



**Australian Government**  
**Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade**



**AUSTRALIA – KINGDOM OF TONGA  
DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP  
PLAN 2024–2029**

# Section 1: Introduction

## Australia's partnership with the Kingdom of Tonga

Australia's partnership with Tonga is anchored in shared values, respect and mutual benefit. The Tongan values of *Feveitokai'aki* (sharing and cooperating), *Falala'anga* (trust) and *Fefaka'apa'apa'aki* (mutual respect) characterise and guide our partnership. Our two countries hold enduring people-to-people links, nurtured through institutional, educational, cultural, church and sporting relationships and growing diaspora connections. In 2025, Australia and Tonga will celebrate 55 years of diplomatic relations, but our peoples share a much longer history.

As fellow members of the Pacific Islands Forum, Australia and Tonga recognise that our respective national interests are served by a strong and enduring bilateral partnership and a peaceful, stable and prosperous Pacific. At the request of the Tongan Government, Australia responded immediately following the COVID-19 pandemic and the 2022 Hunga Tonga-Hunga Ha'apai volcanic eruption and tsunami, contributing significantly to relief, recovery and reconstruction efforts.

Our partnership, however, is not limited to times of crises. We have a long history of working together to address shared social, economic and security priorities, including enhanced state resilience, improved human development and climate action. Australia remains Tonga's largest bilateral development partner and a trusted security partner through an extensive defence cooperation program and a long-established policing partnership.

## Purpose of the Development Partnership Plan

Australia's [International Development Policy](#) presents a long-term vision for how the development program will meet the critical needs of our partners, support sustainable development and help lift people out of poverty. Australia seeks relationships based on respect and partnerships that create economic and social value for us all. To achieve this, Australia supports our partners to:

- build effective, accountable states that drive their own development
- enhance state and community resilience to external pressures and shocks
- connect with Australia and regional architecture
- generate collective action on global challenges that impact us and our region.

The Australia – Tonga Development Partnership Plan 2024–2029 (DPP) translates into action the development priorities Australia shares with Tonga. The DPP sets out agreed objectives, how we will work together to deliver shared outcomes, and how progress will be monitored. It also identifies where Australia can add value to Tonga's national development priorities and how Australia will work with other development actors, ensuring the Australian Government contribution to Tonga's development ambitions is well coordinated.

The DPP reflects the full spectrum of Australia's development support – Australian Government bilateral Official Development Assistance (ODA) as well as significant regional and global ODA and non-ODA development activities. A commitment to ongoing dialogue and engagement with government and non-government actors in support of a genuine and respectful partnership underpins this DPP. A mid-cycle review of the DPP will be undertaken.

Our development partnership has grown considerably in recent years and Australia and Tonga are working closely in many sectors. Our development assistance has grown from \$24 million in 2014 to an estimated \$75 million in 2022–2023 – around one-quarter of all ODA to Tonga.

We will continue to invest in what we know is working, while making changes to reflect the needs and voices of Tongans and focus where Australia can truly make a positive and sustainable impact. We will:

- commit increased budget support to support Tonga's economic recovery, delivery of essential services and reduction of Tonga's rating as at high risk of debt distress



- increase investment and policy engagement with renewable energy, aviation and communications authorities and service providers, as enablers of connectivity for Tongans and economic growth
- deliver greater resources to local communities to adapt to and manage climate risks
- maintain significant investment in health services, realising our 20-year commitment to health systems strengthening
- finalise legacy investments in education infrastructure and renew efforts to improve supply of demand-driven, flexible and inclusive skills training to address shortages in the domestic market
- deepen our ties with security agencies to prevent transnational and serious organised crime and strengthen cybersecurity, recognising the importance to resilience, economic development and national security
- increase assistance to improve the coverage and effectiveness of Tonga's formal social protection systems
- provide long-term and core funding to civil society organisations advocating and providing services for gender equality and people with disability
- build greater partnerships and exchanges between Tongan and Australian institutions to address shared challenges.

We will maintain our level of investment in scholarships and agriculture. We will continue to build on our strong people-to-people links and shared values, including our mutual love of sports. Our broad development cooperation is reflective of our enduring commitment to Tonga's development needs and our many shared interests. This DPP seeks to make our already strong relationship even stronger.

## Preparing the Development Partnership Plan

More than 200 stakeholders across Tonga and Australia were consulted in the drafting of this DPP. These included government officials, Australia Awards alumni, community leaders, development partners, members of Tonga's Privy Council, think tanks, academia, organisations of persons with disability, women's rights groups, businesses and church groups. Staff from the Australian High Commission in Nuku'alofa travelled to all island groups in Tonga to discuss development challenges and opportunities with governors and local leaders. Consultations were undertaken through formal and informal dialogue, using the Tongan concept of *talatalanoa* (ongoing conversations). Noting that the DPP is being developed concurrently with the next phase of the *Tonga Strategic Development Framework 2015–2025* (TSDF),<sup>1</sup> we consulted closely with the Tongan Prime Minister's Office to ensure alignment with national priorities.

Partners highlighted the ongoing relevance and importance of our health systems strengthening partnership, infrastructure investments, scholarships program, security partnerships, and aviation and energy sector support. Our prioritisation of support for civil society, especially women's rights organisations, was highlighted as a strength of Australia's development assistance. Stakeholders noted that Tonga's progress towards gender equality and social inclusion to date was in large part due to donor funding and interest, particularly from Australia, and that this should be maintained. Direct financial assistance to government, through budget support, remains the preferred modality of support for the Government of Tonga.

Stakeholders called for greater efforts to increase the reach and visibility of Australia's development efforts across all Tonga's islands. They also called for efforts to improve the ease of doing business, increased infrastructure investment, and greater action in response to Tonga's vulnerability to, and the compounding effects of, disasters. A more holistic approach to addressing the impacts of labour mobility and illicit drug use across the community were raised. Strengthening maritime security to address trafficking and illegal and unregulated fishing also remained a priority.

## Section 2: Tongan development context and Australian partnership

The Kingdom of Tonga is a small Polynesian country of approximately 106,000 people (as of 2022). It is comprised of more than 170 islands (36 inhabited), which are divided into four main island groups, with most Tongans living on the main island of Tongatapu. In 2021, around half the population was aged under 20. More than 40,000 Australians identify as having Tongan ancestry, and Tonga's diaspora in Australia, New Zealand and the United States play a strong role in Tonga's development through remittances.<sup>2</sup>

The TSDF articulates a vision for a more progressive Tonga supporting higher quality of life for all. Its priorities include human development, gender equality, good governance, effective land administration, environment management, improved infrastructure and technology, and balanced urban and rural development across island groups.<sup>3</sup> The TSDF also focuses on Tonga's advancement of its national interests, security and sovereignty in the Pacific and globally. Tonga plays a significant role in regional and global affairs. The Prime Minister of Tonga is the Chair of the Pacific Islands Forum (2024–2025). Tonga hosts the Polynesian sub-office of the Pacific Community (SPC) and will host the Pacific Games in 2031.

With a gross national income of TOP10,645 per person in 2021, Tonga is an upper-middle-income country. It has achieved a relatively high Human Development Index value of 0.739, extreme poverty has been virtually eradicated, access to safe water and sanitation is reasonably secure, and gender parity has been achieved in basic education. Tonga's formal social protection system reaches more than 6,000 recipients who are older or have disability, and is complemented by strong community safety nets.<sup>4</sup>

Tonga has some of the best health outcomes in the Pacific and has achieved substantial reductions in communicable diseases and maternal and child mortality. However, Tonga continues to grapple with a growing burden of non-communicable diseases, which account for eight in 10 deaths. Over 80 per cent of women live with obesity, and the growth rate of obesity in young girls is among the highest in the world. Strains on the health system and the national economy as a result of the growing burden of non-communicable diseases are worsening.<sup>5</sup>

Tonga is among the top five labour sending countries under the Pacific Australia Labour Mobility (PALM) scheme. Tonga is also part of the Pacific Engagement Visa scheme, a new Australian permanent resident visa program. In 2024–25, 300 places were reserved for Tongan citizens and their families. Remittances from labour mobility workers are an important source of income for Tongan households and most Tongans believe that seasonal work is good for families and business. However, emphasis is now on balancing labour mobility opportunities with domestic market needs. Although labour is available, there is a national skills shortage in Tonga, driven by a lack of technical and vocational education and training options across many sectors, permanent migration, adverse workplace conditions and regional temporary employment schemes.

Like many other Pacific island countries, Tonga faces significant structural constraints to economic growth and employment creation. These include its geographic remoteness; its dependence on climate-sensitive sectors such as agriculture, fisheries and tourism; the small size of its domestic markets; its reliance on imports and remittances; and limited population growth. Consecutive climate and natural hazards are having compounding impacts.

Investments in public works and infrastructure, including maintenance, remain a priority. The *Tonga National Infrastructure Investment Plan 2021–2030* identifies 148 priority projects to enable economic growth,<sup>6</sup> but most remain unfunded. The International Monetary Fund forecasts long-term growth at only 1.2 per cent.<sup>7</sup> The 2022 Worldwide Governance Indicators data<sup>8</sup> tell a mixed picture of state effectiveness. Tonga's civil service is the largest employer in Tonga. However, its capacity is limited, with gaps in systems, processes and policy.

Government activity plays a strong role in the Tongan economy, with public services contributing to more than half of gross domestic product (GDP).<sup>9</sup> Recent shocks have driven account deficits for the Tongan Government, mitigated primarily by development financing from partners. The country has been assessed as being at high risk of

debt distress by the International Monetary Fund.<sup>10</sup> The Government of Tonga's navigation of its debt burden, particularly its repayments to the Export–Import Bank of China, will have a significant impact on public finances. Through the recently revised Public Financial Management Roadmap 2024–29, the Government of Tonga has committed to improve operational and allocative efficiency and transparency. The establishment of an Anti-Corruption Commissioner in 2024 demonstrates a commitment to reform.

Tonga is one of three Pacific island countries to have a defence force and remains committed to building a professional and accountable police force. Tonga's large Exclusive Economic Zone of 700,000 km<sup>2</sup> poses a complex set of security challenges, including transnational and organised crime and illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing.

## **Climate change**

Tonga is rated as one of the most at-risk countries to the impacts of climate change and natural disasters. Climate modelling predicts more heatwaves and drought impacting human health and agricultural productivity; sea level rise exacerbating inundation events, erosion and saline intrusion of freshwater lenses; intensified cyclones causing widespread damage; and ocean acidification and warming impacting local fisheries. On average, Tonga experiences 17 tropical cyclones per decade and events have become more intense in recent times. Eight in 10 Tongans live within 1 km of the coast.<sup>11</sup> Houses, community infrastructure, agricultural infrastructure, tourism infrastructure, and other infrastructure and assets are very exposed to coastal hazards such as cyclones as well as sea level rise, inundation and flooding. Despite some progress, climate resilient critical infrastructure and services are generally lacking.

Natural disasters and climate change impacts are expected to continue to adversely affect economic growth, worsen fiscal and external sustainability, set back development goals, undermine the business environment and increase already high debt levels. Global Climate Risk ranks Tonga as having experienced the fourth greatest loss per unit GDP in percentage from climate-related events since 1999.<sup>12</sup> The 2022 Hunga Tonga-Hunga Ha'apai volcanic eruption and tsunami caused damages and losses equivalent to about 18.5 per cent of GDP.<sup>13</sup> Women, children and rural populations have historically been disproportionately affected by natural disasters and climate change.

Tonga has a strong commitment to climate action and a strategic climate and disaster policy framework. Despite Tonga's negligible contribution to global greenhouse gas emissions, its second Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) to the Paris Agreement includes a transition to 70 per cent renewable electricity by 2030.<sup>14</sup> National commitments are being translated to meaningful action through initiatives such as the Tonga Climate Change Trust Fund, which will provide financial support for community-based adaptation and mitigation. However, Tonga faces an estimated USD289 million climate financing gap to 2030.<sup>15</sup>

To support Tonga's climate change adaptation and mitigation priorities, Australia will deepen efforts to integrate climate considerations across the development program, capitalising on the strength of our partnerships built over many years. A focus will be on supporting communities to adapt to and manage climate risks facing their wellbeing, livelihoods and assets, including through a new national and locally led partnership for climate resilient communities. We will also support underlying resilience through assistance to strengthen social protection systems and through efforts to address gender and social inequalities. We will build targeted strategies for climate-induced environmental hazards and natural disasters into our health systems strengthening partnership. We will also continue to support the capacity of the National Disaster Risk Management Office and build humanitarian response capabilities. We will support development of the Tonga Agriculture Sector Plan 2024–2029 as the basis for a climate resilient agriculture sector.

Australia will support Tonga's efforts to accelerate progress towards renewable energy targets by investing in renewable energy projects and projects to reduce diesel use. This will be complemented by access to technical

support, investment in vocational training in emerging green sectors and donor coordination to ensure a coherent portfolio of sustainable locally led initiatives. Australia's infrastructure investments in Tonga (such as a new parliament house and improved school infrastructure) will focus on climate resilience. Australia will continue to strengthen Tonga's fiscal position through increased budget support.

We will build on these investments by integrating climate change into all our programming. We will design all new programs to meet climate targets as set out in Australia's International Development Policy.

## **Gender equality, disability and social inclusion (GEDSI)**

Since 2000, the vision of successive Tongan Government policies has been to achieve gender equality by 2025. There has been some progress, including increased rates of enrolment in secondary education among girls, the enactment and implementation of the Family Protection Act, increased participation of women in business and increased levels of women's leadership in the civil service. Dedicated and persistent local champions and organisations have been key to progress. However, significant barriers to achieving gender equality remain, including gendered cultural norms, limited representation in leadership and political roles, family and gender-based violence, and impediments to exercising sexual and reproductive health rights and acquiring land. Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, intersex, asexual and identity-diverse (LGBTQIA+) people, including the *fakaleiti* community, experience exclusionary and discriminatory practices.

Although Tonga has committed to supporting people with disability, it is the only Pacific island country yet to ratify the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. People with disability continue to face challenges around access to inclusive education and health care, employment opportunities and essential services as well as inclusion in decision-making processes. This is exacerbated by a lack of sustainable funding to organisations of persons with disability.

Tonga's economic growth and continued prosperity need more people engaged in the domestic labour market. Women are more highly educated, under-utilised and less likely to emigrate than men. People with disability are also under-utilised and capable and willing to work more than they are currently given the opportunity to.

In line with Tonga and Australia's shared development commitments, we will work together to advance gender equality, disability and social inclusion (GEDSI), and to diversify economic, social and political opportunities for all Tongans. Australia is a long-term advocate and supporter of GEDSI. We will continue our capacity building to support the National Women's Machinery and the Disability and Social Protection Division to lead efforts across government to implement national GEDSI policies and commitments. For more than a decade, we have provided core funding to social service providers for victim/survivors of family violence. We will continue to prioritise long-term support for these providers while also increasing preventive efforts and shifting harmful social norms. We will work with government and civil society to address concerning rates of cyber-facilitated sexual harassment and bullying.

Non-government organisations are connected to their communities and are best placed to bring about locally led changes that build legitimacy and sustain changes in attitudes, behaviours and power relations. Australia will provide core funding and organisational support to peak GEDSI organisations. We will promote and incentivise collaboration and coordination across government and civil society, including through an expanded governance partnership. We will continue to have respectful dialogue on Tonga's engagement with international human rights frameworks, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

Our regional programs will continue to support coalitions and build in gender equality and disability inclusion. The Pacific Women Lead program (2021–2026) will complement bilateral efforts by investing in women's leadership, rights and economic empowerment. Our defence and policing cooperation programs will continue dedicated activities to recruit and support women to succeed in male-dominated sectors.

## Section 3: Joint objectives of the Australia – Kingdom of Tonga development partnership

The overarching goal for the Australia – Tonga development partnership is a peaceful, stable and prosperous Tonga. This is shown in our development partnership objectives and how we will work together to progress each objective, as summarised in Table 1 and set out in detail later in this section. The objectives draw on Australian expertise, partner priorities and our longstanding partnerships. The outcomes support the implementation of the TSDf and align with the *2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent*.<sup>16</sup> While Table 1 shows the objectives and outcomes in pillars, there are clear linkages and synergies across outcomes and objectives, with many investments contributing to multiple areas of the partnership.

**Table 1: Australia – Kingdom of Tonga development partnership**

**Goal: A peaceful, stable and prosperous Tonga**

| Objective   | Objective 1   | Objective 2  | Objective 3  |
|-------------|---|--|--|
|             | Improving national resilience to climate change impacts, disasters and security challenges  | Strengthening fiscal stability, accountable governance and economic performance  | Enhancing health, gender equality and social outcomes for all Tongans  |
| Outcomes    | <p>Outcome 1.1</p> <p>Inclusive, long-term climate action: Government has increased capability to anticipate, respond and adapt to climate change impacts and disasters</p> <p>Outcome 1.2</p> <p>Resilient communities: Communities have increased capability to anticipate, respond and adapt to climate change impacts and disasters, including through improved social protection systems</p> <p>Outcome 1.3</p> <p>Security partnerships: Government agencies benefit from enhanced policing, military, maritime, border and cybersecurity cooperation</p> | <p>Outcome 2.1</p> <p>Public sector performance and fiscal stability: The Government of Tonga improves public financial management and the effectiveness of the public sector</p> <p>Outcome 2.2</p> <p>Economic opportunity: Tongans, including women and people with disability, secure economic and social benefit from participating in regional opportunities, including labour mobility</p> <p>Outcome 2.3</p> <p>Resilient infrastructure: Economic activity is increased through higher quality, climate resilient critical infrastructure and economic services</p> | <p>Outcome 3.1</p> <p>Health services: Tonga has a more effective and accessible health system delivering essential and quality health services</p> <p>Outcome 3.2</p> <p>Skills: Tongans, including women and people with disability, gain new or improved skills that are aligned with the needs of the domestic labour market</p> <p>Outcome 3.3</p> <p>Safety and inclusive leadership: More women, girls, people with disability and civil society organisations are respected, listened to, represented and able to influence decision-making at different levels of society</p> |
| Focus areas | <p>Objective 1 focus areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Renewable energy</li> <li>Resilience (humanitarian, disaster risk reduction and disaster risk management)</li> <li>Policing and defence cooperation</li> <li>Border integrity</li> <li>Cybersecurity</li> </ul>   | <p>Objective 2 focus areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public financial management</li> <li>Civil service reform</li> <li>Telecommunications</li> <li>Aviation</li> <li>Private sector development</li> <li>Infrastructure</li> <li>Trade</li> <li>Labour mobility</li> </ul>   | <p>Objective 3 focus areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Health services and system strengthening</li> <li>Australia Awards</li> <li>Technical and vocational education and training and skills</li> <li>Gender equality, disability and social inclusion</li> <li>Media</li> <li>Sport</li> </ul>  |

## Ways of working

We will work together to progress the objectives set out in Table 1 through:

- promoting locally led development
- enhancing engagement across all of Tonga's island groups
- integrating and elevating GEDSI and climate change
- facilitating mutually beneficial institutional partnerships and people-to-people linkages
- remaining flexible and adaptable to emerging priorities
- coordinating and maximising engagement with other development partners, including New Zealand and multilateral development banks.

## Objective 1: Improving national resilience to climate change impacts, disasters and security challenges

There is no prosperity without security and climate change remains the single greatest threat to the livelihoods, security and wellbeing of Tongans. Australia will continue working in partnership with the Government of Tonga and communities to enhance national resilience and advance security and sovereignty, in line with the TSDF's national outcomes related to improving climate resilience and advancing security and sovereignty.

Australia will support the Government of Tonga and communities to lead climate mitigation and adaptation. We will increase resources for Tonga's renewable energy transition and support it to achieve its NDC targets. This includes financing the Government of Tonga's rollout of battery and solar systems, ensuring sustainable maintenance, and the upgrade of the national grid and generator network in Tongatapu to enable future investment.

Recognising the large gap in meeting the estimated costs of financing for climate mitigation and adaptation, we will share climate finance expertise with Government of Tonga ministries to help plan and prepare for climate investment opportunities, structure finance and develop a portfolio of high-impact projects. We will continue existing programs to help build tools and collect data on climate, tides and the ocean to inform community and government decision-making. Australia will support communities to adapt to, and manage, climate risks through a new national community development program. This will support Tonga's villages to implement their development priorities across economic empowerment, rural development and small-scale infrastructure. We will integrate climate change resilience, adaptation and mitigation across all development investments.

Australia stands ready to provide humanitarian assistance in the event of a disaster. We will work with humanitarian partners to build the capacity and capability of Tonga's national humanitarian preparedness and response system. We will pre-position supplies and build new warehousing capabilities. Shifting away from ad hoc and event-specific responses, we will establish new long-term partnerships with local organisations for enhanced disaster preparedness, response and recovery. We will back locally led humanitarian action, with a focus on quality, predictable funding. Recognising the critical role of formal social protection systems, particularly in times of crisis, we will help Tonga strengthen the quality and coverage of its systems and support community outreach to increase access.

We will enhance security partnerships through the Australian Federal Police, Australian Defence Force and Australian Border Force, to build leadership and operational capacity in Tonga and the region to address shared challenges. Through the Tonga–Australia Policing Partnership, the Australian Federal Police and Tonga Police will continue to combat crime and prevent and respond to family violence. Together, we will enhance national security and support Tonga Police to deliver professional, trusted community policing services.



Through ongoing cooperation between the Australian Border Force and partner agencies, we will work together to strengthen the integrity of Tonga's air and land borders and maritime domains. Partners will increase information sharing and operational support and build capacity to counteract national security threats, and facilitate legitimate trade and revenue.

Cybersecurity cooperation will increase to build capability to protect networks that are increasingly under threat. Across policing and border security cooperation, we will help counteract transnational and serious organised crime.

Through defence cooperation, the Australian Defence Force will work to achieve shared security objectives, build capacity (including upgrades to critical infrastructure), enhance interoperability, and address common challenges, including upholding sovereignty and protecting resources. Cooperation in maritime security will continue to protect Tonga's critical maritime resources.

## **Objective 2: Strengthening fiscal stability, accountable governance and economic performance**

Tonga's economy is recovering after recent successive shocks. At high risk of debt distress and facing account deficits, Tonga has identified the need to strengthen public finances and administration, improve the business environment, and invest in improved infrastructure for productivity and growth. Australia will support these priorities, in line with the TSDF national outcomes related to strengthening inclusive good governance and improving infrastructure.

In recent years, increased levels of direct financial assistance to the Tongan Government have been critical to supporting Tonga's priorities and recovery efforts. This will be key to meeting Tonga's financing needs in the medium term. Our budget support in 2021–2022 amounted to 15 per cent of domestic revenue, ensuring the delivery of critical services such as health care and education. Australia will continue to provide Tonga with budget support, allowing it to take leadership of its own priorities as well as reducing the country's vulnerability to external shocks. The 2023 Assessment of National Systems affirmed that Tonga's systems are robust and there is a demonstrable commitment to continual improvement and lowering residual fiduciary risks. In partnership with New Zealand, the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank and the European Union, we will use the Joint Policy Reform Matrix mechanism to facilitate budget support payments aligned with the delivery of priority policy reforms. We will sharpen our focus on public sector performance, debt management, revenue mobilisation and climate resilience. We will support the Government of Tonga to take greater ownership of policy-setting, particularly in alignment with its Public Financial Management Reform Roadmap 2024–2029. We may consider performance-based budget support in addition to the Joint Policy Reform Matrix. This may focus on implementation of agreed reforms, social protection, governance and performance of state-owned enterprises, and quality infrastructure.

Australia will continue to use technical assistance and explore institutional partnerships to strengthen government systems in Tonga, including supporting civil service reform, procurement policy reform and public financial management reform. We will also increase efforts to enhance public accountability, integrity and oversight mechanisms. Australia will maintain its assistance to the Tonga Electoral Commission to support it to successfully plan and conduct local and national elections.

Access to regional opportunities, particularly the PALM scheme, will remain important for household incomes and economic activity in Tonga. Australia will increase its support to the Government of Tonga to harness the development benefits of labour mobility. We will explore how we can improve labour mobility outcomes to meet Tonga's needs and priorities, balancing the economic benefits with social and labour market concerns. We will do more to facilitate greater inclusivity among participants in the scheme. The Pacific Engagement Visa will grow the Tongan diaspora in Australia with ongoing connections to the Kingdom of Tonga – strengthening people-to-people links – and encourage greater cultural, business and educational exchange.

We will deliver infrastructure support, recognising the importance of improved infrastructure for economic productivity and growth, as well as improved access to and quality of services. The Australian Infrastructure Financing Facility for the Pacific will play a significant role in nation-building infrastructure for Tonga and opening new forms of development finance. Confirmed projects include the redevelopment of the Queen Salote International Wharf (together with the Asian Development Bank); construction of a modern, functional, inclusive and climate resilient parliament house (with New Zealand); and construction of a second international telecommunications cable to provide redundancy (also with New Zealand). We will maintain investments in social infrastructure, including education, policing and health projects.

Tourism and agriculture remain important sectors for economic performance, reflected through regional investments and expansion of commercial agriculture opportunities. We will continue targeted assistance to the aviation sector to improve domestic connectivity and the quality and reliability of the aviation sector, to maximise economic opportunities, particularly for tourism. We will explore catalytic investments for private sector development and trade, including in agricultural value chains.

### **Objective 3: Enhancing health, gender equality and social outcomes for all Tongans**

Australia and Tonga are committed to building human capital, so that all Tongans can achieve their potential and drive economic growth. We will continue working with the Government of Tonga on this, in line with the TSDF's national outcomes related to balancing urban and rural development and empowering human development with gender equality.

Australia has committed to a 20-year partnership to support the realisation of universal health coverage in Tonga. We will continue to provide direct financing and technical support to improve the delivery of essential health services and address the non-communicable disease crisis. We will maintain funding for critical sexual and reproductive health services. The Partnerships for a Healthy Region initiative will support a more resilient and equitable Tongan healthcare system, including workforce development, digital health, and disease prevention and control. Recognising the role of other development partners, we will not explore future sectoral-level investments in water and sanitation.

Our engagement in education will shift. We will finalise legacy investments in basic education infrastructure and refocus to improve supply of demand-driven, flexible and inclusive skills initiatives to address shortages in the domestic market. Regional education investments will support broader education priorities.

Our Australia Awards program will support Tongans to advance their professional and academic skills through tertiary study in Australia and the Pacific. Since 2011, Australia has provided more than 600 opportunities for Tongans to study through the program, and we are committed to delivering scholarships for around 25 scholars annually. We will enhance our engagement with alumni, supporting lifelong learning and connections in support of Tonga's development.

Australia has a strong record of advocating for GEDSI. We will strengthen engagement with, and support for, people with disability through a new phase of bilateral disability support, including increased and core funding for organisations of persons with disability, strengthening organisational capacity and support for national policy redevelopment. We will use our partnerships to inform mainstreaming of disability inclusion – for example, in our new bilateral skills investments, we plan to integrate disability equity considerations across curriculums and improve accessibility for people with disability.

We will continue core funding to service providers and women's rights organisations addressing family and gender-based violence, women's leadership and girls' empowerment. We will provide similar support to peak LGBTQIA+ organisations. Families Free of Violence will remain a flagship project to strengthen the response to family violence across Tonga. We will support local partners to scale up violence prevention initiatives that seek to shift social

norms, ensuring resourcing for prevention and response. Policy engagement and technical support to the Tongan Government on gender equality will continue, with an increased emphasis on collaboration across non-government organisation and government partners.

As proud sporting nations, sport plays a critical role in connecting our people, promoting development and unity, building leadership skills and encouraging a healthy lifestyle. Our Team Up sport for development programs will continue to support women, girls and people with disability to benefit from participation in safe, inclusive and accessible sport programs. Through PacificAus Sports, Australian national sports organisations will continue to support Pacific athletes and teams across a range of sports, including rugby league, rugby union, netball and soccer. We offer pathways for talented athletes to engage with the Australian sport sector.

We recognise that a strong local civil society is foundational to development. We will provide additional support to Tonga's media sector to lift capacity, counter misinformation and disinformation, and increase public interest media content. We will continue to explore other partnerships, such as with think tanks and churches, to promote accountability and deliver services.

## Section 4: Delivering our partnership

### Locally led development

Locally led development is central to our development partnership with the Tongan Government and people of Tonga. We remain committed to embedding locally led development practices throughout our development partnership by:

- aligning our program with Tonga’s national development priorities, as articulated in the TSDF and associated national and sector plans
- using Government of Tonga national systems through the provision of budget support
- investing in institutions and individuals to enable local systems and partners to anticipate change, adapt to growth, take advantage of opportunities and cope with setbacks
- supporting and strengthening local non-government organisations by building their organisational capacity and providing core funding
- supporting entrepreneurship and the Tongan private sector through expanded trade facilitation and market development programs, particularly for agriculture and tourism, as well as economic reintegration programs for labour mobility participants
- focusing on local content and domestic supply chains through infrastructure investments
- maximising use of local and regional expertise throughout program consultation, design, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation
- ensuring regional programs delivering work in Tonga align their activities to Tonga’s development priorities and provide transparency and visibility of program activities and funding.

### First Nations engagement

We will explore opportunities to bring First Nations customs, knowledge and expertise to key issues and contribute to an inclusive approach to development. In 2024, this began with learning exchanges between service providers for victim/survivors of violence from Arnhem Land and Tonga. Further opportunities may include place-based climate adaptation and resilience or recognising and strengthening cultural connections to land. We will draw on connections across Tongan and First Nations art, music and sports to build meaningful relationships.

### Consultation

Australia and Tonga commit to engaging in regular stakeholder forums to shape priorities, discuss challenges, share learnings and update progress on the DPP. These forums will include a combination of formal and informal mechanisms. This will principally be through annual bilateral Senior Officials Talks, annual policing and defence cooperation talks, and a new bilateral development dialogue. However, it will also draw on discussions in the Government of Tonga-facilitated Annual Planners’ Forum, Annual Development Partners Forum and sector coordination meetings. The biannual Joint Policy Reform Matrix discussions also provide a valuable forum for development partners to understand public sector reform efforts underway in the context of budget support and to align support among development partners. Civil society and non-government organisation partners will be invited to participate in relevant six-monthly review and reflection exercises.

### Evaluation and learning

We commit to continuous learning and ensuring our development programming is locally informed, locally led and meets the needs of local people and institutions. Table 2 shows the investment- and portfolio-level reviews and



evaluations that will be completed in the first three years of the DPP (to which others may be added on an as-needed basis). We will conduct annual investment-level reviews but with increased focus on program-wide patterns so that we are better placed to anticipate and respond to emerging issues and opportunities. The outcomes from these processes will feed into robust independent reviews of major investments in their final year and the mid-term review of the DPP, scheduled for 2027. Each evaluation will have a learning and dissemination plan to explain how the findings will be used to support decision-making and improvement.

**Table 2: Consultation, evaluation and learning plan**

| Objective  | 2024–25  | 2025–26  | 2026–27   |
|--|--|--|---|
| <b>Objective 1</b><br>Improving national resilience to climate change impacts, disasters and security challenges | Independent evaluation of Australia’s contribution to the Tonga Outer Islands Renewable Energy Project<br><br>Mid-term review of Tonga–Australia Policing Partnership  | No formal reviews planned  | Mid-term review of bilateral humanitarian investment  |
| <b>Objective 2</b><br>Strengthening fiscal stability, accountable governance and economic performance            | Research on social impacts of temporary labour migration   | No formal reviews planned  | Mid-term review of bilateral governance investment  |
| <b>Objective 3</b><br>Enhancing health, gender equality and social outcomes for all Tongans                      | Review of Tonga Health Sector Support Program Phase 3<br><br>Independent evaluation of Australia Awards Tonga  | End-of-phase review of Families Free of Violence<br><br>Mid-term review of bilateral support to Women’s Affairs and Gender Equality Division | Mid-term review of Health Sector Support Program Phase 4  |
| <b>Cross-program</b>   | Independent review of the Tonga–Australia Support Platform<br><br>Annual Senior Officials Talks and development dialogue<br><br>Annual policing and defence cooperation talks<br><br>Biannual Joint Policy Reform Matrix (JPRM) dialogue | Annual Senior Officials Talks and development dialogue<br><br>Annual policing and defence cooperation talks<br><br>Biannual JPRM dialogue    | Mid-cycle review of development partnership plan<br><br>Annual Senior Officials Talks and development dialogue<br><br>Annual policing and defence cooperation talks<br><br>Biannual JPRM dialogue |

## Performance and results

The Performance Assessment Framework (PAF) at Table 3 provides a selection of indicators and expected results for the first three years of the DPP. The PAF will be updated periodically including at the mid-cycle review point, at which time indicators and results for the second half of the DPP will be identified.

**Table 3: Performance Assessment Framework**

### Objective 1: Improving national resilience to climate change impacts, disasters and security challenges

| Outcome   | Indicator  | Expected results 2024–25  | Expected results 2025–26  | Expected results 2026–27   | Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)   |
|---|--|---|---|--|--|
| <b>Outcome 1.1</b><br>Inclusive, long-term climate action: Government has increased capability to anticipate, respond and adapt to climate change impacts and disasters   | 1.1.1 Investments contribute to Tonga’s national renewable energy generation targets and to lower fossil fuel use                    | Renewable energy generation increases by 5%<br>Reliance on imported diesel reduces by 2%  | Renewable energy generation increases by a further 10%<br>Reliance on imported diesel reduces by a further 2%<br>Policy settings for off-grid renewable energy asset maintenance improved | Renewable energy generation increases by a further 10%<br>Reliance on imported diesel reduces by a further 2%<br>Improved capacity of Tongans to manage renewable energy systems | SDG7: Affordable and clean energy<br>SDG9: Industry, innovation and infrastructure |
| <b>Outcome 1.1</b>  | 1.1.2 Improved systems for Government of Tonga to respond to natural disasters   | New inventory management system for National Disaster Risk Management Office operational  | New coordination mechanism established between National Disaster Risk Management Office and civil society partners  | Construction started on new humanitarian warehouse in Vava’u   | SDG13: Climate action  |
| <b>Outcome 1.2</b><br>Resilient communities: Communities have increased capability to anticipate, respond and adapt to climate change impacts and disasters, including through improved social protection systems | 1.2.1 Number of Tongans with improved adaptation to climate change and resilience to disasters via community-led mechanisms (Tier 2) | At least 500 Tongans empowered to manage climate risks through implementation of their community development plans, disaggregated by gender | At least 1,000 additional Tongans empowered to manage climate risks through implementation of their community development plans, disaggregated by gender                                  | At least 2,000 additional Tongans empowered to manage climate risks through implementation of their community development plans, disaggregated by gender                         | SDG5: Gender equality<br>SDG10: Reduced inequalities<br>SDG13                      |

| Outcome            | Indicator  | Expected results 2024–25  | Expected results 2025–26   | Expected results 2026–27   | Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) |
|--------------------|--|---|--|--|--------------------------------------|
| <b>Outcome 1.2</b> | 1.2.2 Tongan Government supported to strengthen social protection systems (Tier 2) | Additional 500 Tongans reached with new or improved social protection programs, disaggregated by gender and disability<br><br>Operational review of the Social Welfare Scheme completed | Additional 500 Tongans reached with new or improved social protection programs, disaggregated by gender and disability<br><br>Improved delivery of the Social Welfare Scheme | Additional 500 Tongans reached with new or improved social protection programs, disaggregated by gender and disability<br><br>Improved delivery of the Social Welfare Scheme | SDG1: No poverty<br><br>SDG10        |

| Outcome  | Indicator  | Expected results 2024–25  | Expected results 2025–26   | Expected results 2026–27   | Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)          |
|--|--|---|--|--|---|
| <p><b>Outcome 1.3</b></p> <p>Security partnerships: Government agencies benefit from targeted policing, military, maritime, border and cybersecurity cooperation</p> | 1.3.1 Increased security cooperation across agencies | <p>At least 10 instances of joint defence training and exercises</p> <p>Improved police maritime capability and upgrade of custody cells on Tongatapu</p> <p>1 example of enhanced women’s leadership in Tonga Police, Customs Services and His Majesty’s Armed Forces (HMAF)</p> <p>300 police officers trained in crime prevention and family protection legislation</p> <p>50 officers across multiple agencies trained in border security and trade enforcement</p> <p>Enhanced maritime capability for Customs Services</p> <p>Improved equipment for border security agencies in aviation and maritime environments</p> <p>Bilateral memorandum of understanding established between Australian Border Force and Customs Services</p> | <p>At least 12 instances of joint defence training and exercises</p> <p>Improved police transnational crime, forensic and cyber capability</p> <p>1 example of enhanced women’s leadership in Tonga Police, Customs Services and HMAF</p> <p>400 police officers trained in crime prevention and family protection legislation</p> <p>60 officers across multiple agencies trained in border security and trade enforcement</p> <p>Improved equipment for border security agencies in aviation and maritime environments</p> | <p>At least 14 instances of joint defence training and exercises</p> <p>Improved police transnational crime, forensic and cyber capability</p> <p>1 example of enhanced women’s leadership in Tonga Police, Customs Services and HMAF</p> <p>500 police officers trained in crime prevention and family protection legislation</p> <p>70 officers across multiple agencies trained in border security and trade enforcement</p> <p>Improved equipment for border security agencies in aviation and maritime environments</p> | SDG16: Peace, justice and strong institutions |



**Objective 2: Strengthening fiscal stability, accountable governance and economic performance**

| Outcome  | Indicator   | Expected results 2024–25   | Expected results 2025–26  | Expected results 2026–27   | Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)  |
|--|---|--|---|--|---|
| <p><b>Outcome 2.1</b></p> <p>Public sector performance and fiscal stability: The Government of Tonga improves public financial management and the effectiveness of the public sector</p> | <p>2.1.1 Economic and public financial management reform advanced through policy and technical advice (Tier 2)</p>          | <p>Public Financial Management Act approved by the Parliament of Tonga</p> <p>Percentage of Joint Policy Reform Matrix (JPRM) actions met or on track</p>                        | <p>Improved policy settings in debt and budget management, revenue mobilisation and transparency of public expenditure</p> <p>Percentage of JPRM actions met or on track</p>  | <p>Improved policy settings in debt and budget management, revenue mobilisation and transparency of public expenditure</p> <p>Percentage of JPRM actions met or on track</p> | <p>SDG8: Decent work and economic growth</p> <p>SDG16: Peace, justice and strong institutions</p> |
| <p><b>Outcome 2.1</b></p>  | <p>2.1.2 Tonga reduces its level of debt distress (Tier 1)</p>  | <p>External debt level as a percentage of gross domestic product (GDP) decreases to below 40%</p>  | <p>External debt level as a percentage of GDP decreases to below 35%</p>  | <p>External debt level as a percentage of GDP decreases to below 30%</p>   | <p>SDG8, SDG16</p>  |
| <p><b>Outcome 2.1</b></p>  | <p>2.1.3 Organisations and government accountability institutions supported, including electoral and audit institutions</p> | <p>Improved preparedness of Tongan Government agencies to deliver national elections</p> <p>Instances of civil society engagement in national budgetary processes or reforms</p> | <p>Tongan Government agencies supported to deliver national general elections in 2025</p> <p>New partnerships developed to strengthen accountability and transparency in government systems, policy reform and implementation</p> | <p>Relevant ministries supported to strengthen accountability and transparency in government systems, policy reform and implementation</p>                                   | <p>SDG8, SDG16</p>  |

| Outcome   | Indicator   | Expected results 2024–25  | Expected results 2025–26   | Expected results 2026–27   | Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)  |
|---|---|---|--|--|---|
| <b>Outcome 2.2</b><br>Economic opportunity: Tongans, including women and people with disability, secure economic and social benefit from participating in regional opportunities, including labour mobility | 2.2.1 Number of Pacific Australia Labour Mobility (PALM) workers and PALM remittance flows per year (Tier 2)    | Total value of remittance flows from PALM workers to Tonga maintained<br><br>Number of Tongan PALM workers maintained or increased<br><br>Women’s representation in PALM increased<br><br>Social support program introduced for Tonga PALM workers and families | Total value of remittance flows from PALM workers to Tonga maintained<br><br>Number of Tongan PALM workers maintained or increased<br><br>Women’s representation in PALM increased | Total value of remittance flows from PALM workers to Tonga maintained<br><br>Number of Tongan PALM workers maintained or increased<br><br>Women’s representation in PALM increased | SDG8, SDG16   |
| <b>Outcome 2.3</b><br>Resilient infrastructure: Economic activity is increased through higher quality, climate resilient critical infrastructure and economic services                                      | 2.3.1 Number of Tongans accessing jobs created by new infrastructure projects, disaggregated by gender (Tier 2) | At least 50 local jobs created by Australian-funded infrastructure projects, at least 30% of which are for women  | An additional 50 local jobs created by Australian-funded infrastructure projects, at least 30% of which are for women  | No target available, as this will be contingent on future programming  | SDG1: No poverty<br>SDG8<br>SDG9: Industry, innovation and infrastructure<br>SDG10: Reduced inequalities<br>SDG17: Partnerships for the goals |

| Outcome            | Indicator   | Expected results 2024–25   | Expected results 2025–26   | Expected results 2026–27   | Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)   |
|--------------------|---|--|--|--|--|
| <b>Outcome 2.3</b> | 2.3.2 Number of infrastructure projects supported that meet Pacific Quality Infrastructure Principles, G20 Principles for Quality Infrastructure Investments or similar internationally agreed standards (Tier 2) | All Australian-supported infrastructure meets Pacific Quality Infrastructure Principles, G20 Principles for Quality Infrastructure Investments or similar internationally agreed standards | All Australian-supported infrastructure meets Pacific Quality Infrastructure Principles, G20 Principles for Quality Infrastructure Investments or similar internationally agreed standards<br><br>Completion of Nuku’alofa Port Upgrade Project<br><br>Completion of Tonga Hawaiki Branch System Project | All Australian-supported infrastructure meets Pacific Quality Infrastructure Principles, G20 Principles for Quality Infrastructure Investments or similar internationally agreed standards | SDG8, SDG9, SDG10, SDG17   |
| <b>Outcome 2.3</b> | 2.3.3 Improved transport, communications and energy sector projects, policies and capacity  | Tongatapu electricity network losses reduced to below 10%<br><br>2 projects in aviation established  | Unplanned electricity outages reduced by 20%<br><br>Container capacity at the international port increased to 45,000 20-foot equivalent units<br><br>Second international telecommunications cable<br><br>2 additional projects in aviation established  | At least 500 households have improved access to electricity on Tongatapu<br><br>2 additional projects in aviation  | SDG7: Affordable and clean energy<br><br>SDG8, SDG9<br><br>SDG11: Sustainable cities and communities |

**Objective 3: Enhancing health, gender equality and social outcomes for all Tongans**

| Outcome   | Indicator  | Expected results 2024–25   | Expected results 2025–26  | Expected results 2026–27  | Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)                              |
|---|--|--|---|---|---|
| <p><b>Outcome 3.1</b></p> <p>Health services: Tonga has a more effective and accessible health system delivering essential and quality health services</p>                              | <p>3.1.1 Improved health system capacity to provide quality, accessible, affordable health services (Tier 2)</p>         | <p>Improved diagnosis and/or treatment for 5,000 people in Tonga’s outer islands through increased outreach services</p> <p>400 health professionals trained</p>                   | <p>Improved delivery of the essential services package compared with 2023 baseline</p> <p>Non-communicable disease behavioural change interventions reach 13,000 people</p> <p>Vava’u hospital redevelopment project on track</p> | <p>Improved delivery of the essential services package compared with 2023 baseline</p> <p>Non-communicable disease behavioural change interventions reach 15,000 people</p> <p>Vava’u hospital redevelopment project on track</p> | <p>SDG3: Good health and wellbeing</p>                            |
| <p><b>Outcome 3.1</b></p>   | <p>3.1.2 Uptake of contraceptive protection from unplanned pregnancies (Tier 2)</p>                                      | <p>15.8% of women of reproductive age using a modern method of contraception</p>   | <p>16.8% of women of reproductive age using a modern method of contraception</p>  | <p>17.8% of women of reproductive age using a modern method of contraception</p>  | <p>SDG3</p>   |
| <p><b>Outcome 3.2</b></p> <p>Skills: Tongans, including women and people with disability, gain new or improved skills that are aligned with the needs of the domestic labour market</p> | <p>3.2.1 Number of Tongans who successfully complete a technical/vocational course or work-related training (Tier 2)</p> | <p>At least 20 technical and vocational education and training (TVET) students or long-term PALM workers complete a TVET qualification, disaggregated by gender and disability</p> | <p>At least 100 TVET students or long-term PALM workers complete a TVET qualification, disaggregated by gender and disability</p>   | <p>At least 200 TVET students or long-term PALM workers complete a TVET qualification, disaggregated by gender and disability</p>   | <p>SDG4: Quality education</p> <p>SDG10: Reduced inequalities</p> |



| Outcome   | Indicator   | Expected results 2024–25   | Expected results 2025–26  | Expected results 2026–27  | Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) |
|---|---|--|---|---|--------------------------------------|
| <b>Outcome 3.2</b>  | 3.2.2 Number of Tongans who are awarded a tertiary scholarship to study in Australia or the Pacific   | More than 25 scholarships offered annually   | More than 22 scholarships offered annually<br><br>Progress towards equal distribution of scholarships by gender (currently 30% of recipients are male and 70% female) | More than 22 scholarships offered annually<br><br>Progress towards equal distribution of scholarships by gender (currently 40% of recipients are male and 60% female) | SDG4, SDG10                          |
| <b>Outcome 3.2</b>  | 3.2.3 Number and percentage of alumni participating in mutual collaborations between Tonga and Australia, after completion of an Australia Award (Tier 2) | At least 30 alumni participate in collaborations   | At least 50 alumni participate in collaborations  | At least 70 alumni participate in collaborations  | SDG4, SDG10                          |
| <b>Outcome 3.3</b><br><br>Safety and inclusive leadership: More women, girls, people with disability and civil society organisations are respected, listened to, represented and able to influence decision-making at different levels of society | 3.3.1 Official Development Assistance funding channelled to Women’s Equality Organisations and Institutions in Tonga (Tier 2)                             | \$1 million  | \$1.2 million   | \$1.4 million   | SDG5: Gender equality                |
| <b>Outcome 3.3</b>  | 3.3.2 Improved services provided to victim/survivors of sexual and gender-based violence (Tier 2)   | 1,300 services provided annually<br><br>Increased community awareness of Family Protection Act | 1,350 services provided annually<br><br>Improved case management and referral network operations  | 1,400 services provided annually  | SDG5                                 |

| Outcome            | Indicator   | Expected results 2024–25  | Expected results 2025–26  | Expected results 2026–27  | Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) |
|--------------------|---|---|---|---|--------------------------------------|
| <b>Outcome 3.3</b> | 3.3.3 Improved policy settings for inclusion  | Revised national gender equality policy   | Revised national disability policy  | No target available, as this will be contingent on future programming   | SDG5, SDG10                          |
| <b>Outcome 3.3</b> | 3.3.4. Women and people with disability participating in local and national processes | <p>Women and people with disability participating in development of community development plans</p> <p>2 organisations of persons with disability receiving capacity building support</p> <p>1 example of a civil society organisation leading activities influencing policy or service delivery improvements</p> | <p>Increased number of women and people with disability participating in development of community development plans</p> <p>3 organisations of persons with disability receiving capacity building support</p> | <p>Increased number of women and people with disability participating in development of community development plans</p> <p>2 examples of civil society organisations leading activities influencing policy or service delivery improvements</p> | SDG5, SDG10                          |

## Cross-program

| Theme           | Indicator  | Expected results 2024–25    | Expected results 2025–26    | Expected results 2026–27    | Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)  |
|-----------------|--|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| Gender equality | Gender effectiveness aggregate investment monitoring report ratings  | 75%                         | 77%                         | 80%                         | SDG5: Gender equality<br>SDG10: Reduced inequalities  |
| Climate change  | Percentage of new Tonga investments over \$3 million that have a climate change objective (Tier 3)                       | 60% of all new investments  | 70% of all new investments  | 80% of all new investments  | SDG7: Affordable and clean energy<br>SDG11: Sustainable cities and communities<br>SDG13: Climate action |
| Localisation    | Number and dollar value of local contracts and grants (local supply chains) – Managing Contractors (Tier 3)              | Results collected centrally | Results collected centrally | Results collected centrally | SDG1: No poverty<br>SDG10<br>SDG17: Partnerships for the goals  |
| Localisation    | Percentage of bilateral investment designs and evaluations that include local participation (Tier 3)                     | 80%                         | 85%                         | 90%                         | SDG10, SDG17  |
| Localisation    | Total direct financing to partner government as a percentage of total bilateral Official Development Assistance (Tier 2) | At least 30%                | At least 30%                | At least 30%                | SDG17   |
| Disability      | Percentage of Tonga development investments that effectively address disability equity in implementation (Tier 3)        | 40%                         | 50%                         | 60%                         | SDG10   |

| Theme           | Indicator   | Expected results<br>2024–25 | Expected results<br>2025–26 | Expected results<br>2026–27 | Sustainable Development<br>Goals (SDGs) |
|-----------------|---|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| Program quality | Percentage of investments that are assessed as satisfactory on both the effectiveness and efficiency criteria in the investment monitoring reporting process (Tier 3) | 75%                         | 80%                         | 85%                         | SDG1, SDG10, SDG17                      |

## Annex 1: Supporting investments/activities in the Kingdom of Tonga

Australian Government supporting investments/activities for Objective 1 – improving national resilience to climate change impacts, disasters and security challenges (bilateral Official Development Assistance (ODA) as well as significant regional and global ODA, and significant non-ODA development investments/activities)

| Name of investment/activity  | Duration | Key partners  |
|--|----------|---|
| Tonga Renewable Energy Stabilisation package<br>(bilateral)          | 2024–27  | Tonga Power Limited; Tongan Government Ministry of Public Enterprises                             |
| Defence Cooperation Program<br>(bilateral)                           | Ongoing  | Australian Government Department of Defence; Australian Defence Force; His Majesty’s Armed Forces |
| Pacific Maritime Security Program<br>(regional)                      | Ongoing  | Australian Government Department of Defence; Australian Defence Force; His Majesty’s Armed Forces |
| Tonga–Australia Policing Partnership<br>(bilateral)                  | Ongoing  | Australian Federal Police; Tonga Police   |
| Border security partnership<br>(bilateral)                           | Ongoing  | Australian Border Force; Tongan Government Ministry of Finance, Revenue and Customs               |
| Partnerships for Social Protection<br>(regional)                     | 2021–25  | Tongan Government Ministry of Internal Affairs; Tongan Government Ministry of Finance             |
| Tonga–Australia partnership for resilient communities<br>(bilateral) | 2024–29  | Mainstreaming of Rural Development Innovation Tonga Trust   |
| Humanitarian preparedness, recovery and response<br>(bilateral)      | 2025–29  | To be determined  |
| Pacific Humanitarian Warehousing Program<br>(regional)               | 2023–31  | Pacific Community (SPC); Tongan National Disaster Risk Management Office                          |
| Australia Assists program<br>(global)                                | 2018–24  | Government of Tonga ministries  |

Australian Government supporting investments/activities for Objective 2 – strengthening fiscal stability, accountable governance and economic performance (bilateral Official Development Assistance (ODA) as well as significant regional and global ODA, and significant non-ODA development investments/activities)

| Name of investment/activity  | Duration  | Key partners   |
|--|-----------|--|
| <b>Nuku'alofa Port Upgrade Project (Queen Salote International Wharf)</b><br>(bilateral)                         | 2021–26   | Australian Infrastructure Financing Facility for the Pacific; Tongan Government Ministry of Infrastructure; Asian Development Bank   |
| <b>Tonga Parliament Buildings Project</b><br>(bilateral)   | 2021–27   | Australian Infrastructure Financing Facility for the Pacific; Tongan Government Ministry of Infrastructure; Legislative Assembly of Tonga; New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade |
| <b>Tonga Hawaiki Branch System Project</b><br>(bilateral)  | 2024–26   | Australian Infrastructure Financing Facility for the Pacific; Tonga Cable Limited; New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade   |
| <b>Tonga–Australia partnership for governance</b><br>(bilateral)   | 2025–29   | To be determined   |
| <b>Pacific Engagement Visa (PEV)</b><br>(regional)   | Ongoing   | Australian Government; Australian state and territory governments  |
| <b>Pacific Australia Labour Mobility (PALM) scheme</b><br>(successor investment under development)<br>(regional) | 2024      | Tongan Government Ministry of Internal Affairs   |
| <b>Pacific Agreement on Closer Economic Relations (PACER) Plus Implementation Unit</b><br>(regional)             | 2019–26   | Tongan Government Ministry of Trade and Economic Development   |
| <b>Pacific Horticultural and Agricultural Market Access (PHAMA) Plus</b><br>(regional)                           | 2018–26   | Tongan Government Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forestry   |
| <b>Market Development Facility</b><br>(regional)   | 2017–2027 | Tongan Government Ministry of Trade and Economic Development   |
| <b>Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR)</b><br>(global)                             | Ongoing   | ACIAR projects   |
| <b>Tonga Electoral Support Program</b><br>(bilateral)  | 2023–26   | Australian Electoral Commission; Tonga Electoral Commission  |
| <b>Australia-Pacific Partnerships for Aviation</b><br>(regional)   | 2024–29   | Aviation partners  |



Australian Government supporting investments/activities for Objective 3 – enhancing health, gender equality and social outcomes for all Tongans (bilateral Official Development Assistance (ODA) as well as significant regional and global ODA, and significant non-ODA development investments/activities)

| Name of investment/activity  | Duration  | Key partners   |
|--|-----------|--|
| Tonga Health Systems Support Program (THSSP)<br>(bilateral)  | 2010–2030 | Tongan Government Ministry of Health; Tonga Health Promotion Foundation  |
| Partnerships for a Healthy Region<br>(regional)  | 2024–28   | Tongan Government Ministry of Health   |
| Vava’u Hospital redevelopment project (Prince Wellington Ngu Hospital)<br>(bilateral)                        | 2022–28   | Tongan Government Ministry of Health; Tongan Government Ministry of Finance; World Bank  |
| Support to the Women’s Affairs and Gender Equality Division<br>(bilateral)                                   | 2023–26   | Tongan Government Ministry of Internal Affairs   |
| Pacific Women Lead<br>(regional)   | 2020–26   | Tongan Government Ministry of Internal Affairs; SPC  |
| Bilateral gender investment (implemented through the Tonga–Australia Support Platform (TASP))<br>(bilateral) | 2024–25   | Women and Children Crisis Centre; Tonga Women in ICT; Ma’a Fafine Moe Famili   |
| Families Free of Violence (FFOV)<br>(bilateral)  | 2022–26   | Tongan Government Ministry of Internal Affairs; Tonga Police; family violence service providers  |
| Australian Sports Partnerships Program Phase 2 (Team Up)<br>(regional)                                       | 2019–27   | Tongan national sports organisations   |
| PacificAus Sports partnerships<br>(regional)   | 2019–27   | Tongan national sports organisations   |
| Strengthening the Tongan Media Sector<br>(bilateral)   | 2023–26   | Media Association of Tonga   |
| Bilateral skills investment (implemented through the TASP)<br>(bilateral)                                    | 2024–25   | Tongan Government Ministry of Education and Training; technical and vocational education and training providers; Tonga National Qualifications and Accreditation Board |
| Australia Awards Tonga (including alumni and fellowship opportunities)<br>(global)                           | Ongoing   | Australian, Tongan and Pacific education institutions  |
| Australia’s Pacific skills investment<br>(regional)  | 2024–29   | To be determined   |

| Name of investment/activity                            | Duration | Key partners   |
|--|----------|--|
| <b>Tonga Safe and Resilient Schools</b><br>(bilateral) | 2021–27  | Tongan Government Ministry of Education and Training; World Bank |

Australian Government supporting investments/activities across Objectives 1, 2 and 3 (bilateral Official Development Assistance (ODA) as well as significant regional and global ODA, and significant non-ODA development investments/activities)

| Name of investment/activity                                  | Duration | Key partners                            |
|--|----------|---|
| <b>Australian Volunteers Program</b><br>(global)             | Ongoing  | Australian Volunteers Program           |
| <b>Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP)</b><br>(global) | Ongoing  | Australian non-government organisations |
| <b>New Colombo Plan</b><br>(global)                          | Ongoing  | Australian universities                 |

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Ministry of Finance and National Planning, *Tonga strategic development framework 2015–2025*, 2015. <https://pmo.gov.to/index.php/tonga-sustainable-development-goal/>
- <sup>2</sup> Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, *Tonga country brief*, 2025. <https://www.dfat.gov.au/geo/tonga/tonga-country-brief>
- <sup>3</sup> Ministry of Finance and National Planning, *Tonga strategic development framework 2015–2025*.
- <sup>4</sup> United Nations Development Programme, *Human development reports: country insights – Tonga*, 2024. <https://hdr.undp.org/data-center/country-insights#/ranks>; Tonga Statistics Department, *National accounts statistics bulletin: financial year 2022–2023*, 2024. [https://finance.gov.to/sites/default/files/2024-10/GDP\\_Bulletin-2022-23\\_final.pdf](https://finance.gov.to/sites/default/files/2024-10/GDP_Bulletin-2022-23_final.pdf)
- <sup>5</sup> M Ng et al., *Global, regional, and national prevalence of adult overweight and obesity, 1990–2021, with forecasts to 2050: a forecasting study for the Global Burden of Disease Study 2021*. *The Lancet*, vol. 405, iss. 10481, pp. 813–38; Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation, *Global Burden of Disease Study 2019*, 2019. <https://ghdx.healthdata.org/gbd-2019>
- <sup>6</sup> Government of the Kingdom of Tonga, *Tonga National Infrastructure Investment Plan 2021–2030*, 2021. <https://www.theprif.org/document/tonga/national-infrastructure-investment-plans/tonga-national-infrastructure-investment-0>
- <sup>7</sup> International Monetary Fund, *IMF Executive Board concludes 2024 Article IV consultation with Tonga* [press release], 25 November 2024. <https://www.imf.org/en/News/Articles/2024/11/25/pr-24437-tonga-imf-executive-board-concludes-2024-article-iv-consultation>
- <sup>8</sup> World Bank Group, *Worldwide Governance Indicators* [database], 2025. <https://databank.worldbank.org/source/worldwide-governance-indicators>
- <sup>9</sup> Kingdom of Tonga, *Budget statement for the year ending 30th of June, 2025*, 2024. <https://finance.gov.to/index.php/budgetpublication>
- <sup>10</sup> International Monetary Fund, *IMF Executive Board concludes 2024 Article IV consultation with Tonga*.
- <sup>11</sup> National Disaster Risk Management Office, Tonga, *Tonga’s risk profile*, 2024. [https://www.globalshield.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/First-Global-Shield-workshop\\_Tonga\\_NDRMO.pdf](https://www.globalshield.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/First-Global-Shield-workshop_Tonga_NDRMO.pdf); Australian Aid, *Pacific risk profile: Tonga*, 2021. [https://www.dfat.gov.au/sites/default/files/pacific-risk-profile\\_tonga.pdf](https://www.dfat.gov.au/sites/default/files/pacific-risk-profile_tonga.pdf)
- <sup>12</sup> Germanwatch, *Global Climate Risk Index 2020*, 2020. <https://www.germanwatch.org/en/17307>
- <sup>13</sup> World Bank Group, *Tonga volcanic eruption and tsunami: World Bank disaster assessment report estimates damages at US\$90M* [press release], 14 February 2022. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2022/02/14/tonga-volcanic-eruption-and-tsunami-world-bank-disaster-assessment-report-estimates-damages-at-us-90m>
- <sup>14</sup> Kingdom of Tonga, *Tonga’s second nationally determined contribution*, 2020. <https://climatechange.gov.to/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Tongas-Second-NDC.pdf>
- <sup>15</sup> M Fouad, N Novta, G Preston, T Schneider, S Weerathunga, *Unlocking access to climate finance for Pacific island countries*, International Monetary Fund, 2021. <https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/Departmental-Papers-Policy-Papers/Issues/2021/09/23/Unlocking-Access-to-Climate-Finance-for-Pacific-Islands-Countries-464709>
- <sup>16</sup> Pacific Islands Forum, *2050 strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent*, 2022. <https://forumsec.org/2050>

## Cover photo credits

Clockwise from top right:

- Australia has a 20-year commitment to health systems strengthening. Nurses Sr ‘Ana Vakauta, Sr ‘Ana Ohi and Sr Mafi ‘Ealelei at the launch of the Australian-funded refurbished obstetrics ward at Vaiola hospital in 2024  
Credit: Talita Tuipulotu, Tonga–Australia Support Platform
- Australia is supporting more opportunities for Australian and Pacific athletes to train, play and grow together, such as the Tonga under-18 girls team who competed in the 2023 Global Youth Sevens rugby tournament  
Credit: Tonga Rugby Union. <https://www.tonga-rugby-union.com/>
- Unidentified Tailulu College student with former teacher Loluhamia Mausia. Australia is contributing more than AUD9 million towards building safe and resilient education facilities across Tonga  
Credit: Tonga Safe and Resilient Schools Project, World Bank Group
- Selemaia Lo‘amanu, development officer for the Tonga Table Tennis Federation and a participant in Team Up  
Credit: Team Up. <https://www.teamup.gov.au/stories/meet-the-team-selemaia-loamanu>
- Queen Salote International Wharf (Nuku‘alofa) port upgrade, co-financed by the Australian Infrastructure Financing Facility for the Pacific  
Credit: Royal HaskoningDHV
- Ofa ‘Ulupano (from Popua, Tongatapu), a Pacific Australia Labour Mobility (PALM) team leader at one of the largest commercial berry farms in Australia, Queensland Berries  
Credit: PALM scheme. <https://www.palmscheme.gov.au/stories/hospitality-horticulture-ofa-breaking-barriers-and-empowering-women>