerging needs and priorities.

MSSIF's modality of integrated planning positions it well to support future MFMR priorities and operational plans, ensuring it remains appropriate and relevant to the policy and delivery contexts of the Solomon Islands.

The Solomon Islands Government, elected in April 2024, is focusing on economic growth, emphasising job creation and maximising economic returns from natural resources. The fisheries sector is seen as key to achieving this goal, with potential for expanded activity in offshore and inshore coastal fisheries, as well as aquaculture. The evaluation heard MFMR's forthcoming Corporate Plan will drive these priorities. MSSIF's alignment with MFMR's priorities and operational plans will ensure its ongoing relevance.

Embedded within a national fisheries Ministry, MSSIF occupies a distinctive position that enables it to actively bolster New Zealand's pursuit of regional approaches in Pacific fisheries that support country level actions (and vice versa). Fulfilling this potential necessitates more intentional internal coordination within MFAT and enhanced collaboration with external stakeholders.

The extent to which outputs, short- and medium-term outcomes were achieved

Achievement of outputs and outcomes

Overall, progress toward achieving outputs has been proportionate and realistic considering the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Table 2 summarises progress against the MSSIF Phase 3 outputs.

Table 2 Summary Table of Outputs Achieved

MSSIF Phase 3 Outputs	Progress	Relevant Factors
Gender strategy completed and implemented	Draft competed and subject to verification workshop in April 2024. Increased engagement on gender by SPC and FFA led to MSSIF playing more of a supporting role rather than leading the work on gender. Some increased awareness among MFMR staff apparent.	Concerns expressed by MFMR Executive that strategy needs to be homegrown rather than imposed by donors/outsiders.
MFMR restructure concluded and operationally resourced	Remaining few hires under the restructure completed in 2023. Over 70 new positions now funded by Solomon Islands Government.	Delays in recruitment due to COVID-19 and completing demands on Solomon Islands Government recurrent budget.
MFMR upskilled and sufficiently resourced to deliver provincial fisheries services	Pilot programme of direct support to PFOs has been successful with greater outreach to communities and increased visibility and reputation of MFMR.	Funding combined with proposal and report writing skills training for PFOs has been key. MFMR support to PFOs has led to increased support by Provincial Governments in some cases.
Central Tilapia hatchery operating sustainably and supplying well-resourced farmers	Infrastructure at Aruligo largely complete but not yet operational. Much work remains to get farmers ready for arrival of GIFT.	Significant delays due to COVID-19 impacts, challenges navigating Solomon Islands Government procurement processes and a lack of cement due to South Pacific Games requirements.
Regulations and processes in place to manage inshore fisheries and aquaculture	Regulations not yet in place. Development of White Paper now being resourced by WB Proper.	Reduced capacity of Policy and Planning Division with key individuals leaving for training, higher education etc.
MFMR compliance officers upskilled and equipped	Progress made under MSSIF Phase 2 with support from MPI but limited progress under MSSIF Phase 3.	COVID-19 impacted on ability of MPI to deliver training in-country. A number of key MFMR personnel took up positions elsewhere.
Bina project team established and operational	Bina Harbour Project Office and BRAG both set up as independent projects under MSSIF Phase 3.	Review of governance review of these projects currently being undertaken.

Progress toward short- and medium-term outcomes has been varied. Some of the outcomes may have been overly ambitious for the timeframe, contributing to the mixed results observed.

Getting the Aruligo Tilapia Hatchery construction close to the point of completion is a significant achievement and realisation of a long-held aspiration of MFMR and the Solomon Islands Government is now in sight. By the end of MSSIF Phase 3, Solomon Islands will have a hatchery that is fit for purpose to supply farmers with Genetically Improved Farmed Tilapia (GIFT) subject to completion of associated infrastructure.

Construction of the ponds at the Aruligo Tilapia Hatchery and refurbishments of the post-entry quarantine facility at the Solomon Islands National University have been a major focus of MSSIF Phase 3. Work was hampered by a range of factors including COVID-19, procurement challenges (see comments on modality), lack of Solomon Islands Government co-funding due to COVID-19 and South Pacific Games priorities, and a lack of cement due to construction of the stadium and other facilities for the South Pacific Games.

Work is now largely complete with the post-entry quarantine facility handed over to the Solomon Islands Government in May 2024. Work remains to be done on auxiliary services at Aruligo, for example, water infrastructure, electricity and completion of staff houses (two are under construction using Solomon Islands Government funding with discussions underway to use MSSIF funding to build a further two) in preparation for the arrival of GIFT, scheduled for April 2025.

Post-entry quarantine facility handover, May 2024, SINU. Photo: MFMR

Despite the progress made, there is still a long way to go before the hatchery is operating sustainably and supplying farmers. Farmers will also require ongoing support to prepare for introduction of GIFT into their ponds, including for pond construction, maintenance and repair. The anticipated output of MSSIF Phase 3 – for the hatchery to be operating sustainably and supplying well-resourced farmers – was clearly overly ambitious, even without the unforeseen impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Given the remote location and logistical challenges involved in pond aquaculture, this output could realistically be carried over to the next Phase of MSSIF support.

The corporate restructure of MFMR has significantly increased organisational capacity and capability and can be considered one of the key achievements of MSSIF Phases 2 and 3.

The restructure was initiated under MSSIF Phase 2 with a focus on redesigning the Ministry and ensuring it was well placed to deliver on government objectives for the sector. The restructure has led to the establishment of over 70 new positions within MFMR with the last recruitment completed in 2023. All these positions are now funded by the Solomon Islands Government as part of the Ministry's recurrent budget – a significant increase in investment in the sector and one that signals confidence by the Solomon Islands Government (both previous and current) in the work of MFMR.

With new staff coming on board, MSSIF Phase 3 played a significant role in ensuring they had the resources to carry out their roles, including equipment and induction training. MSSIF has continued to support training of MFMR staff, with needs now being identified as part of the performance management process. The evaluation heard directly how training is increasing skills and capability, and staff are more confident and increasingly stepping up to take on new challenges – a point borne out by comments made by other stakeholders including regional organisations and industry representatives.

MFMR's Development Budget appropriations (Solomon Islands Government funded) has also increased threefold (from SBD4.7million to 15million) from 2019 to 2021 following the restructure.[13] Comments to the evaluation indicate this can be seen as endorsement of the capability of the Ministry, including the new Project Management Division, established under the restructure, that oversees the development budget funding.

The evaluation heard from many MFMR staff about the importance of MSSIF funding to provide them with the resources and ability to engage in activities supported by other donors. Examples ranged from funding the logistics for stakeholder consultations for the development of the Tuna Management

[13] Actual expenditure of the Development Budget however remains consistently lower than the appropriations amount. See Table 1 above for full particulars of actual expenditure against appropriations.

and Development Plan, to paying costs associated with community engagement, and support for training and attendance at meetings. While other donors (for example, WorldFish, JICA, FAO) provide technical advisers and/or fund specific activities or equipment, MSSIF is somewhat unique in providing MFMR with the broader and more flexible budgetary support required for MFMR staff to more actively manage and engage in these interventions, including in the provinces.

MSSIF funding and support has enabled the PFOs to deliver tangible benefits to communities, significantly strengthening the visibility and reputation of MFMR in the provinces.

Funding provided directly to PFOs, primarily through imprest accounts, was piloted under MSSIF Phase 3 starting in late 2020. The evaluation heard that previously PFOs had limited access to funding from either Provincial Governments or MFMR. Where funding was allocated, it was often fully expended early in the year. No other donors are directly funding the work plans of the PFOs.

Around SBD80,000 has been allocated annually for the activities of each PFO, with funding dispersed based on proposals submitted by the PFOs. PFOs are required to report back on the implementation and outcome of activities undertaken using a pre-agreed template. There has been varying utilisation of the available funds across the provinces (Table 3).

Table 3 MSSIF funding to provinces, 2020-2024

Province	2020-2024 Expenditure (SBD)
Central	188,441.00
Choiseul	128,774.07
Guadalcanal	250,563.04
Isabel	215,999.20
Makira	245,517.00
Malaita	239,743.20
Renbel	70,857.00
Temotu	345,875.77
Western	81,944.07
TOTAL	**SBD 1,767,714.35**

The evaluation heard MFMR's two-fold objective for piloting direct support to PFOs was to: (i) enable immediate support for PFOs to carry out their annual priorities; and, (ii) create increased trust and build community confidence in PFOs. Advice and feedback from MFMR, PFOs and community stakeholders confirmed to the evaluation that both these objectives are being achieved.

Provincial Fisheries Officers Conference, November 2023, Honiara. Photo: MFMR

MSSIF supported annual PFO conferences held in Honiara in November 2020, 2021 and 2022, bringing together PFOs from across the Solomon Islands. The annual conferences provide PFOs with the opportunity to connect with colleagues from other provinces as well as MFMR headquarters, to share experiences and enhance knowledge.

In addition to funding support, PFOs have benefited from training opportunities to improve their knowledge and skills (for example, training on writing submissions and reports).

Post-harvest fish handling training, June 2023, Temotu. Photo: Malasy Malakia, Temotu Province

It is clear that the support for fisheries in the provinces is a strategic investment that is paying dividends. The needs are significant and the benefits are clear (as discussed further below). MSSIF (and MFAT/New Zealand) is receiving positive acknowledgement for this initiative from coastal communities, provincial governments, other donors and from MFMR itself. The evaluation heard examples of increased activity and visibility of the provincial fisheries teams leading to increases in funding for fisheries from the provincial governments.

Reports provided by the PFOs on activities funded by MSSIF provide an insight into the breadth of engagement by PFOs with coastal communities that has been enabled by MSSIF. These activities include post-harvest fish handling training, fish aggregating device (FAD) deployment, Community Based Resource Management (CBRM) consultations, compliance awareness, and gender surveys and awareness training.

Fisheries Regulation Awareness Program, September 2023, Central Province. Photo: Mark Seda, Central Province

Management of inshore coastal fisheries is supported by multiple donors and organisations including World Bank PROPER, WorldFish, SPC and JICA. **Direct budgetary support to MFMR from MSSIF, including to the Inshore Fisheries team and the support to PFOs, has enabled MFMR to better leverage the support provided by other organisations.**

Inshore fisheries are managed by CBRM approaches and MSSIF has played a significant role in supporting the roll-out of CBRM in a large number of communities, along with a range of other donors (including SPC, Japan International Cooperation Agency, WorldFish, Food and Agriculture Organization).

The evaluation heard MSSIF funding has helped support the establishment of management committees by coastal communities and these have, in turn, provided a governance framework that helps support interventions by other donors.

CBRM is raising awareness and helping communities to make informed choices on management of inshore fisheries habitats that are under pressure from a growing population.

CBRM Women's management group, November 2023, Vatoro Community on Vella La Vella Island. Photo: MFMR

Deployment FADs is also supported by other donors with MSSIF support to the headquarters-based Provincial FAD team and the PFOs greatly assisting their roll out. The evaluation heard directly from communities that FADs are having a significant positive benefit in terms of food security as well as supporting alternative livelihoods. For example, FADs providing fish that can be sold within communities, and enhancing the demand for food parcels sold at markets through including fish with the cooked root vegetables.

FAD deployment at Canaan community, July 2022, Malaita. Photo: Mathew Isihanua

The steady supply of larger pelagic fish from fishing around FADs has also allowed communities to move forward with protection of reef ecosystems through establishment of management areas and no-take zones.

The valuable bêche-de-mer sea cucumber fishery in Solomon Islands has been subject to unsustainable and illegal harvesting practices resulting in a moratorium being in place since 2005 (with the exception of a one-year period from September 2021 during the COVID-19 pandemic). While management of the bêche-de-mer fishery is primarily supported by Japan through the Overseas Fishery Cooperation Foundation of Japan, MSSIF support to CBRM, inshore fisheries management and monitoring, control and surveillance all indirectly contributes to better management of bêche-de-mer.

While some work has been done on compliance and enforcement in relation to inshore fisheries, led by SPC and MPI's Te Pātui programme, there is much still to be done, including finalisation of ordinances at provincial level to empower PFOs.

Development and implementation of aquaculture regulations was one of the planned outputs of MSSIF Phase 3 but this work was significantly delayed due to COVID-19 and staff movements.

Work on the development of new aquaculture legislation has now been picked up by World Bank PROPER as of 2024 with an expression of interest issued for a consultant to develop a white paper for consideration by Cabinet.

Capacity building and technical support to aquaculture farmers (primarily seaweed farming and some pond aquaculture of Mozambique tilapia) has been ongoing through the aquaculture team and PFOs and has been well supported by MSSIF as well as other donors.

Remote communities in the Shortland Islands and Malaita Outer Islands receive seaweed farming training as part of a livelihoods support committee request during COVID-19, August 2021, Shortlands. Photo: New Zealand High Commission

Seaweed farming, July 2024, East Guadalcanal. Photo: MFMR

There is potential for these aquaculture initiatives to be scaled up further and rolled out to additional communities, including with introduction of GIFT as outlined above.

Work to upskill and equip MFMR compliance officers was progressing well at the start of MSSIF Phase 3, including through support from the MFAT-funded Te Pātui Programme implemented by MPI, but this collaboration was greatly impacted by COVID-19 and staff movements.

Work under MSSIF Phase 2 built strong ties between the MFMR Offshore Division and MPI's Te Pātui Programme. Ten monitoring, control and surveillance training modules were developed and rolled out leading to improved knowledge and skills, and building confidence among fisheries officers, particularly in the provinces where the impact has been significant due to a lack of training opportunities previously.

With face-to-face training by MPI officers impossible during the pandemic, some training was provided virtually. However, with a number of senior MFMR officers and the MPI lead taking up roles in other organisations, the recommendation from the evaluation of MSSIF Phase 2 to formalise the relationship between the Offshore Division and Te Pātui was not realised.

MFMR did benefit from FFA's presence in Honiara during the COVID-19 period and was able to receive hands on training from FFA staff with some support from MSSIF for travel to Noro.

More recent engagement by MPI officers in 2022 has highlighted the need for further support in the area of case management and prosecution – the process steps when an infringement is detected.

The evaluation was made aware of challenges associated with the satellite office in Noro – Solomon Islands' busiest commercial fishing port. There is some disconnect between compliance officers based in Noro and MFMR headquarters, with concerns expressed regarding the accountability of officers in relation to their dealings with the industry. Consideration could be given to rotation of staff into the Noro positions to give all offshore officers greater exposure to the Noro work environment while also avoiding Noro-based officers becoming disconnected from the operations and culture at headquarters in Honiara.

Noro is also home to the much-celebrated **E-Port initiative** – a move away from cumbersome paper-based systems to have all key processes and data managed digitally online. While the system is now in use to a degree, there is much to be done to strengthen its operation, including incorporation of the EU's requirements for health and legality certification and enabling online and remote access by MFMR officers.

MFMR's Offshore Division also manages an **electronic monitoring programme** whereby cameras are installed on domestic longline vessels and compliance officers analyse footage stored on hard drives that are removed from the vessels at the end of each trip. The programme has been funded by a range of donors since its inception, most recently the World Bank, but MSSIF funded the associated service-provider contract for a period in 2021/22 during a gap between the World Bank Pacific Island Regional Oceanscape Program and PROPER projects. MSSIF Phase 2 also financed the building that houses the electronic monitoring programme at MFMR headquarters.

MFMR's leadership in electronic monitoring at regional level is widely recognised but questions are now arising regarding the financial sustainability of the programme. Without agreement on wider regional implementation and associated cost recovery mechanisms, Solomon Islands has created a disincentive for vessels to fish in Solomon Islands waters and been left with significant costs to keep the system running which donor partners are now increasingly reluctant to cover. While MFMR has a close working relationship with the domestic and locally based fishing industry through the Tuna Industry Association of Solomon Islands, some foreign fishing fleets have chosen to shift their operations elsewhere. As one domestic industry stakeholder representative said, "you can't keep monitoring the sheep while letting the wolves run amuck".

Gender equality

Support and focus on gender equality under MSSIF Phase 3 stalled, but there is a growing consciousness about the engagement of men, women and youth in the community and across MFMR and the fisheries sector.

Under MSSIF phase 2, gender was identified as a priority in the design but had not received sufficient focus during implementation[14]. The programme logic of MSSIF phase 3 brought gender to the forefront by including a specific short-term outcome of increased awareness of gender in the workplace, and a medium-term outcome of fisheries interventions better reflecting gender equity objectives within the fisheries sector.

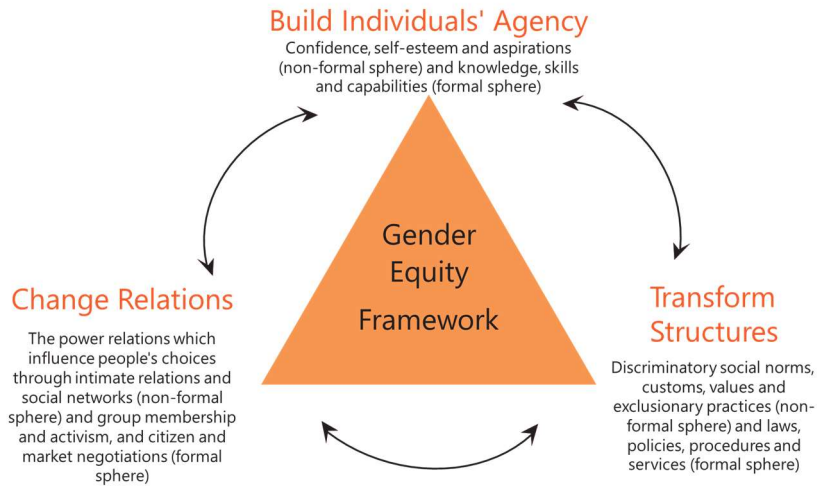
There were expectations for a strong focus on gender equality, with a gender strategy to be developed and implemented. However, the evaluation heard that this focus diminished during MSSIF Phase 3 in response to the prioritisation of other corporate plan activities, disruptions caused by the COVID-19

[14] MFAT (2018). Mekem Strong Solomon Islands Fisheries Phase 2: Final Evaluation Report.

pandemic and opportunities for MFMR to receive support for gender equality from other partners, notably SPC and FFA.

In considering MSSIF's gender equality outputs and outcomes, the evaluation refers to three domains of change (Figure 1)[15] which are needed to achieve gender equity impacts. The evaluation heard that MFMR is working across all three of these levels, although perhaps not well enough in each area to break down gender inequalities. MFMR does not have dedicated in-house gender expertise. The Human Resources Manager is the gender focal point and is being supported by the Deputy Director, Policy and Planning, who is providing technical support. This provides opportunities for addressing gender more comprehensively in the future.

Figure 1 Gender equity framework



At the **individual level**, the evaluation heard in conversations that there is some increase in awareness and consciousness about the engagement of men, women and youth in the community and across the fisheries sector. However, it was not consistent across all conversations with MFMR. The evaluation heard that where this had occurred, it was attributed to a series of gender awareness trainings that had been rolled out across MFMR. MSSIF Phase 3 had supported the inclusion of PFOs to receive this training. The evaluation heard that the appreciation that a number of individual officers had for gender greatly increased as a result of the training. One officer told the evaluation that he was initially resistant to undertaking the training but that it had given him a new understanding of how his work has differential impacts on men and women. However, not all officers understood this and there has been a request for refresher training to be rolled out across the Ministry.

At the **relations level**, MFMR works with communities to involve men, women and youth when helping communities implement their fisheries management plans. The evaluation heard how organisations interacting with the Ministry had witnessed an increased appreciation of gender issues at the relations level. As one interviewee shared, "*Over the past 3 weeks, I have worked closely with 3 MFMR officers and they have all taken leadership in gender and integrating it into their research and the debate and discussion on the role of men and women and barriers that they may or may not have to participation in the fisheries sector. I cannot attribute their awareness and willingness to engage and contribute a really unique understanding of these issues to any one initiative – but there has been growth.*"

[15] The approach captured in Figure 1 is an adaptation of the change model described in Rao, A. and Kelleher, D. (2005). Is there life after gender mainstreaming? Gender & Development 13(2):57-69.

At a **structural level**, the evaluation heard a Gender Strategy was completed in April 2024 through a validation workshop led by SPC and supported by the Gender and Social Inclusion Advisor from FFA. This was a revision of the MSSIF supported Gender Implementation Strategy 2011-2014 which did not include offshore fisheries and was stalled in implementation. Despite the April 2024 validation workshop, the implementation of the new gender strategy has been patchy and has also been stalled. We heard that where progress is being made in implementing the Gender Strategy, it is being supported by SPC through the Pacific-European Union Marine Partnership (PEUMP) programme, alongside FFA.

Gender strategy validation workshop, April 2024, Honiara
Photo: MFMR

The new Gender Strategy offers an opportune moment to enhance support for and increase knowledge and awareness of gender equality within MFMR across the individual, relational and structural levels, particularly in MFMR systems, planning, policies, finances, and resources. There is an increasing presence of women in key decision-making roles within MFMR, a focus on gender balance in the staffing of each Division and gender considerations are being included in the development of new plans, such as the draft Tuna Management and Development Plan.

Several existing programmes and organisations are working to increase gender awareness and equity in the fisheries sector regionally. These include FFA, SPC, and PEUMP. A future phase of MSSIF could collaborate with MFMR to leverage these programmes, supporting gender mainstreaming efforts within MFMR and the Solomon Islands fisheries sector, ensuring more inclusive and equitable outcomes for all.

Stakeholders emphasised the importance of gender initiatives being centred on awareness and understanding, aligned with the culture and traditions of the Solomon Islands and driven internally with strong leadership and effective monitoring to track implementation progress. As the evaluation heard from one interviewee, *"there is a lot of support that is available to MFMR at the regional level that they could use but it comes back to them. They have to be open to coming on the journey".*

Coordination

Overall donor coordination rests with MFMR, with Divisional Heads responsible for coordinating donor support related to the work of their divisions. MFMR's Corporate Plan and annual planning process provide a sound framework for MFMR to align donor support around its work plan. MSSIF's flexible funding has meant it can fill gaps not resourced by other donors and is more readily able to respond to immediate needs.

There are a **large number of donors and organisations that provide support to the Solomon Islands in the area of fisheries** including the World Bank (budgetary support with a focus on infrastructure development), WorldFish (technical advice in relation to coastal fisheries management and gender issues), FAO (technical support in relation to FADs and aquaculture), Japan (technical support on aquaculture and bêche-de-mer), FFA (offshore fisheries management, development, monitoring and compliance) and SPC (coastal fisheries, gender, fisheries science). Managing and aligning the inputs

of this many donors is a significant task for MFMR. Coordination between MSSIF and the **World Bank PROPER** project is strong, which is important given that both provide sector budget support to MFMR and there is crossover in some work areas (for example, CBRM, FAD deployment). MFMR does a good job of allocating MSSIF and PROPER funding across different parts of its work programme and there is regular interaction between the MSSIF and PROPER Programme Managers to ensure transparency and a shared understanding of respective funding areas.

The degree to which MSSIF is now embedded within MFMR is one of the real strengths of the programme. It is important that the Programme Manager has an understanding of all the donor programmes working with MFMR (including World Bank PROPER; JICA; Overseas Fishery Cooperation Foundation of Japan (OFCF); WorldFish; Food and Agriculture Organization; World Vision) as well as the work of regional organisations and programmes (FFA, SPC, the Pacific Fisheries Leadership Program, MPI Te Pātui).

While coordination of donor support rests with MFMR, there is an important role for the MSSIF Programme Manager, and for MFAT via the New Zealand High Commission and in Wellington, in raising awareness of MSSIF among other donors and programmes. Increased awareness across all relevant players could greatly assist with overall coordination and enable MSSIF to better support and leverage the work that MFMR does with other donors.

Coordination across **MFAT supported regional and bilateral fisheries programmes** could be considerably stronger and has relied heavily on personal relationships and contacts. Awareness of MSSIF is lacking outside of MFMR (for example, at FFA, SPC, MPI). In the absence of any formal structures or processes, the MSSIF Programme Manager has limited opportunities for engagement, coordination and influence in relation to MFAT's wider regional fisheries related funding support and associated objectives.

Support from **MPI's Te Pātui Programme** is well coordinated with other providers of regional training and capacity building such as FFA, SPC and the Australian Fisheries Management Authority, particularly in the area of monitoring, control and surveillance related support, and yet those organisations currently have limited awareness of MSSIF and how it operates.

Te Pātui's Compliance section had established a strong relationship with the previous MSSIF Programme Manager but was unsure whether the Programme had continued after her departure. In the absence of any overall coordination process or structure the relationship has faltered, and some of the momentum of Te Pātui's earlier support to MFMR appears to have been lost.

The **Pacific Fisheries Leadership Programme** coordinated by SPC, with funding contributions from New Zealand, has been tapped into by MFMR with a number of staff taking part. Skills and development of staff fostered by the Pacific Fisheries Leadership Programme plays an indirect but significant role in supporting the objectives of MSSIF and MFMR.

MSSIF has played an important role in getting the Bina Harbour tuna processing plant initiative underway with the **Bina Harbour Project Office** (established to provide project management support) and the **BRAG** project (set up to help address governance issues), both established during MSSIF Phase 3. The MSSIF office continues to provide financial and administrative support to BRAG. The evaluation is aware of the current review of governance arrangements for the Bina Harbour Project Office and the BRAG project aimed at strengthening linkages and accountability to MFMR leadership.

Official signing of contract for Bina Harbour Project Office, December 2022, Honiara. Photo: MFMR

The value of MSSIF's delivery model

The flexibility and responsiveness of MSSIF's delivery model to MFMR's funding priorities, has proved invaluable during challenging fiscal periods for the Solomon Islands Government. The delivery of MSSIF has been integrated into MFMR work planning processes which has driven strong ownership and high transparency of New Zealand's support within MFMR management levels.

The evaluation heard several examples of where MSSIF's approach to co-funding has enabled MFMR to better leverage other donor support, enhancing overall impact of donor funding for the fisheries sector in Solomon Islands.

The MSSIF programme office, and the Programme Manager role in particular, has been central to the efficient management of MSSIF. MSSIF Phase 3 has benefitted from a team with the relationships, experience and skills in navigating the necessary Solomon Islands Government financial rules and systems.

While the work planning processes are well embedded within the Ministry, there was less awareness across MFMR divisions on the mechanisms for discussing workplan progress and budget expenditure during implementation. Feedback from the consultations suggests there would be value in MSSIF facilitating regular, structured updates on funding allocations and expenditure across the MFMR divisions.

The close engagement between MFAT and MFMR via the Independent Steering Committee (ISC), along with accessible leadership within MFMR and strong oversight protocols, supports alignment and accountability in managing MSSIF funds.

The engagement between the MFAT and MFMR through the ISC structure was described by both MFMR and MFAT as functioning well, with the ISC being an effective decision-making mechanism to support adaptive management during COVID-19. The ISC meets twice a year to make decisions on use of MSSIF funds.

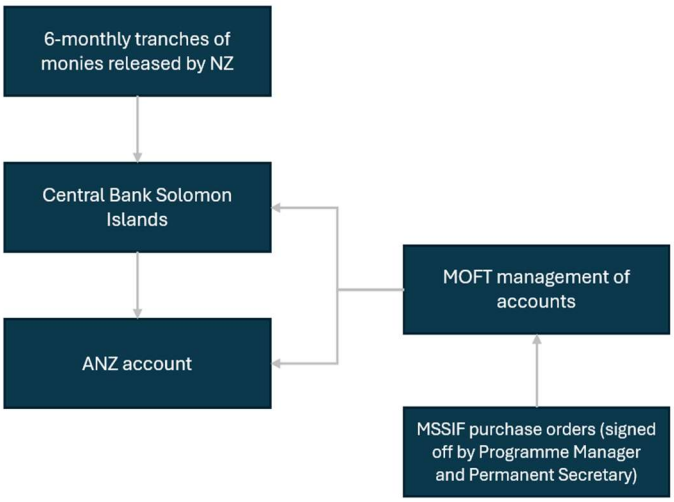
Outside of the ISC, the evaluation heard that the accessibility of MFMR leadership to discuss MSSIF implementation significantly eases the MSSIF programme office's work and ensures strong interaction and alignment.

The evaluation heard that the ISC is used primarily to discuss and approve management and operational matters with a small number of representatives from MFAT and MFMR. The need and

opportunity for MFAT and MFMR to discuss strategic issues of relevance to MSSIF implementation is becoming more important in light of possible strategic shifts in the fisheries sector in Solomon Islands (for example, consideration of moving to a fisheries management authority model). The Bina Harbour developments and any further strategic support that MSSIF can provide to MFMR as it navigates the complexities of this development are also topical. This strategic alignment could help maximise the impact and sustainability of both BRAG and MSSIF initiatives.

In terms of financial governance, MOFT is responsible for receipt of MFAT funds into the nominated bank account held by the Central Bank of Solomon Islands and for transferring funds to MFMR. MFMR is responsible for managing the GFA, leading accounting tasks and implementation and delivery of all activity outputs. Tranches of monies are released 6-monthly into a MSSIF trust account once there is agreement between both partners on acquittals for the previous year and MFAT approval of the MSSIF workplan and budget for the subsequent year. This approval is given via the ISC. Figure 2: MSSIF Payment Mechanism and Financial Approvals Process sets out the process for the movement of funds.

Figure 2 MSSIF Payment Mechanism and Financial Approvals Process



The programme's governance structure ensures clear management and approval protocols and comprehensive oversight. Drawing on the ANZ account is managed by co-signatories, of which the Programme Manager is not one. This approach has the benefit of being transparent, and of being low risk for financial mismanagement.

There are risks associated with the use of imprest accounts. The evaluation heard how there had been two instances involving the misappropriation of imprest funds. The funds were able to be recovered in one of these cases.

The evaluation was advised that the last audit was a process audit in 2015, with plans underway for another external audit. Audits go through the Solomon Islands Office of Auditor General, although the GFA also provides for MFAT or its delegate to carry out an audit at any time.

Utilising Solomon Island government systems for MSSIF has empowered the Ministry with direct resource control, fostering ownership and strengthening New Zealand's standing as a trusted partner in the fisheries sector. However, slow and complex financial and procurement processes, inconsistent engagement in budget planning, and difficulties in tracking expenditures have been a drawback to using a GFA modality. The expertise of key MSSIF staff has been crucial in navigating these challenges.

Utilisation of Solomon Islands Government systems for delivering MSSIF has been a mixed blessing, presenting both benefits and drawbacks. On the one hand, embedding MSSIF within MFMR has given the Ministry direct control over resources enabling tangible benefits for the Ministry, industry, and communities. It has allowed the Ministry to use MSSIF funds effectively and flexibly, with MSSIF being highly responsive, which has fostered a strong sense of ownership and deepened the partnership between New Zealand and the Solomon Islands in the fisheries sector.

On the other hand, the slow and complex Solomon Islands Government systems and processes have created drawbacks to implementation progress.

Tracking budgets through government systems is challenging, prompting the MSSIF programme team to maintain its own records to track expenditure. Although MOFT increased its capacity to support donor programs with the D365 system in 2021, stretched staff in MOFT and the need for refresher training in the system hinder effective budget and expenditure tracking.

The evaluation heard from MFMR's Project Management Division that any major procurements go through the Ministry's tender board and, depending on the amounts involved, the Central Tender Board. While this can often result in lengthy procurement processes, the interviewed staff expressed confidence in navigating the system, largely due to the expertise of certain key individuals.

Furthermore, some interviewees highlighted that MSSIF following Solomon Islands Government systems and procurement rules also meant following Solomon Islands Government limits for per diems and catering. The evaluation heard the limits made it difficult to secure catering from service providers, and staff would seek support from other donor funded programs, where available, to ensure sufficient catering budgets. Similar examples were also provided regarding limits on per diems for travel.

Despite the challenges with using Solomon Islands Government systems and processes, the evaluation team heard how MSSIF navigates Solomon Islands Government systems successfully most of the time and with speed and how this is attributed to the skills and experience of MSSIF staff requesting payments.

During MSSIF Phase 3, the shift to Solomon Islands Government procurement systems for recruiting technical advisors marked a departure from the MFAT-contracting of advisors under MSSIF Phase 2 when dedicated offshore and inshore fisheries advisers were embedded within MFMR under the direction of the MSSIF Team Leader. MSSIF Phase 3 saw a phasing out of this embedded advisory support as capacity had been built within MFMR. However, scope remained for the provision of short-term technical inputs for specific tasks such as corporate planning and legal drafting.

While this approach reflects the effectiveness of historical capacity development support, it has both benefits and drawbacks. The evaluation heard how the legacy of MSSIF-funded technical advisory support is the significant confidence building of Ministry staff, facilitated by the embedding of long-term technical advisors within the Ministry. The turnover of senior staff during Phase 3 resulted in a new cohort of junior officers who have not experienced this on-the-job capacity development. The evaluation heard a number of interviewees express a desire for a future phase of MSSIF to include this support via high quality technical advice, although there were mixed preferences expressed for local technical advisors versus regional or international long-term technical advisors.

There was some concern expressed that both the recruitment and payment of technical advisory support through Solomon Islands Government procurement systems in MSSIF Phase 3 experienced significant delays. The MSSIF programme office felt that these payment delays affected the attraction of suitable candidates and staff morale, highlighting the drawbacks of the current system.

Lessons and recommendations

These lessons and recommendation are intended to support discussions and decision-making for the design of MSSIF Phase 4.

The tables below provide an analysis of each lesson and explain the context in which the lesson was made. The application and recommendation sections speak to the potential changes for future MSSIF design and delivery to enhance sustainability of outcomes and increase relevance.

For the most part, MSSIF Phase 3 implemented the recommendations from the evaluation of Phase 2. The status of these can be found in Appendix E. Of the nine recommendations from the evaluation of MSSIF Phase 2, five were implemented in full. The remaining recommendations, some of which were disrupted by COVID-19, remain relevant for a future phase, and have been incorporated in the recommendations presented below.

Lesson	**Integrating control over MSSIF resource allocation within MFMR has led to strong alignment between MFAT's support and the Ministry's changing needs and emerging priorities. Notwithstanding the slow and complex government systems, which have at times posed implementation risks, this new approach in Phase 3 has reaped benefits.**
Context	Moving from an advisory support model under Phase 2 to a budget support model under Phase 3 has seen the delivery of MSSIF integrated into MFMR work planning and resource allocation processes which has driven strong ownership and high transparency of New Zealand's support within MFMR. Slow and complex Solomon Islands Government systems and processes are a constant risk to implementation progress, and throughout Phase 3 there has been considerable effort by the MSSIF team to adapt to and improve processes where possible to increase efficiencies wihtin the budget support model.
Application and recommendations	MSSIF phases to date have been adapted in line with the Ministry's organisational needs, emerging priorities and challenges. This has been a real strength, and an approach that should continue in future. **Recommendation 1: MSSIF continues to use MFMR work planning processes to allocate MSSIF resources to MFMR priorities as outlined in its Corporate Plan.** **Recommendation 2: MSSIF funds continue to be administered through a budget support model, supported by a dedicated project team which coordinates with MFMR, MOFT and the New Zealand High Commission to address inefficiencies as they arise.**

Lesson	**The nature of MSSIF supported strategic interventions (such as, Aruligo Tilapia Hatchery, Bina Harbour, support to PFOs) necessitates deliberate consideration of how impacts and results will be sustained in the medium to long term.**

Context	Strategic interventions supported by MSSIF are helping MFMR and Solomon Islands realise the economic and social benefits from its fisheries. Overall, the combination of support to specific tangible projects alongside general budgetary support has been highly successful and should be continued in any future Phase. The challenge for the future is to ensure these interventions are enduring and sustainable. Ensuring that MFMR can maintain and build on the significant gains achieved through the corporate restructure will require ongoing investment in areas such as human resource management, training, recruitment and performance management. In the medium term support from New Zealand and/or other development partners will continue to be essential. In relation to the Aruligo hatchery, the anticipated output of Phase 3 – for the hatchery to be operating sustainably and supplying well-resourced farmers – was overly ambitious and will require further support under the next Phase of MSSIF in order to be achieved. As the scale of fisheries management and development in Solomon Islands increases, consideration is being given to how best to ensure the sector becomes self-sustaining in the long term with investment in fisheries commensurate with the social and economic importance of the sector to the Solomon Islands. An option raised by the Permanent Secretary, and supported by one of the long-term advisers to MFMR, is investigating the establishment of a national fisheries authority, charged with maximising economic and social benefits to the country while ensuring fisheries are managed sustainably and ecologically for the benefit of future generations. With Solomon Islands growing its domestic fishing industry, including onshore processing capacity, it will be important to strengthen the engagement and collaboration with the sector at all levels, including Provincial Governments, with the aim of generating long-term partnerships for the future.
Application and recommendations	In general, the next phase should continue to support tangible projects (including the Aruligo Tilapia Hatchery and support to PFOs), as well as providing direct budget support for operationalising work plans. Building on the strengths of MSSIF and the strong trust established between MFAT and MFMR, decisions on which specific projects to include in a future phase should be progressed in collaboration with MFMR. Given the growth and diversification of the Solomon Islands fisheries sector, including a strong domestic offshore tuna fishing sector, onshore processing, marine and shore-based aquaculture, and increased engagement in community-based fisheries management, a future phase of MSSIF could usefully support MFMR to consider its long-term strategic direction, including investigating the option of establishing a national fisheries authority. **Recommendation 3: MSSIF Phase 4 to continue support, including through provision of technical assistance where needed, to ensure the structural changes,**

	and associated management and planning processes put in place under earlier Phases are sustained. Recommendation 4: MSSIF Phase 4 to continue support to the Aruligo Tilapia Hatchery project to ensure momentum is maintained and that the anticipated economic and social benefits to farmers and to the wider Solomon Islands population are realised.

Lesson	The regional nature of offshore tuna fisheries management relies on regional agreements and implementation. Strong actions by an individual country can put it at a disadvantage if not supported by collective action from others.
Context	With management of tuna stocks governed by international legal frameworks and regional agreements between Pacific Island countries and Distant Water Fishing Nations, there is much to be gained from close cooperation between Pacific Island countries. The collective weight and influence of the PNA and wider FFA groupings has been instrumental in securing strong management outcomes in the WCPFC and Solomon Islands has played an increasingly strong role in these forums. Conversely, there are potential risks in getting ahead of agreed regional management frameworks and actions as this can create an uneven playing field, whereby vessels move their operations in order to avoid increased regulation and higher costs. This has been the case for MFMR and Solomon Islands as a result of taking a leadership role on longline management, including application of electronic monitoring, with foreign flagged vessels choosing to no longer fish in Solomon Islands waters and instead seeking fishing opportunities elsewhere.
Application	Given the number of countries and industry players involved, it is difficult to implement measures that impose a higher compliance burden and costs on industry without wider regional uptake of those same measures and associated standards for implementation. Binding agreement at the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission is effectively a prerequisite to national level implementation. Recommendation 5: Consideration of future support to implementation of management measures in the offshore sector, such as electronic monitoring, needs to take full account of wider regional uptake and the potential costs and associated incentives placed on tuna industry partners.

Lesson	Effective coordination across the portfolio of New Zealand support to Pacific fisheries requires specific and deliberate mechanisms.
Context	MFAT's new Sustainable Pacific Fisheries portfolio is driving linkages and coordination across the regional fisheries support programmes (for example, SPC, FFA, Pacific Fisheries Leadership Programme, MPI Te Pātui). However,

	there is currently no structure or process for direct involvement of key personnel involved in bilateral programme delivery such as the MSSIF Programme Manager.
Application and recommendations	MFAT's coordination processes should be expanded to include direct involvement of the bilateral fisheries programme managers, such as the MSSIF Programme Manager, given the significant degree of overlap and the reach and influence of the regional support programmes. Such coordination should aim to raise awareness across the New Zealand funded fisheries programmes (including MSSIF) about the objectives and modality of the different programmes and how they intersect. This is particularly important for a programme like Te Pātui which involves close engagement between MPI and MFMR officers working together, as distinct from simply coordinating funding or activities. Possible mechanisms for raising awareness are: regular (for example, quarterly) meetings of key personnel across all relevant programmes, convened by MFAT with a focus on building relationships, sharing information and establishing linkages; a newsletter to be shared across all relevant programmes and personnel updating on recent and planned activities; use of an online platform for sharing information and providing a more informal communication channel. **Recommendation 6: MFAT to implement mechanisms (for example, regular meetings, newsletters, and/or an online information sharing platform) for coordination across its bilateral and regional fisheries portfolios.** **Recommendation 7: MSSIF Programme Manager to participate in coordination efforts to leverage synergies, maximise opportunities for support to MFMR, and avoid duplication of efforts.** **Recommendation 8: In line with the recommendation from the Phase 2 evaluation, MFAT to support MPI to formalise a support arrangement with MFMR under the MPI Pacific Fisheries Capacity Development Programme in order to create longer term institutional relationships between the fisheries administrations and integrate the MPI programme into MFMR work planning.**

Lesson	**Effective management of MSSIF's contribution to a wider work programme involving multiple donors requires greater awareness by all key players of respective roles and responsibilities.**
Context	While MFMR's lead role in donor coordination is well understood, there is scope for greater clarity as to the respective roles of MFMR (responsibility for coordination of donor support around achievement of its work programme) and MSSIF Programme Manager (ensuring MSSIF support is leveraged to best advantage, including to support and complement the work of other donors and fill gaps where required).

	The MSSIF Programme Manager should have a strong understanding of the work of other donors in support of MFMR activities and, conversely, should also ensure other donor organisations have a good understanding of MSSIF and the nature of the support it provides to MFMR.
Application	Consideration could be given to how MSSIF can support more formalised, MFMR led, donor coordination processes such as an annual meeting involving all relevant donors, as MFMR develops its annual work plan. Developing a good understanding of the work of other donors and how they contribute to MFMR should be a requirement of the MSSIF Programme Manager position and would enable MSSIF to more actively support MFMR's leadership in this area. **Recommendation 9: In line with the recommendation from the Phase 2 evaluation, MSSIF Phase 4 to consider and lead discussions with MFMR on how MSSIF can support a more formalised, MFMR led, donor coordination process involving all relevant donors and partner organisations.** **Recommendation 10: MFAT to update the terms of reference for the MSSIF Programme Manager to include responsibilities for coordinating and networking with other donors.**

Lesson	**Small amount of support to PFOs has brought about significant change and impact, but also highlighted the dynamic between MFMR headquarters and the provinces and the need for sustainable funding for provincial fisheries.**
Context	Most MFMR staff are based in Honiara and yet many of the most pressing priorities are with respect to coastal fisheries management in the provinces. Support to PFOs has been hugely successful, but has also highlighted the need for more support to this area, particularly given the threats posed by climate change and the needs of a growing population as well as the potential for increase small-scale economic activity in the inshore fisheries sector. There are multiple donors working in the coastal fisheries area. MFMR's Inshore and Provincial teams, along with PFOs themselves, are tasked with management and coordination of the support coming from many donors, some via MFMR and others going directly to communities. There is potential for stronger planning of interventions and an associated need for better information and data on what's being done at community level, for example, where are the FADs, where are Management Areas, where is aquaculture happening and what sort. The work in this area is bringing forward issues that will require further and increased support, as recognised by World Bank staff involved in PROPER.
Application and recommendation	There is a need to consider how to best progress support to this critical area in any future phase of MSSIF. This will require strategic consideration of the relationship between MFMR headquarters in Honiara and the provinces. What does this relationship look like in 5-10 years' time, what are the respective roles

	of the Provincial and Central governments, and what steps will be required to support any transition from current modalities? **Recommendation 11: MFMR to progress development of its Provincial Fisheries Strategy including consideration of the respective roles of MFMR headquarters and the PFOs, and associated long-term funding requirements, including from Provincial Governments and other sources.**

Lesson	**Promotion of gender equity and gender mainstreaming needs to be consistent with the cultural and traditional contexts of Solomon Islands, with support and accountability measures to ensure sustained implementation.**
Context	Gender equity in the Solomon Islands fisheries sector has seen fluctuating focus under MSSIF phases, with Phase 2 largely neglecting gender issues and Phase 3 initially emphasising gender awareness but losing momentum due to regional priorities like COVID-19 and other regional support being made available to MFMR. The new MFMR Gender Strategy offers a timely opportunity to integrate gender considerations into MFMR's systems, policies, and planning. However, effective gender mainstreaming requires sustained efforts at individual, relational, and structural levels, and needs to be driven from within MFMR to assist all MFMR officers to understand the differential impacts of what the Ministry is doing on men and women.
Application and recommendation	Any future phase of MSSIF should consider the provision of long term, locally-led capacity development and technical advice to support the effective implementation of MFMR's new Gender Strategy. **Recommendation 12: MFAT commission a gender analysis, undertaken by local expertise in collaboration with MFMR, to inform the gender equity approach of the next phase of MSSIF.** **Recommendation 13: In line with the recommendation from the Phase 2 evaluation, the design team for MSSIF Phase 4 to consider and lead discussions with MFMR on how inclusive development be considered explicitly and integrated into MSSIF management and review processes.**

Conclusion

The evaluation finds that MSSIF Phase 3 has successfully provided crucial and highly valued support, enabling MFMR to deliver on its strategic priorities, and implement its operational workplans under its Corporate Plan.

One of MSSIF's key strengths is that, after nearly 20 years of New Zealand support, MFMR has integrated MFAT funding into its planning mechanisms, resulting in strong ownership, robust relationships and a demonstrably partner-led, adaptive approach. This approach and support during MSSIF Phase 3 were especially critical during the COVID-19 pandemic.

A notable strength of MSSIF has been its adaptability across its three phases, demonstrating a dynamic and responsive approach based on lessons learned. The focus of support has evolved alongside the development of MFMR. The successful use of sector budget support under MSSIF Phase 3 during COVID-19 underscores the importance of maintaining flexibility and openness to change to ensure the continued benefits of this modality, while systematically addressing its drawbacks. The longevity of MSSIF, the strength of the relationship, MFMR leadership and the skills and experience of MSSIF's staff have enabled this.

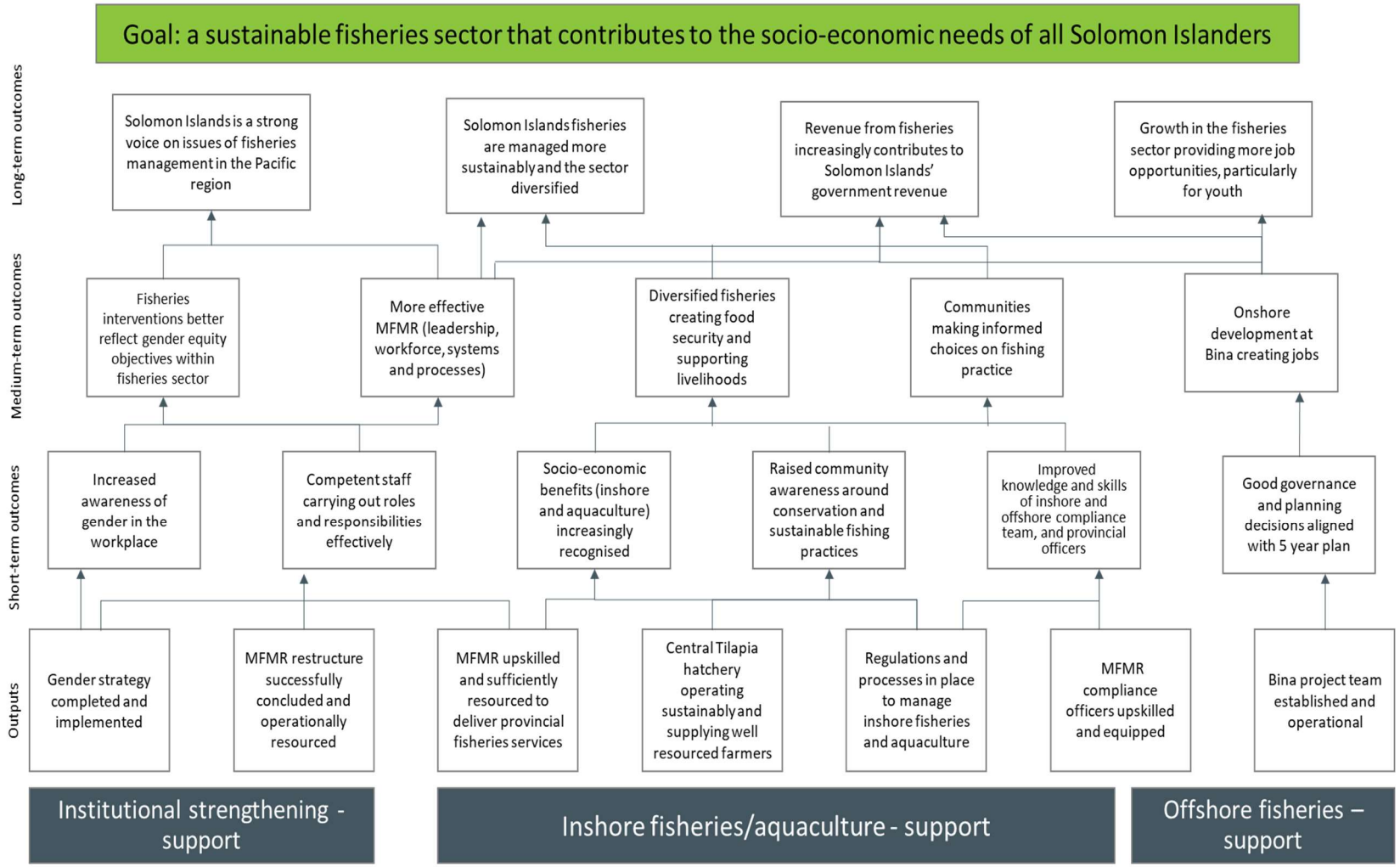
There is an ongoing need for sustained support to build on the successes achieved thus far and to ensure these benefits are preserved. By concentrating on MFMR itself, MSSIF Phase 3 has enabled this Ministry to raise its profile, and take better advantage of the many different donors that support it, the things they have to offer and enhancing overall impact of donor funding for the fisheries sector in Solomon Islands.

Ensuring the sustainability of achievements, particularly the embedding of structural and organisational reforms within MFMR, is foundational to ongoing success. The dual focus on large projects (such as the Aruligo Tilapia Hatchery and Bina Harbour) combined with widespread support for the implementation of MFMR's divisional work plans has proven to be a valuable approach; but large projects and piloted approaches, once initiated, often require continuity and more deliberate consideration of sustainability factors.

MSSIF has the capacity to play a greater role in supporting future transformational change in strategic priority areas for both MFAT and MFMR. Moving beyond the current budget support mechanism would require intentional decisions and efforts from both MFAT and MFMR, with associated governance arrangements to support broader and more strategic discussions.

Appendix A: Activity Logic Diagram

Figure 3 MSSIF Phase 3 Activity Logic Diagram



Appendix B: Methodology

The full evaluation methodology is contained in the Evaluation Plan, submitted separately to MFAT. This annex provides an overview of the approach and phases of the evaluation.

The evaluation of the MSSIF Phase 3 was conducted by integrating summative and formative approaches. This dual approach enabled the assessment of progress towards outcomes and the derivation of lessons to inform future phases.

The evaluation used a theory-based methodology to test the appropriateness and consistency of MSSIF outcomes (as outlined in the MSSIF diagram at Appendix A). The evaluation also considered the processes of how MSSIF had been implemented.

The evaluation report synthesises and presents the key lessons related to MSSIF Phase 3 which were identified during the evaluation. Lessons have been derived from a review of key documents and stakeholder consultations and have been discussed and confirmed with MFAT and MFMR.

The evaluation was conducted in two phases:

Phase One: Briefing and Planning

The evaluation team held initial discussions with MFAT on 5 March 2024 to confirm the evaluation scope, stakeholder engagement, and potential risks. Follow-up discussions and planning with MFAT and MFMR continued throughout March and April to ensure the evaluation process supported decision-making and policy discussions among stakeholders.

A comprehensive document review was undertaken, covering key literature, MSSIF program documents, Solomon Islands policy documents, and MFAT policy documents. This review identified expected results and unanticipated effects, described implementation modalities, provided an overview of contextual factors and informed the lines of enquiry for the data collection phase.

Phase Two: Data Collection and Analysis

The evaluation team collected and analysed data through interviews and discussion groups in the Solomon Islands and New Zealand, using interview guides for semi-structured focus group discussions and interviews. Consultations commenced with MFAT staff in Wellington, MPI, SPC, and the World Bank.

Fieldwork in the Solomon Islands took place from 27 May to 10 June 2024, focusing on assessing MSSIF Phase 3's progress towards intended outcomes, evaluating stakeholder satisfaction and the value of the delivery model, and identifying lessons for future improvements.

Fieldwork activities included discussions with MFMR Divisions, current and former MSSIF staff, Solomon Islands Government, industry stakeholders, community members, and other development partners.

Site visits were conducted at the Aruligo Tilapia Hatchery, Electronic Monitoring building, SINU Quarantine Facility, Tiaro Bay villages in Guadalcanal, and Provincial Government offices, Fiu Village and seaweed nursery in Malaita.

At the conclusion of the fieldwork, the evaluation team debriefed MFAT and MFMR through an in-country workshop.

Data analysis was performed on an ongoing basis during data collection. The evaluation team recorded and tracked major observations and emerging themes, triangulating evidence to ensure rigor. NVivo software was used to code responses and manage the large quantities of interview data. A final data analysis was conducted against key evaluation questions and emerging themes.

Content analysis of data collected against the evaluation objectives was undertaken in NVivo. This approach has ensured there is rigour through triangulation and that insights emerging from the data analysis are valid and credible. This approach allowed the evaluators to assess merit and to make evaluative judgements of MSSIF's relevance and effectiveness.

The data analysis phase culminated in this draft evaluation report which is being circulated for feedback via the Evaluation Steering Committee.

Evaluation with integrity

An information sheet was provided to all participants and outlined the purpose of the evaluation, and names of the team. Participants were told that their responses will remain confidential to the team and their source will not be identified in the report. Interview and group responses are used only for this evaluation and have been securely stored.

Appendix C: Stakeholders consulted

Table 4 Stakeholders consulted

Organisation	Number of people consulted
Bina Harbour Project Office	1
Japan International Cooperation Agency	1
Malaita Provincial Government	1
MSSIF Phase 3 Project Staff	5
New Zealand High Commission, Honiara	4
New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade	3
New Zealand Ministry for Primary Industries	4
Pacific Community FAME Division	2
Pacific Community Gender team/Division (incl. PEUMP staff)	1
Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency	12
Solomon Islands Ministry of Finance and Treasury	1
Solomon Islands Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources	41
Solomon Islands National University	2
Trimarine	1
WorldFish	2
World Bank PROPER Project	3
Total	**84**

Appendix D: Key documents

MSSIF Phase 3 Activity Design, Evaluations, Reporting

MFAT. (July 2021). Activity Monitoring Assessment. October 2020 – June 2021.

MFAT. (July 2023). Activity Monitoring Assessment, July 2021 - June 2023.

MFAT. (2023). Activity Monitoring Summary, 2023.

MFAT. (May 2019). Fisheries Concept Note.

MFAT. (2014). Mekem Strong Solomon Islands Fisheries Phase 2 Activity Design Document

MFAT. (December 2018). Mekem Strong Solomon Islands Fisheries Phase 2: Final Evaluation Report.

MFAT. (2019). MSSIF Phase 3 Business Case.

MFAT. (2021). Phase 3 Activity Risk Register, 2021.

MFAT. (August 2019). Solomon Islands Fisheries Programme Business Case and Activity Design: Design Work Plan.

MSSIF. (August 2020). Minutes of Independent Steering Committee Meeting No. 19: 27 August 2020.

MSSIF. (December 2021). Minutes of Independent Steering Committee Meeting No. 21: 9 December 2021.

MSSIF. (May 2021). Minutes of Independent Steering Committee Meeting No. 20: 20 May 2021.

MSSIF. (May 2023). Minutes of Independent Steering Committee Meeting No. 23: 31 May 2023.

MSSIF. (October 2022). Minutes of Independent Steering Committee Meeting No. 22: 7 October 2022.

MSSIF. (February 2022). MSSIF Phase 3 Activity Progress Report 3, July 2021 – December 2021.

MSSIF. (February 2024). MSSIF Phase 3 Activity Progress Report 6, May 2023 – December 2023.

MSSIF. (June 2021). MSSIF Phase 3 Activity Progress Report 2, January 2021 – June 2021.

MSSIF. (July 2022). MSSIF Phase 3 Activity Progress Report 4, January 2022 – June 2022.

MSSIF. (March 2021). MSSIF Phase 3 Activity Progress Report 1, July 2020 – December 2020.

MSSIF. (May 2023). MSSIF Phase 3 Activity Progress Report 5, October 2022 – April 2023.

MSSIF. (2023). Safety Plan.

MSSIF. (2020). Activity Completion Report: MSSIF Phase 2.

MSSIF. (May 2020). Bi-monthly report: December to April 2020.

MSSIF. (September 2020). Bi-monthly report: July to August 2020.

MSSIF. (November 2020). Bi-monthly report: September to October 2020.

MSSIF. (October 2021). Bi-monthly report: June to October 2021.

MSSIF. (March 2022). Bi-monthly report: January 2022 to April 2022.

MSSIF. (May 2023). Contract Completion Report, Programme Coordinator.

MSSIF. (February 2023). Bi-monthly Report: December 2022 to January 2023.

MSSIF. (April 2023). Bi-monthly Report: February 2023 to March 2023.

MSSIF. (August 2023). Bi-monthly Report: May 2023 to July 2023.

MSSIF. (October 2023). Bi-monthly Report: August 2023 to September 2023.

MSSIF. (December 2023). Bi-monthly Report: October 2023 to November 2023.

MSSIF. (May 2021). Summary Report to MSSIF ISC No. 20: September 2020 – April 2021.

MSSIF. (December 2021). Summary Report to MSSIF ISC No. 21: May 2021 – December 2021.

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Appendix E: Status of recommendations from MSSIF Phase 2 evaluation

Table 5 Status of recommendations from Phase 2 evaluation

	Recommendations from MSSIF II Evaluation Report	Was this recommendation implemented?
1	MFAT moves away from supporting long-term technical advisors but continues to support a grant funding arrangement that allows the MFMR to contract technical assistance through short-term advisors/consultants, and to further embed the corporate restructure programme initiated under MSSIF.	Yes, this approach has been adopted under MSSIF Phase 3. Some challenges incurred with contracting advisors using MOFT systems, but positive outcomes overall.
2	MFAT contracts a programme manager (in place of a Team Leader) to work with MFMR in planning, scoping, developing, implementing and reporting on activities supported under a grant funding arrangement.	Yes, the Programme Manager role was initiated under MSSIF Phase 3. The extent to which the Programme Manager is involved in "planning, scoping and developing" activities has varied with scope for greater clarity and specificity around this aspect of the role.
3	MFMR continues to ensure that future advisors/consultants are always paired with willing counterparts within the Ministry to build capability and support knowledge transfer.	Yes, there is evidence of this approach being taken by MFMR although technical advisor consultancies have been limited under MSSIF Phase 3, largely due to COVID-19 impacts.
4	MFAT continues to deliver a grant funding arrangement through SIG systems and considers more fully aligning (and where feasible integrating) grant funding planning and reporting with MFMR planning and reporting (for example, integrating the grant funding arrangement with an MFMR results framework).	Yes, this has largely been the case under Phase 3 with considerable flexibility around the use of funding as long as aligned to MFMR's Corporate Plan and Annual Work Plan. Separate reporting still undertaken for MSSIF, and is appropriate given the multiple sources of support that feed into MFMR's overall work programme.
5	MFAT targets support towards tangible projects, subject to rigorous decision-making processes that include assessments of project rationale/objective (for example, job creation, improving livelihoods, improving food security, resource management, etc), project activity, outcomes, risks, and sustainability (including future funding).	Yes, to the extent that MSSIF has supported specific tangible projects (Bina Harbour, Aruligo hatchery), this has been done on the basis of significant advance analysis and assessments. Any future investment in electronic monitoring by MSSIF requires careful consideration given delays in uptake by other countries.
5a	In relation to the tilapia project, MFAT defines its intended future role and scope of support through any future funding mechanism and identify alternate funding if needed.	This recommendation remains relevant for a future phase. Phase 3 has funded Aruligo hatchery to the point it is ready to receive GIFT in early 2025. MFAT's ongoing future role and support needs to be clearly defined.
5b	In terms of the Bina Harbour project, MFAT minimises investment to only critically needed activities required to	Yes, this recommendation has been implemented during the course of MSSIF

	Recommendations from MSSIF II Evaluation Report	Was this recommendation implemented?
	maintain progress until such a time that the land holding, and trade relations matters are resolved. It is likely that, in the long term, the project will require significant funding from multiple donors at which point MFAT will need to identify specific support it can provide in relation to a group funding mechanism. At that point, as the project becomes more of an infrastructure project, it may be worth considering providing any further support through a dedicated mechanism rather than through a fisheries programme. Specifically, multi-donor infrastructure projects typically require significant coordination to satisfy multilateral donor requirements. This may be an area that MFAT could provide targeted support to enable continued momentum	Phase 3 with support to the Bina Harbour project now separated into the BRAG project focusing on governance arrangements and the Bina Harbour Project Office focusing on managing the technical inputs and engagement needed to progress the project.
6	MFAT encourages MPI to formalise a support arrangement with MFMR under the MPI Pacific Fisheries Capacity Development Programme in order to create longer term institutional relationships between the fisheries administrations and integrate the MPI programme into MFMR work planning.	This recommendation was not implemented in Phase 3, largely due to changes in key personnel within MSSIF and MPI and the impact of COVID-19 on face-to-face engagement. It remains highly relevant for a future phase, in relation to both monitoring, control and surveillance and fisheries management mentoring support and training.
7	MFAT encourages and supports MFMR to lead regular donor coordination processes to increase understanding and visibility of opportunities and progress so as to identify opportunities for cross-project leverage.	This recommendation remains a work in progress. While MFMR is responsible for and does a good job of coordinating donor input into its workplan, there is no formal coordination process involving all donors. The recommendation remains important for a future Phase.
8	MFMR ensures that MFAT is engaged throughout the upcoming PROP review to ensure lessons learned are shared and that future planning is coordinated at a funding agency level.	Yes, there was scope for MFAT and MSSIF to engage in the PROP review and the engagement and coordination between MSSIF and PROPER is strong. MFAT and MSSIF need to be engaged in the Institutional Review of MFMR that is being undertaken by World Bank PROPER.
9	MFAT mandates in any future fisheries programme design that inclusive development be considered explicitly and integrated into management and review processes.	This recommendation remains relevant for a future phase of MSSIF, noting MSSIF Phase 3 did not explicitly address how inclusive development considerations would be integrated into management processes.

Abbreviations

BRAG	Bina Regional Arrangement for Governance
CBRM	Community Based Resource Management
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
FADs	Fish aggregating devices
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FFA	Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency
GFA	Grant Funding Agreement
GIFT	Genetically Improved Farmed Tilapia
ISC	Independent Steering Committee
JICA	Japanese International Cooperation Agency
MFAT	New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade Manatū Aorere
MFMR	Solomon Islands Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources
MOFT	Solomon Islands Ministry of Finance and Treasury
MPI	New Zealand Ministry for Primary Industries
NZHC	New Zealand High Commission in Honiara
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperationand Development
PEUMP	Pacific-European Union Marine Partnership
PFOs	Provincial Fisheries Officers
PNA	Parties to the Nauru Agreement
PROPER	World Bank's Pacific Regional Oceanscape Program for Economic Resilience
SPC	The Pacific Community