



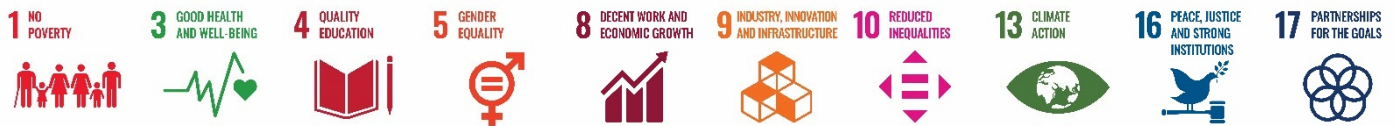
2020-21 SAMOA DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM PROGRESS REPORT

The *2020-21 Samoa Development Program Progress Report* summarises progress for the reporting period 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021 of implementation of the Australia – Samoa COVID-19 Response Plan and program highlights.

Our development program to Samoa contributes towards achieving the following Sustainable Development Goals.

Program Budget	2020-21 Budget Estimate \$m*
Bilateral	27.0
Regional	5.7
Global	2.5
Other Government Departments	1.9
Total	37.2
Temporary, Targeted and Supplementary Measures (TTS)	1.7
Total ODA	38.8

*Actual expenditure is expected to be available in December 2021/ January 2022.



CONTEXT

Australia and Samoa have an enduring cooperative political, security, business and people-to-people relationship. We successfully reoriented our development program to respond to COVID-19 challenges ensuring a focus on the three key pillars of the *Partnerships for Recovery* strategy. Our work in health security supported improvements to service delivery and detection and disease control preparation. Our work in the stability pillar ensured Samoans still had access to key services. Our focus on economic recovery supported fiscal and economic policy development to address COVID-19 and included fiscal support and provision of livelihood and training opportunities. Through all three pillars our support in Samoa had a focus on the most vulnerable, particularly women, girls and people with disabilities (PWD).

We delivered whole-of-government support in several ways, including through government systems, multilateral and non-government organisations and managing contractors. We coordinated closely with partners like New Zealand, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the World Bank, aligning our support with Government of Samoa policy.

During the reporting period, **Samoa did not record any COVID-19 community transmission**, mainly due to early border closure, effective border and quarantine measures, and domestic COVID-19 restrictions. In July 2021, Australia shared 50,000 doses of AstraZeneca (and associated consumables) from its domestic supplies. As at 29 September 2021, over 94.5 per cent of the eligible population had received a first dose and almost 53 per cent were fully vaccinated.

The global pandemic has significantly impacted Samoa's economy, primarily due to a fall in tourism and trade. **In 2021, Samoa's economic contraction and fiscal deficit are expected to be -9.2 per cent of GDP (ADB, Sep't 2021) and -3.4 per cent of GDP (International Monetary Fund (IMF), April 2021) respectively.** Prior to COVID-19, Samoa's debt levels were progressively declining, with no planned new loans. The September 2021 national budget noted that debt levels were currently at 50 per cent. Even so, Samoa remains at high risk of debt distress and has taken advantage of the Group of Twenty (G20) Debt Service Suspension Initiative. On the upside, **remittances increased** over the reporting period, comprising 16.8 per cent of GDP, and were an important cash injection into the economy.

National elections in April 2021 were followed by a four-month political impasse, due to a dispute over a constitutional requirement for at least 10 per cent of seats to be held by women. Samoa remained peaceful, while the judiciary and the police remained strong and impartial. On 23 July, the court recognised the government of Fiame Naomi Mata'afa.

AUSTRALIA'S RESPONSE AND PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

The post elections political impasse, resulted in slower-than-expected progress on some program implementation in the last quarter of the reporting period, including in budget support disbursements and policy reforms. Increased pressure on government systems and capacity also resulted in delays in monitoring and evaluation reporting, limiting the evidence base on which to form assessments of progress. While technical assistance focussed programs were for the most part able to successfully pivot to remote delivery where appropriate, there were still minor delays in meeting some targets. A redesign of the development program commenced during the reporting period, including consultation with government to ensure we have a fit for purpose program to reflect challenges of a world impacted by COVID-19. Several underperforming programs will conclude during the next reporting period.

Health Security

Australia supported Samoa's health sector to respond to COVID-19. We have committed \$4.7 million over three years (2020-23) for COVID-19 vaccine access, including delivery support and vaccine procurement, drawing on Australia's Regional COVID-19 Vaccine Access and Health Security Initiative (VAHSI). **Through VAHSI, Australia has committed to supporting Samoa and other Pacific island countries achieve comprehensive vaccine coverage.** This is in addition to Australia's support for the COVAX Advance Market Commitment totalling \$130 million. As at 30 June 2021, this global mechanism had delivered 52,800 COVID-19 vaccine doses to Samoa. Achieving high vaccination coverage is critical to protect Samoa's citizens in an outbreak and for re-opening borders, which is important for economic recovery.

Through VAHSI and the bilateral program, Australia supported significant improvements in Samoa's health information system. This **included rollout of Tupaia (a data aggregation and visualisation tool) and Tamanu (a patient-level electronic medical record).** Tupaia is being used to track COVID-19 vaccine coverage across the country and digitise the national quarantine system and has the capacity to identify disease hotspots. Registration of COVID-19 vaccines is more efficient and accurate with Tamanu. Both systems have broader applicability: Tamanu will be used for registering other immunisations and noncommunicable disease screening and Tupaia can track other public health issues.

Our programs have also focused on other critical health needs. The Impact Project: Catalysing Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights has **supported access to sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) services for over 10,000 clients.** This included 7,355 women and 2,736 young people under 24. Through a budget support contribution, Australia provided wage support to nurses and midwives, to support increased primary health care and outreach services. This was at both the main Tupua Tamasese Meaole Hospital in Apia, as well as in district hospitals and clinics.

Through the Australia Assists program, **Australia deployed personnel in the reporting period to support the development of the Government of Samoa's integrated National Disaster Management Plan,** a key preparedness activity for both a COVID-19 outbreak as well as a natural disaster. This also included assistance in developing a system to provide updates on key COVID-19 statistics and trends, including active cases, tests conducted, and vaccinations administered. Through an Australian funded public health physician, quarantine management protocols were developed. Training was also conducted in quarantine management and use of personal protective equipment (PPE).

Stability

Australia increased support to women and girls, with a particular focus on gender-based violence (GBV). **Awareness initiatives and workshops were rolled out in 243 villages across Samoa, reaching 13,038 participants** and reinforced the role of women's councils in village governance. This activity was further assisted through the production of an interagency services guide, which supported greater awareness and coordination of available counselling and support services for vulnerable people, both within government and non-government organisations.

Impacts of the measles outbreak in 2019 and COVID-19 in 2020, and capacity constraints within the counterpart Ministry, resulted in the delayed implementation of the Samoa Disability Partnership Program by the Government of Samoa. Despite this, with Australian support, Samoa made good gains for the most vulnerable. Through the Ministry of Women, Social and Community Development, we supported Nuanua O Le Alofa, Samoa's national disability advocacy organisation, to ensure COVID-19 response plans were inclusive. This initiative also supported the Ministry of Health to

include sign language interpreters in media and television campaigns. In the reporting period, funding through **the Australian Humanitarian Partnership program ensured that around 750 people with disabilities received food supplies and hygiene products**. Food security was further supported through the PHAMA Plus program, which provided 327 farmer households with taro plants.

Australia worked in partnership with New Zealand to improve participation in, and the quality of, education in Samoa. Despite disruptions to the school year in early 2020, academic activity progressed uninterrupted in the reporting period. Through well-regarded initiatives like the Samoa School Innovations for Literacy, Numeracy and Science programme, efforts to **improve the quality of education remained a key priority**. Gains were made in strengthening information and computer technology systems across the sector in preparation for the introduction of a centralised Education Management Information System. Other priority strategic achievements include **commencement of the sector Climate Change and Disaster Risk Resilience strategy**, revision of the sector Research Strategy, and implementation of the National Teacher Competency Framework. In the reporting period, the number of students with disabilities enrolled at all levels increased and the Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture (MESC) began scaling up the Disability Champion School Initiative, piloted with Australian and New Zealand support. **Through the Australian Strategic Partnership in Remote Education**, the Queensland Department of Education worked closely with the MESC to review the remote learning practices Samoa put in place when COVID-19 forced school closures across the country in early 2020 and provided recommendations, which MESC is implementing.

Security continued to be a key focus. Through the Samoa-Australia Police Partnership, the Australian Federal Police worked with the Samoa Police, Prisons and Correction Services (SPPCS) to further strengthen SPPCS' leadership, management, corporate and technical capabilities, to maintain a safe and stable Samoa, including throughout COVID-19 and the national election. The Australian Defence Force continued to build Samoa's capability to police its borders and secure its exclusive economic zone, including fisheries. Through Australian funding, the first Samoa Computer Emergency Response Team was established to better support information security and management in government, particularly vital in COVID-19 preparedness and response as systems come under greater strain.

Economic recovery

Mitigating the economic impacts of COVID-19, charting a pathway to recovery, and ensuring Samoans have access to economic opportunities have been an important focus of Australia's support in 2020-21. In partnership with the World Bank, ADB and New Zealand, Australia provided budget support (totalling \$4 million) through the Joint Policy Action Matrix. Our support incentivised key socio-economic and fiscal policy reforms. These included the development of a tax invoice monitoring system, which resulted in increased revenue. Samoa also continued a commitment to responsible debt management, including a policy of no new external non-concessional borrowing. Notably, **through the Samoa Fiscal Resilience Program** and in partnership with other donors, the Government of Samoa commenced development of a **Social Protection Policy**, which will pave the way for measures to further support needs of the vulnerable.

The **Samoa Governance Support Program provided** critical advice to Government ministries to mitigate and address the impacts of COVID-19. An economic technical advisory support panel was able to provide senior levels of government with on-demand economic advice and expertise. This included **a advice on stimulus measures, and budget prioritisation to support the most vulnerable**. Other technical assistance supported a review of the minimum wage and associated amendments to legislation to ensure it is well focused to support those in need. The University of New South Wales delivered leadership and management training to the senior levels of the Samoa public service. This training focussed on equipping public service leaders with the skills and knowledge to respond to challenges, including service delivery obstacles, in the context of the demands presented by the COVID-19 environment.

Since the resumption of labour mobility with Samoa in April 2021, **over 1,000 Samoans have come to work in Australia** under the Seasonal Worker Programme and the Pacific Labour Scheme (as at 30 June 2021). Samoans are filling critical workforce shortages in Australia, earning Australian wages and gaining valuable on-the-job learning to take back home. In the reporting period, the Australia Pacific Training Coalition (APTC) delivered training to 330 students in a range of fields, including leadership and management, training, engineering and hospitality. This training provided opportunities to those out of work to retrain and for students to improve their employment and livelihood opportunities.

ANNEX 1: PROGRESS AGAINST COVID-19 RESPONSE PLAN RESULTS INDICATORS

Health Security

Key Results Indicators	Progress/Result
Number (and nature) of instances of strengthened health systems, including preparedness for emergencies and public health crises	<p>Supported the implementation of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Tupaia</i>, a data aggregation-visualisation tool, to track COVID-19 vaccine coverage, digitise the national quarantine scheme and identify disease hotspots - <i>Tamanu</i>, a patient level electronic medical record system for easier immunisation registration - the <i>M-supply</i> system to monitor pharmaceutical stock and prevent stockouts. <p>Supported the development of an updated National Epidemic and Pandemic Influenza Preparedness and Response Plan and a review of effective public health interventions.</p>
Evidence of improved response to health security threats	<p>Supported the implementation of a tailored online information management system to enable the collection, collation, analysis and dissemination of information in support of government planning and decision making.</p> <p>Supported the updating contact tracing protocols to ensure sufficient surge support in the event of an outbreak.</p> <p>Supported implementation of critical quarantine management protocols and PPE. These were integrated into Samoa's COVID-19 response.</p>
Number of people immunised with Australian support	Supported 51,756 people (or 42.5 per cent of eligible population) to be partially vaccinated and 7,891 (or 6.5 per cent of eligible population) to be vaccinated with AstraZeneca vaccine doses received through the COVAX AMC.
Number of women and men accessing SRHR services provided with Australian support	Supported 10,091 people (7,355 women and 2,736 youth) to receive SRHR services, an 18 per cent increase over pre-COVID-19 baseline of 8,215 for Australian-supported activities.
Total number of SRHR-related appointments held at frontline service units, provided with Australian support	Supported the delivery of 34,275 SRHR-related services at both static and mobile clinics.
Contraceptive protection from unplanned pregnancy made available through Australian support	Supported 348 Couple Protection Years ¹ .

¹ Couple Protection Years is the estimated protection provided by contraceptive methods during a one-year period, based upon the volume of all contraceptives sold or distributed free of charge to clients during that period.

Stability

Key Results Indicators	Progress/Result
Number (and nature) of instances of improved social protection-related policies and/or measures	<p>Supported the amendment of the Labour and Employment Relations Act to strengthen provisions against discrimination and child labour, and criteria for adjusting minimum wages.</p> <p>Supported vulnerable sectors and livelihoods through the COVID-19 stimulus package, including an unemployment benefit and a one-off senior citizens' benefit.</p> <p>Under the new Shelter Financing Project, commenced work to provide 115 new builds and 53 home refurbishments for 171 families.</p>
Number of women and girl survivors receiving support services	Supported 13,038 participants through active women's councils.
Number (and nature) of instances of improved policies and/or measures that seek to combat gender-based violence (GBV)	Supported the development and approval of the new Inter-agency Services Guide to provide a one-stop-shop for the coordination of services to victims of GBV.
Per centage of Year 4 and Year 6 students meeting a minimum Level 3 for literacy and numeracy	Government of Samoa is currently collating and refining data. This is expected to be released toward the end of 2021.
Number of students with disabilities enrolled at all levels	<p>Supported the enrolment of 373 students with disabilities at all levels (with data for National University of Samoa currently not available):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Early Childhood Education: 57 - Primary: 210 - Secondary: 57 - APTC: 38, and - Vocational: 11.
Per centage of schools implementing online learning plans	Supported 62 per cent of schools to implemented online learning plans.
Number (and nature) of instances of improved policies and/or measures that seek to improve education quality for all	<p>Supported the implementation of nine policies to improve education quality, including: the Samoa Child Care and Protection Policy; and the Climate Change and Disaster Resilience strategy.</p> <p>Supported the development of ICT strategies in preparation for the rollout of the Samoa Education Management Information System.</p> <p>Supported the finalisation of the National Standards Competency Framework to support MESC monitor and improve teacher standards.</p> <p>Supported a rapid response study to assess students' learning access during COVID-19 related disruptions.</p>

Number (and nature) of instances of improved food security-related policies and/or measures, including farmer resilience under climate change conditions and market challenges	Supported 450 families of people with disabilities (750 people with disabilities were reached). Supported food security and increased supply chains by purchasing 172,050 taro shoots from 36 farmer households, at an average price of \$0.27 per shoot, and re-distribution to 327 farmer households for replanting.
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Economic Recovery

Key Results Indicators	Progress/Result
Number (and nature) of instances of the Government of Samoa having adopted responsible and evidence-informed fiscal and economic measures that mitigate the impacts of COVID-19	Supported the development and implementation of the Government of Samoa's budget and stimulus packages in support of the most vulnerable and key sectors of the economy. Supported improvements for the Central Bank of Samoa's supervisory and regulatory settings. These improvements are designed to support more efficient financial services delivery, to reduce red tape and to improve integrity and sustainability.
Number (and nature) of instances of the Government of Samoa having adopted responsible and evidence-informed fiscal and economic measures that support inclusive growth and resilience	Supported implementation of 12 policy actions under the Joint Policy Action Matrix. This included improvements to the Tax Invoice Monitoring System which has increased revenue collection. Supported Government of Samoa to exercise sound debt management through a no new external non-concessional borrowing policy. Supported a study on renewable energy options to reduce whole-of-lifecycle costs for the Legislative Assembly Office (LAO) and Parliament House building. This provided a best practice model for future infrastructure to consider sustainable recurrent costs.
Number of people supported to have raised incomes and better jobs or livelihoods	Business Partnership Platform (BPP) and PHAMA Plus supported 536 people to raise their incomes, including 173 farmers who were able to achieve organic accreditation for their products through BPP, increasing their annual incomes from \$320 to \$350-\$360. Supported 330 students to complete training on education support, leadership and management, and fabrication.
Examples of partnering with the private sector and other partners to ensure supply lines are open	Supported the establishment of partnerships between Nuanua o le Alofa (the national organisation advocating for the rights of people with disabilities) and LAO to address disability access in the LAO building design. During the LAO construction, supported on-site training for 30 students undertaking Construction Certificate 1 and 2. Through the BPP, supported 950 farmers.
Australian budget support as a per centage of the partner country's domestic revenue	Australia provided budget support to the amount of 2.9 per cent of total domestic revenue in 2020-21.

ANNEX 2: INVESTMENT PERFORMANCE RATINGS

Investment Details	Year	Effectiveness	Efficiency	Gender
Samoa Education Sector Support Program – Phase 2 Investment duration: 2019-24; Budget: \$14.1m	2021	4	4	4
	2020	n/a	n/a	n/a
Samoa Parliament Complex Redevelopment Investment duration: 2012-22; Budget: \$13.2m	2021	3	4	2
	2020	5	4	3
Samoa Economic Infrastructure Program Investment duration: 2012-22; Budget: \$18.7m	2021	4	3	1
	2020	4	4	3
Samoa Health Program Investment duration: 2013-22; Budget: \$9.2m	2021	4	4	4
	2020	3	4	4
Women in Leadership in Samoa Investment duration: 2018-22; Budget: \$3.0m	2021	3	3	4
	2020	4	3	4
Samoa Fiscal Resilience Program Investment duration: 2018-22; Budget: \$10.0m	2021	5	5	1
	2020	5	5	3
Samoa Governance Support Program Investment duration: 2018-22; Budget: \$9.45m	2021	3	3	3
	2020	5	5	3
Samoa Disability Partnership Program Investment duration: 2019-23; Budget: \$4.3m	2021	2	2	2
	2020	4	4	3
Education Sector Support Program II Investment duration: 2019-24; Budget: \$15.1m	2021	4	4	4
	2020	n/a	n/a	n/a

FINAL INVESTMENT PERFORMANCE RATINGS

Investment Details	Year	Effectiveness	Efficiency	Gender
Education Sector Support Program – Phase 1 Investment duration: 2011-21; Budget: \$17.2m	2021 FIMR	3	3	2
	2020 IMR	4	3	3

Definitions of rating scale:

Satisfactory (4, 5 and 6)

6 = Very good; satisfies criteria in all areas.

5 = Good; satisfies criteria in almost all areas.

4 = Adequate; on balance, satisfies criteria; does not fail in any major area.

Less than satisfactory (1, 2 and 3)

3 = Less than adequate; on balance does not satisfy criteria and/or fails in at least one major area.

2 = Poor; does not satisfy criteria in major areas.

1 = Very poor; does not satisfy criteria in many major area.