



MFAT Management Response to the Samoa Strategic Evaluation (2018 – 2024)

Evaluation Report Recommendation	MFAT Response and Action (Agree, Partially Agree, Reject)
Consider improving activity documentation and reporting to enable the measurement of activity alignment to Samoa Country Plan goals and outcomes.	Agree. MFAT's Development Capability and Insights (DCI) division has implemented an extensive training programme for new development staff (and MFAT partners), which includes sessions and guidance on reporting. New activities will have clear alignment to Country Plan outcomes.
Consider improving activity documentation and reporting to enable the measurement of activity alignment to priority themes particularly interconnected and cross-cutting themes such as gender equality, disability and social inclusion (GEDSI) and climate change.	Agree. Activities that have specific thematic (GEDSI, climate, etc.) outcomes will develop relevant indicators that will illustrate progression (or otherwise) towards those outcomes during activity implementation. Progress towards those outcomes will also continue to be reported on in activity monitoring documentation.
Consider developing an overarching monitoring, evaluation, research and learning (MERL) framework or guidance for the Samoa Country Plan that ensures consistency in the specification of outputs and short-term outcomes and supports aggregation of results including cross-cutting themes such as GEDSI and climate change.	Partially agree. New PDG Plans (including the Samoa Plan) all include Theories of Change (ToC) and indicator tables. Further additions to Samoa Plan MERL will be considered, however any proposed additions will have to factor in monitoring and reporting requirements which could be resource intensive for both Wellington and Post staff. Plan guidance has been developed by DCI, and is being utilised by design and implementation teams when creating new activities.
Pursue opportunities in future programming to use a strategic or programmatic approach instead of individual projects, where feasible and appropriate, including in cocoa agriculture and private sector development investments.	Agree. As mentioned in the report, programmes are already being developed for private sector development and health within the Samoa Programme. MFAT will balance the effectiveness of our High Commission and Embassy Fund activities in Apia.

Evaluation Report Recommendation	MFAT Response and Action (Agree, Partially Agree, Reject)
Ensure that future activity designs provide resources for institutional strengthening and capacity development for local implementation partners.	Agree. Health activities already provide coordination resourcing for Ministry of Health. Consideration will be given for extra resourcing in all new activities.
Explore opportunities to expand use of budget support for sector development using appropriate arrangements to support implementation, monitoring and performance reporting.	Agree. Sector-based budget support is already being explored within the Samoa Plan, however this support will ultimately depend on partner (Government of Samoa) preference.
Consider providing additional technical assistance with budget support to enable institutional strengthening and capacity development to support reform progress and implementation of sector development.	Partially agree. Work is underway at MFAT to establish a regional technical assistance (TA) facility to more efficiently respond to TA requests. However, MFAT has noted that TA requests within Samoa are sporadic, and the market in-country is quite saturated (e.g. through DFAT TA facility and ABD).
Take advantage of opportunities for Post to optimise its engagement with Samoa on its budget support investments, particularly in relation to the Joint Policy Action Matrix (JPAM).	Agree. Post will take a more strategic approach to engagement on the Joint Policy Action Matrix, noting the impact and high value of this investment.
Document and draw together past and planned NZ Inc security-related agency engagement with Samoa counterparts as part of long-term agency and sector planning for institutional strengthening and capacity building to inform the Samoa Country Plan.	Agree. Lessons jointly learned during CHOGM support have contributed to the design and implementation of new inter-agency activities in Samoa such as the recent Police and Customs agreements.
Capture and codify the lessons learned from CHOGM support to develop and document a model for mobilising NZ Inc capabilities to meet event-specific and programmatic counterpart agency needs.	Partially agree. Lessons learned from CHOGM have been captured. Where possible, MFAT will utilise and share lessons learned from CHOGM with NZ Inc. agencies during similar events.

FOR INTERNAL USE ONLY

Acceptance of Final Report, Recommendations and Management Response by MFAT

Note: this section must be completed for all evaluations. The Final Report must be approved for acceptance by the Unit Manager and Evaluation Steering Group (if applicable).



Zoe Coulson-Sinclair

(insert name and signature)

UM PACPF Samoa Tonga Tuvalu

(insert Unit Manager Title)

_____ **1 May 2026** _____
(date)

Report Release Checklist

Note: This checklist must be used for all evaluations that will be published on MFAT's website. Where the report has been commissioned by a partner organisation and is published on their website, MFAT should simply seek written permission from the partner to provide a link to the published evaluation from our website.

NAME OF THE REPORT: SAMOA STRATEGIC EVALUATION: PHASE 2

AUTHOR(S): JID

REPORT MONTH AND YEAR: SEPTEMBER 2025

The evaluation report must meet MFAT's obligation to protect individuals' privacy under the Privacy Act (2020) and in line with research ethics. Individuals must not be named in the evaluation report without their consent (gained at the time of data collection)

All evaluation reports should be able to be publicly released in accordance with the principle of availability (Section 5 of the Official Information Act (OIA). However, this principle can be overridden if there is 'good reason' (as set out in the OIA) to withhold information. Use this checklist to help you decide if sections in the evaluation report should be withheld.

If any of the answers to these questions is 'yes' then:

- *A hard copy of the report should be marked up with brackets around the information to be withheld, and the OIA section under which the information is to be withheld noted (refer to MFAT Style and Practice Guide OIA Requests)*
- *The PDF copy of the report that is submitted to merl@mfat.govt.nz for the library and public release will have the withheld information whited out and the reasons for withholding noted in the margins. The following note should be placed in the report: Certain information in this report has been withheld in accordance with the Official Information Act and the grounds for withholding, as at the time of publication, are noted in the margins.*

If you are unsure whether a good reason to withhold exists seek advice from the PDG staff member responsible for OIAs.

If you have any doubts or questions talk to your manager, DCI MERL or the OIA Team in Executive Services Division: DM-ESD@mfat.govt.nz

OIA Section 6 Conclusive Reasons: Are there words in the evaluation that are likely to:

- | | | |
|--|------------------------------|--|
| a) Prejudice the security or defence of NZ or NZ's international relations? | ☐ Yes | ☒ No |
| b) Prejudice the entrusting of information to the Government of NZ on a basis of confidence by (i) the Government of any other country or (ii) any international organisation? | ☐ Yes | ☒ No |
| c) Prejudice the maintenance of the law? | ☐ Yes | ☒ No |
| d) Endanger the safety of any person? | ☐ Yes | ☒ No |
| e) Damage seriously the NZ economy? | ☐ Yes | ☒ No |

OIA Section 7 Special Reasons: Are there words in the evaluation that are likely to:

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|--|------------------------------|--|
| a) Prejudice the security or defence of the Cook Islands, Niue, Tokelau or the Ross Dependency? | ☐ Yes | ☒ No |
| b) Prejudice relations between the governments of NZ, and governments of the Cook Island and Niue? | ☐ Yes | ☒ No |
| c) Prejudice the international relations of the governments of the Cook Islands or Niue | ☐ Yes | ☒ No |

OIA Section 9 Other Reasons: Are there words in the evaluation that need to be withheld to: (Note: There is need to balance Section 9 grounds for withholding against 'public interest considerations'. Consider the negative consequences from release, and whether or not these consequences are outweighed by the public interest in access to the information.)

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| a) Protect the privacy of natural persons? | ☐ Yes | ☒ No |
| b) Protect trade secrets and commercial positions? | ☐ Yes | ☒ No |
| c) c)Protect information that is subject to an obligation of confidence where release of the information would be likely to i) prejudice the supply of similar information from the same source and it is in the public interest that such information should continue to be supplied or (ii) otherwise damage the public interest? | ☐ Yes | ☒ No |
| d) Avoid prejudice to measures protecting the health or safety of members of the public? | ☐ Yes | ☒ No |
| e) Avoid prejudice to the substantial economic interests of New Zealand? | ☐ Yes | ☒ No |
| f) Avoid prejudice to measures that prevent or mitigate material loss to members of the public? | ☐ Yes | ☒ No |

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| a) Maintain the constitutional conventions including the confidentiality of advice tendered by ministers and officials? | ☐ Yes | ☒ No |
| b) Maintain effective conduct of public affairs through free and frank expressions of opinion and protection from improper pressure or harassment? | ☐ Yes | ☒ No |
| c) Maintain legal professional privilege? | ☐ Yes | ☒ No |
| d) Enable a minister department or organisation holding information to carry out commercial activities without prejudice or disadvantage? | ☐ Yes | ☒ No |
| e) Enable a minister, department or organisation holding the information to carry on negotiations without prejudice or disadvantage? | ☐ Yes | ☒ No |
| f) Prevent the disclosure or use of official information for improper gain or advantage? | ☐ Yes | ☒ No |

Other Reason: Is there any other reason for withholding information?

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| • If the answer is yes then seek advice from the PDG staff member responsible for OIA or the. DCI MERL Team is also available for guidance. | ☐ Yes | ☒ No |
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RECOMMENDATION (ADD IN SIGN-OFF OF ANY REDACTIONS) (CAPTURE PDSGG DECISION ON DO NOT PUBLISH)

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| ☐ | Do Not Publish (Consult MERL Team)
Include PDSGG decision (meeting minutes noting decision) |
| ☐ | Partially redact (consult MERL team) Send a copy of the redacted version to the MERL team for public release |
| ☒ | Release entire report |

Signed by Name (Divisional Manager)

Date: Day/Month/Year