![PACMAS - Pacific Media Assistance Scheme]

PACMAS Phase 3

Independent Evaluation Report
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Executive Summary

This evaluation reviews the third phase of the Pacific Media Assistance Scheme (PACMAS) which began in April 2017 as a region/bilateral hybrid program. PACMAS focuses on five priority countries - Fiji, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Tonga and Samoa. Coordinated by DFAT Canberra, it is implemented by the Australian Broadcasting Corporation's International Development section which took over management of PACMAS at the start of Phase 2. The total budget for PACMAS 3 since it began until June 2021 has been $11.39m.

The **goal** of PACMAS 3 is to facilitate discourse across government, business and civil society, via Pacific media. Its **objective** is to improve the capacity of journalists and communication practitioners in the Pacific to report responsibly on and mediate discussion about key issues affecting development.

The project has three end of program **outcomes**:
1. Organisations in the Pacific deliver well-designed training programs in journalism and related technical disciplines.
2. Media practitioners and cross-sectoral interlocutors are better equipped to support key development priorities in the Pacific.
3. Key national and regional organisations strengthen the reach and effectiveness of their public communication and engagement.

All outcomes and outputs of the program were originally designed to support directly and/or to complement DFAT aid priorities under the Pacific Regional Aid Investment Plan 2015-2019. But in response to the impact of COVID-19 in 2020, these were adjusted in accordance with the *Pacific Regional COVID-19 Development Response Plan 2020-2022.*

Because of COVID-19-related travel limitations and border closures, the methodological approach for this evaluation was constrained by access to and availability of PACMAS partners and stakeholders. Almost all interviews took place via telephone or internet.

In assessing the performance of PACMAS during this most recent phase, the evaluation focused on five key assessment queries as well as its relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and gender equity and social inclusion. In coming to its conclusions and recommendations, the evaluation team interviewed a range of stakeholders and gathered evidence from program reporting and other relevant documents including the findings of an Impact Assessment undertaken in November 2020. The evaluation also took into account the broader contextual issues impacting on the Pacific media landscape as well as growing external influences.

Findings - Assessment Queries

Assessment Query 1 focused on three desired outcomes. In terms of meeting **Outcome 1**, the TVET/university courses operating in some of the priority countries are not meeting media industry needs and to bring it up to industry standards requires support and assistance beyond PACMAS scope and resources. Instead, and with DFAT's agreement in 2018, PACMAS has shifted its attention to increasing the numbers of local trainers which has been welcomed and where it can has provided targeted support to journalism courses.

With regard to better equipped media practitioners to support key development priorities - **Outcome 2** - a large number of stakeholders was highly positive of PACMAS work and keen to stress how helpful and essential PACMAS was, noting that PACMAS was often the only body providing much needed support.

In strengthening the reach and effectiveness of national and regional organisations in their communication engagements, **Outcome 3**, PACMAS has worked closely with national media organisations. As much as the associations have welcomed the PACMAS support, sustained survival of these volunteer run organisations will require dedicated staff and other resources which they do not have access to.

Feedback from regional organisations which PACMAS has worked with was highly positive pointing to visible improvements in understanding by the media of the complex issues dealt with by these organisations as well as better communication by the organisations themselves.

In terms of the remaining assessment queries, PACMAS was seen as supporting a **stronger media sector** despite the difficult operating context made worse by COVID-19. At a minimum, it was stopping the quality from going backwards. However, there were several areas identified as either gaps or where PACMAS could do better. These included:
- more local trainers
- more emphasis on mentoring and less on multi-day workshops which presented challenges for newsrooms with already limited staff numbers; for similar reasons after-hours training would be preferable
- bridging programs to make graduates and other new recruits job-ready
- more engagement with senior management rather than just editors and below
- more training beyond the newsrooms

In terms of **PACMAS support for the Pacific** media in the future, the review found that given the changing media landscape, PACMAS remains highly relevant and is well positioned to build on these foundational elements in the future. Implementation has been very much relationship-focused with close partnerships which is a critically important approach to working in the Pacific. It supports journalists and media associations in addressing capacity gaps and is able to meet the short-term needs of media organisations, media associations and to a much lesser extent some educational institutions. A key strength is its ability to empower journalists by establishing formal and informal networks including with the ABC. Nevertheless, there are a number of areas that present challenges. These include:
- staff retention and turnover and sustaining the benefits of PACMAS
- ill-equipped graduates
- diminishing resource bases
- changing business models from print to digital
- high dependence on donors and governments for revenue
- maintaining professional media standards
- increasing use of data analytics and artificial intelligence
- the increasing influence of state-controlled models of journalism

Moving into the next phase will require PACMAS to have a more sustainable framework involving media associations and tertiary institutions. And while the flexibility has brought major benefits, it also compromises the achievement of sustainable longer-term outcomes without having a cohesive capacity building framework.

In **responding to unforeseen needs** including COVID-19, PACMAS has been particularly agile and much-needed with the onset of COVID, the resulting adjustments to the overarching DFAT strategy for the Pacific and the urgent requirement to support Pacific governments, organisations and media in their response to the tsunami of information demands and at times misinformation about the pandemic.

Looking at the **main needs of the media** which could be addressed in the next phase, there are several critical issues including the financial position of the media organisations and

associations and restructuring business models to reflect the existing economic reality. Strengthening local and regional media education programs continues to be a significant issue with more needing to be done to supply graduates who can adapt quickly to the workplace. Maintaining professional media standards and integrity will continue to be a challenge during the next phase. With people turning to social media for information, there will be an ongoing need to combat misinformation.

Findings - Development Criteria

Turning to how PACMAS addresses the **development criteria**, the review found the following:

Relevance: PACMAS is still considered highly relevant by all stakeholders and is directly addressing the needs of Pacific media and DFAT. It does this by undertaking regular needs assessments and working regionally and bilaterally with DFAT and key partners in the sector. Its flexibility has allowed it to remain relevant at a time of rapid global and regional change.

Effectiveness: PACMAS is making a significant contribution to supporting quality media in the Pacific despite the limited resources and challenges faced by the industry. Many informants commented that the quality of media had improved over the last 5 years. However the sustainability of these benefits is undermined somewhat by the turnover in local journalists in the industry.

Efficiency: PACMAS is a mature program using a tried and tested delivery modality. Continuity with ABCID as the implementing agency has allowed it to continue to build on past achievements, continuously improve and build corporate knowledge and organisational capital (such as data bases, expertise, reputation, networks and partnerships). These factors all contribute to a more efficient and effective operation over time. However, there are several characteristics of the delivery modality that also limit the efficiency. The ad hoc nature of programming means that it is difficult to achieve economies of scale that can be achieved through a planned programmatic approach.

Gender equity and social inclusion: PACMAS has wholeheartedly adopted the gender equity and social inclusion principles applying them both to the process and outputs of its activities successfully mainstreaming GESI principles in its work. PACMAS's approach to monitoring and evaluation ensures gender and disability disaggregated data, and it has conducted specific studies into gender equality and women's empowerment in Pacific media as part of the Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP). There have been numerous specific gender training activities including gender sensitive reporting and gender inclusive reporting to support reporting on national election campaigns.

Monitoring and Evaluation

In terms of the program's **monitoring and evaluation framework**, the interviews highlighted the need to develop a stronger evidence base about the impact of the program, a more accessible public narrative and better ways of measuring medium- and long-term outcomes. This has been a challenge for PACMAS due to the ad hoc nature of programming and limited resources allocated to monitoring and evaluation (M&E). Longer term planning would assist in building a more robust M&E framework. Monitoring outcomes using qualitative and quantitative methods is usually labour intensive.

In terms of establishing a baseline for long term impact assessment, the program should revisit the 2013 regional "State of Media and Communication" reports which represent a useful country-wide baseline and could be conducted again in 2023 to examine the longer term impacts of PACMAS.

Conclusions

Within its limited scope of services and budget and despite the momentous and deleterious impact of COVID-19 halfway through the current phase, PACMAS 3 has made a strong contribution to improving the capacity of journalists and communication practitioners to report on the key issues affecting development. But there is a clear and outstanding need for media development activities to continue and to be strengthened beyond the existing PACMAS 3 scope. In summary, the evaluation concluded:

- Despite a challenged and difficult operating context made worse by COVID-19, PACMAS 3 has contributed to a stronger media sector. At a minimum, it has stopped it from going backwards.
- A wide range of stakeholders are very positive about the PACMAS role in equipping media practitioners to support key development priorities.
- The PACMAS brand is widely recognised and respected with PACMAS often seen as the only effective agency providing much needed media training.
- Gender and social inclusion principles have been very soundly incorporated into PACMAS. A rare development assistance example of successful mainstreaming and one worth sharing with other non-media aid programs in the Pacific.
- PACMAS has worked effectively with key national and regional organisations in response to needs and demands but within the PACMAS framework.
- But the high degree of flexibility and responsiveness has been achieved at the cost of a comprehensive and evolving framework contributing to a sense of short-termism.
- Addressing the resourcing factors challenging the region's tertiary training institutions is beyond the current scope and budget of PACMAS.
- Monitoring and evaluation have been energetic but the results have not been as visible as they could be resulting in a limited public narrative and appreciation of achievements
- M&E has also been adversely affected by the short term ad hoc nature of a number of the activities.
- Need to develop a stronger evidence base about the impact of the program and better ways of measuring medium- and long-term outcomes.

Recommendations

Areas where PACMAS 3 could strengthen or realign its activities to improve outcomes fall into three categories: capacity building, monitoring and evaluation, and operational constraints. Possible improvements under these categories include:

Capacity building:
- greater use of on-the-job and shorter out-of-hours approaches
- expand cohort of local trainers through training of trainers
- bridging programs in to cover journalism basics for incoming recruits
- Mentoring strengthened and formalised
- Training beyond the newsroom extended to include technicians and business managers
- Regional practitioner networks encouraged
- strengthen skills in data analysis

Monitoring and evaluating progress:
- Undertake State of the Media Report 2023
- Strengthened capacity building framework.

Constraining operating environments
- Greater interaction with senior managers to address business models

- working more effectively in response to regulative and legislative restrictions on the media
- Strengthen opportunity for collaborative productions with Australian media entities

Future Options post Phase 3

This report has demonstrated that the Pacific media still has a critical need for ongoing capacity building and strengthening. Any future activity needs to collectively address the critical pressure points and gaps identified in the evaluation to achieve a cohesive and sustained outcome. At the same time, it provides the opportunity for Australia to match its Pacific development goals with its geo-strategic interests. And to encourage greater Australian engagement in and with the Pacific media, it should be based on a partnership framework that would encourage greater exchange and engagement .

The activity's development goal could be to facilitate informed debate and discourse on development across government, business and civil society, via Pacific media. Its objective would be to strengthen the capacity of the region's journalists and communication practitioners. In meeting this aspiration, it would take a multi-pronged approach in addressing the capacity gaps and economic viability pressures identified in this evaluation report. In doing so, it would require working in five areas to ensure a comprehensive and solid approach to the challenge. Those five areas are:
1. Capacity and skills
2. Media economics and business practice
3. Media systems including IT and equipment
4. Coordination and cooperation
5. Research and analysis

Introduction

This is the evaluation report of the latest phase of the Pacific Media Assistance Scheme (PACMAS). Now in its third phase, PACMAS was started in 2007 by the Australian Government to support the development of media in the Pacific region. Initially run by a number of different organisations in the first phase from 2008 to 2010, program implementation for phase 2 was shifted to the Australian Broadcasting Corporation for efficiency and strategic whole of government reasons. The ABC's International Development section has also been responsible for the implementation of Phase 3.

Background

PACMAS 3 began in April 2017 as a regional/bilateral hybrid program, coordinated by DFAT in Canberra, and is focused on five priority countries - Fiji, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Tonga and Samoa. Unlike Phase 2 which had a regional headquarters, PACMAS 3 is coordinated by DFAT in Canberra with input and advice from bilateral Pacific posts and is managed by the Australia-based ABCID team. In addition, there are five locally-recruited PACMAS coordinators in each of the five countries.

In implementing the program, PACMAS works with national media associations and media industry organisations as well as government ministries and regional agencies. It has also delivered activities in direct partnership with other DFAT programs including the Australian Pacific Climate Partnership and Pacific Women shaping Pacific Development (Pacific Girl).

Program goal, objectives and outcomes

The goal of Phase 3 is to facilitate discourse across government, business and civil society, via Pacific media, by improving the capacity of journalists and communication practitioners in the Pacific to report responsibly on, and mediate discussion about, key issues affecting development.

Its objective is to improve the capacity of journalists and communication practitioners in the Pacific to report responsibly on and mediate discussion about key issues affecting development.

PACMAS aims for three end-of-program outcomes supported by targeted outputs:
1. Organisations in the Pacific deliver well-designed training programs in journalism and related technical disciplines.
    o Output – training resources, tailored to development priorities and developed with PACMAS support, are adopted and implemented by appropriate organisations (education, media and government sectors, NGOs, CSOs).
2. Media practitioners and cross-sectoral interlocutors are better equipped to support key development priorities in the Pacific.
    o Output – journalism/communication practitioners and relevant stakeholders undertake thematic training focused on civics, business and the economy, and key development concerns such as disaster resilience.
3. Key national and regional organisations strengthen the reach and effectiveness of their public communication and engagement.
    o Output– development of Pacific-based communication capacity, drawing on regional expertise, to facilitate informed public discourse.

o Output – support for regional and national organisations to expand media and communication-based opportunities for women and girls to participate in public discourse.

o Output – support for regional or national organisations with a stake in media development or communication in the public interest.

All outcomes and outputs of the program were originally designed to support directly and/or to complement DFAT aid priorities under the Pacific Regional Aid Investment Plan 2015-2019 which centred on four pillars:

- Increased economic growth and private sector development
- Healthy and resilient communities
- More efficient regional institutions
- Empowerment of women and

However, in response to the impact of COVID-19 in 2020, DFAT adjusted Australia's Pacific development priorities. As detailed in the *Pacific Regional COVID-19 Development Response Plan 2020-2022,* these priorities are now health security, stability and economic recovery. Aligning itself to these new priorities, PACMAS moved to support its Pacific partners, adjusting its mode of operation and focusing on the critical issues impacting on Pacific media as a result of the pandemic.

Budget

The total budget for PACMAS 3 since it began until June 2021 has been $11.39m incorporating core funding supplemented with significant ad hoc bilateral and thematic funding with the breakdown as follows:

- Regional: $4.47m
- Bilateral: $6m (including $4m for Samoan infrastructure project)
- Step-up: $0.91

This actual total is a significant increase on the funding originally envisaged in the 2017 project design document which budgeted $2.4 million for three years from 2016-17 to 2018-19. The increase over the original figure is due to a number of factors including: the extension of PACMAS 3 beyond 2018-19; impact of the Pacific Step Up policy in 2017-2018; and $4m in funding from the Samoa program for a transmission mast.

It is also noteworthy in terms of PACMAS 3's reduced services and scope in comparison to PACMAS 2 that only after the extension to five years and additional activities does its budget approximate the original budget for the first three years of PACMAS 2.

Evaluation purpose

In line with the terms of reference approved by DFAT in May 2021, the purpose of this independent end-of-program evaluation of Phase 3 is to assess if the current design and mode of operation of PACMAS is best placed to support the media's role in facilitating the discussion about key development issues affecting the Pacific. It answers five key questions and in doing so assesses the effectiveness, efficiency and relevance of the current approach. It also looks at how PACMAS has addressed gender and social inclusion. It provides recommendations on modifications to the design to ensure alignment with the broader Australian Government strategic and aid objectives across the region, as well as the trajectory of the media in the Pacific. It also provides an overview of the Pacific media context and what other parties are doing in this sector and how that is influencing the trajectory.

Methodology and constraints

Because of COVID-19-related travel limitations and border closures, the methodological approach for this evaluation was constrained by access to and availability of PACMAS partners and stakeholders. Evaluation team members were unable to visit countries benefitting from PACMAS with the exception of the Solomon Islands where one of the team members lives. Almost all interviews took place via telephone or internet.

The evaluation methodology comprised a four step approach as follows:

1. Documentation review
In undertaking the evaluation, the team was informed by a desk review of program documentation including the impact assessment of PACMAS 3 undertaken in November 2020 and the May 2020 capability study of Fiji media also undertaken by PACMAS.

2. Stakeholder consultations
In parallel and subsequent to the documentation desk review, stakeholders, as listed in Attachment 1, were consulted via telephone/video conferencing and where feasible, in face to face meetings to discuss the key issues as well as emerging trends and developments as informed by a set of questions coming out of five assessment queries (see Attachment 1) and linked to the development criteria referred to in the TORS and evaluation plan. In light of the 2020 Impact Assessment which provided detailed data on direct beneficiary responses, the stakeholders consulted in this evaluation were largely those whose interests were more strategic and less technical.

While the team was able to talk to a wide range of stakeholders (see Attachment 2 for full list of stakeholders interviewed), the Pacific Island interviews were at times hindered by in-country technical difficulties with the internet links. In addition, the wave of fresh COVID infections in Fiji which coincided with the review period limited the number of stakeholders who were prepared or able to talk to the team.

3. Aide-memoire and DFAT debrief
On completion of the documentation review and stakeholder consultations, the team provided DFAT with an aide-memoire and a verbal debrief on its initial findings and recommendations.

4. Draft and Final report
A final report will be submitted on receipt of DFAT's response to this draft report.

Team resources

The evaluation has been conducted by a team of three:

Team leader Annmaree O'Keeffe has a strong background in development and media. She brings her extensive understanding of the Australian Government's official development assistance program from her time in senior management positions within AusAID. Annmaree has an historical understanding of PACMAS having reviewed the program in 2013. She has an extensive understanding of approaches to capacity building of media organisations across the Pacific as well as a deep understanding of the broader strategic issues impacting the region.

Georgina Kekea is a journalist from Solomon Islands with over 20 years of experience in the media sector. Gina has also engaged as a rapporteur for UNICEF, IWDA and Media Association of Solomon Islands reporting on across a range of development issues. Currently,

Gina works as a freelance journalist and is also the President of the Media Association of Solomon Islands.

David Goodwins is an independent monitoring and evaluation adviser. David has over 20 years' experience working on DFAT programs in the Asia Pacific. He has worked as a team leader, technical director and most recently in leadership roles undertaking research, design, monitoring and evaluation for a wide range of programs in sectors such as economic development, infrastructure, social planning, health, education, environmental management, policing, governance, community development and disaster risk management. He has extensive experience in undertaking strategic evaluations and complex designs for DFAT.

Pacific media: the context and the influences

In 2013, PACMAS published a benchmarking report, State of Pacific Media,[1] which proved to be a reliable weather-vane forecasting the digital direction of the Pacific media's future and warning about the misinformation risks of social media. The report also pointed to abiding economic, capacity and physical constraints undermining media accessibility and technical reliability in many parts of the Pacific.

Fast forward to 2020, a report by the US-based think-tank, CNA, on the region's information environment[2] lists similar fundamental hurdles: varied access to basic essential infrastructure such as electricity and internet access; limited human and financial resources; and capability.

On top of these physical constraints, in recent years there have been some high-profile cases of curtailments on media freedom which have drawn international criticism. But political pressure and legislative restrictions are only part of the broader set of factors which contribute to difficult operating environments for the media across the Pacific.

Overall, that list includes:
- country-specific cultural mores and expectations regarding respect for leaders and elders
- a high turnover of young, inexperienced and under-educated journalism recruits
- media business models that struggle to adjust to the popularity of social media
- reliance by journalists on social media to source information in the absence of research resources
- the growing use of social media by politicians to communicate with their electorates bypassing a more critical mainstream media
- the economic impact of COVID on already financially fragile Pacific island media organisations resulting in falling advertising revenues and an increasingly heavy dependence on government advertising

Yet despite the challenging work environment, an international survey by Reporters Sans Frontières (see Attachment 3) shows that globally, Pacific media is generally in the front middle of the pack when it comes to press freedom.

The digital media challenge

One of the biggest recent challenges facing the Pacific media has been the digital revolution which in the case of the Pacific has resulted in the digital divide particularly with the growing popularity of social media platforms such as Facebook. Social media in the Pacific has been described as both a challenge and a game changer for the media[3]. The "citizen journalism" nature of social media has diverted audiences away from the traditional news gatherers which has had a deleterious effect on readership and advertising revenue and most importantly, quality and reliability of the information being disseminated. As has been seen elsewhere, social media is also used by parties with an interest in disrupting informed public debate.

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[1] https://www.abc.net.au/cm/lb/9248758/data/pacmas-regional-state-of-media-report-data.pdf
[2] Mapping the Information Environment in the Pacific Island Countries: Disruptors, Deficits, and Decisions https://www.cna.org/CNA_files/centers/cna/cip/disinformation/IRM-2019-U-019755-Final.pdf
[3] Shailendra Singh, The Media and Journalism challenges in Melanesia, *Media Freedom in Melanesia*, Pacific Journalism Review, July 2020

Box 1 - Working as a Solomon Islands journalist

The challenges for a journalist in the Pacific differ from country to country. However for Solomon Islands the challenges for a journalist include custom, culture (wantok system), lack of resources both logistics and human and small pay. On average, a working journalist in Solomon Islands earns AUD250 a fortnight. This is AUD6500 per annum. Most without benefits. Only senior journalists usually have benefits like housing rentals.

In Solomon Islands, the minimum wage is SBD8 (AUD1.3598) per hour. In the government communication departments, there is not much difference but officers have benefits like housing allowances, transport, overtime and other allowances that compliments their salary. PR work in NGOs and agencies like UNDP have better work conditions and salary. Journalists in print media are expected to produce three (3) articles per day and both newspaper companies publish 7 days a week.

For the radio, most FM radio stations derive their news from the two local newspapers, national radio (SIBC) and the likes of RNZ and ABC. The media landscape in Solomon Islands is very small as there are only two daily newspapers, one national radio (SIBC), three FM stations and three online news platforms. In Solomon Islands, the media industry needs to be strengthened for it to be trusted by the public.

With expectations both by the publisher and public in addition to limited resources in the newsroom, journalists usually end up feeling undervalued. They continue to look for greener pastures or end up attending conference after conference where they are paid traveling allowances to attend these workshops or sessions. Most times for the PACMAS workshops, they are more keen on getting the transport allowance rather than what the workshop has to offer.

There is a lack of leadership and management in the newsrooms. Editors often find it difficult to hold editorials and there are no mentorship programs for journalists and editors. Editors do not really control the quality of the newsroom as they do not really feel an ownership of the responsibility or the title they hold. Having incentives for journalists in a sort of media award activity is missing and the onus is on MASI (Media Association of Solomon Islands) to come up with incentives or innovative ideas to hold the industry together.

At the same time, social media can point to important trends and emerging issues which otherwise might go unnoticed. Significantly, it has opened up access to life-improving services in health and education and supported economic growth.

However, it has been the COVID-19 pandemic which has cast a spotlight on the Pacific's deep and abiding vulnerabilities in the region's communication systems. A recent Asia Foundation report, The Pacific COVID-19 Infodemic, found that despite efforts by government and civil society to communicate through social media about the pandemic, "false information has led to public confusion"[4]. While the Pacific is not unique in suffering from this "infodemic", what makes it particularly dangerous in this region is the very limited capacity of government and for the purposes of this report, the traditional media, to combat the misinformation. In summarising the Pacific-specific issues the pandemic has thrown up, the Asia Foundation report lists the following conundrums:

- expanding connectivity with undersea cables and infrastructure upgrades without effective safeguards
- fragile media ecosystems
- inability to respond to new cyber threats

Drawing on the lessons of the COVID-19 misinformation experience, it then goes on to suggest three ways forward

- strengthening official credibility and visibility online
- encouraging productive, multi-stakeholder approaches to misinformation
- preparing for emerging threats to online information ecosystems

But these suggestions overestimate the capacity of at least some countries in the region to initiate and follow through on these three steps. It also overestimates the extent to which social media is accessible. While there has been some significant progress made in the Pacific's digital transformation, it largely relies on mobile technology due to the combined effects of geography, small and scattered populations, as well as under-investment by governments in communication systems. And despite early waves of enthusiasm for mobile telephony thanks largely to the arrival of affordable and accessible Digicel services in several Pacific countries over a decade ago, Pacific island penetration rates still remain below other regions.

The latest GSM (Global System for Mobile Communications Association) report on the Pacific mobile economy[5] notes that only 38% of the region's population subscribed to a mobile service by the end of 2018 compared to an average of 44% for least developed countries. Furthermore, within the region, there are significant differences between markets with Fiji's penetration rates at 84%, PNG, at just 30% and the Marshall Islands coming in at 11%. Even more telling is that by the end of 2018, mobile internet penetration was the lowest of any region in the world at just 18% of the population. The reasons behind these low penetration rates include limited financial returns for the operator, inadequate infrastructure, geography and widely dispersed populations. For the consumer, despite the expansion of undersea cabling, the internet remained comparatively expensive and so out of reach to many.

With penetration rates as they are with little significant growth forecast in coming years, despite the expansion of undersea cabling in the Pacific, the reality is that the promised social and economic benefits of the digital transformation remain curtailed. It also reinforces the

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[4] The Pacific COVID-19 Infodemic - Challenges and opportunities in the Pacific's response to an online information crisis, Asia Foundation, San Francisco, 2020

[5] The Mobile Economy - Pacific Islands 2019, GSMA, https://www.gsma.com/mobileeconomy/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/GSMA_MobileEconomy2020_Pacific_Islands.pdf

critical role that the Pacific's mainstream or traditional media continue to play in social and economic development.

External influences

The 2020 CNA report[6] also highlighted a growth in the internationalisation of influence on the Pacific media. Similar conclusions were made by various writers in a 2020 edition of the Pacific Journalism Review[7] dedicated to media freedom in Melanesia, pointing to foreign interest efforts to influence media coverage.

The **US Government**, has ramped up its involvement with Pacific media through a number of initiatives via the US State Department's Global Engagement Center (GEC) and the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor as well as its official aid agency, USAID. The GEC which is charged with responding to foreign state and non-state propaganda and disinformation efforts has been overseeing a number of activities including:

- hosting a media sustainability workshop at the East West Center in Hawaii
- making Associated Press and New York Times content available to around two dozen media outlets across the Pacific
- building a Pacific network of fact checkers
- providing support to Pacific Island radio broadcasters through USP Journalism and Radio Pasifik.

These approaches supplement more traditional efforts such as visitor programs and regular tours and exchanges.

DRL's initiative is a competitive grant program worth up to $US2m for organisations looking to work on a regional project to strengthen investigative journalism and anti-corruption across the Pacific islands. Although the deadline for applications was mid-April 2021, the outcome of the application round was still unknown at the time of writing this report. Meanwhile USAID is planning an analysis this year of misinformation trends and impact in four Asian countries as well as PNG.

New Zealand is seen internationally as a traditional supporter of Pacific media, alongside Australia, working to improve its capacity and output. Their Pasifika TV initiative started modestly in 2015 and stands as a case study in cost effective media activity in the South West Pacific. It is now a central collator and distributor of Pasifika-generated content from New Zealand and the 14 Pacific countries in which they have 24 broadcast partners.

Pasifika TV (PTV) is operated by Pacific Cooperation Broadcast Limited (PCBL) which reports to NZ's Pacific Cooperation Broadcast Trust, funded by the country's Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Trade but operating autonomously. Their 2020 annual report (covering 2019/20) cites an annual budget of NZ$4.77 million.

Pasifika-TV also provides a broad spectrum of broadcasting training from technical to journalism and business continuity planning. A recently launched innovation is a contestable funding mechanism for partner broadcasters to produce local content. PCBL has also provided equipment to a number of broadcasters. PCBL is also delivering a virtual media exchange program between TVNZ and newsrooms in Niue, Tonga, Vanuatu, PNG and Samoa. a range of ad hoc activities initiated during COVID to support Pacific media's response. Looking ahead, PCBL's priorities are

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[6] Mapping the Information Environment in the Pacific Island Countries: Disruptors, Deficits, and Decisions https://www.cna.org/CNA_files/centers/cna/cip/disinformation/IRM-2019-U-019755-Final.pdf

[7] https://ojs.aut.ac.nz/pacific-journalism-review/issue/view/20/PJR%2026%281%29%20July%202020

- business sustainability/viability due to the impact of COVID-19
- providing relevant content to the Pacific broadcasters
- capability building to maintain capacity in a sector suffering from high staff turnover.

Other NZ support outside of PCBL tends to be small and ad hoc such as assistance to the Media Association of Vanuatu to host a local media award in 2021.

For **China**, its efforts to influence can be directly linked to Chinese President Xi's own vision for engaging in international communications, namely to "engage in international communication to tell China's stories well, make the voice of China heard and present a true, multi-dimensional and panoramic view of China."[8]

In terms of China's media activities in the Pacific, China analysts Denghua Zhang and Amanda Watson[9] have identified a five-prong approach
- expansion of its official media to Pacific Island countries
- the active use by Chinese diplomatic missions to use the media to generate publicity
- sponsoring Pacific journalists' visits to China for training or exchanges
- constructing media facilities
- fostering ties with local Chinese media in Pacific island countries.

Some of these moves are not recent. For example, CCTV established operations in FSM almost 20 years ago with Samoa, Vanuatu, Fiji and Tonga following soon after. And it was 11 years ago that Xinhua opened its first Pacific branch in Suva.

Given this recent expansion of Pacific-focused media initiatives by USA, New Zealand and China, **Australia's position** as the major country of influence on and support for the shape and capacity of the Pacific media sector is declining proportionally. There have been some increases in Australian activity, largely through private sector engagement, notably The Guardian Pacific Project funded by the Judith Nielsen Institute for Journalism and New Ideas, and the Walkley Foundation/Google News Initiative partnership although the Australian Government has provided $17.2m to Free TV to increase Australian television content across the Pacific (see Attachment 3 Table 2).

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[8] http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2018-08/22/c_137410956.htm
[9] http://dpa.bellschool.anu.edu.au/sites/default/files/publications/attachments/2020-11/chinas_media_strategy_in_the_pacific_denghua_zhang_amanda_watson_department_of_pacific_affairs_in_brief_2020_29.pdf

Findings

This chapter presents and analyses the findings of the evaluation team. It is divided into three parts.

The first looks at the findings flowing from the five assessment queries which were set out in the terms of reference. Those queries are:

1. To what extent has PACMAS 3 met each of its three end-of-investment outcomes (and targeted outputs listed in the design)?
2. Is PACMAS contributing to a better quality, strong and independent Pacific media sector?
3. Is PACMAS well placed to support Pacific media in the future, given the changes to the media landscape (e.g. the rise in use of digital media and the economic impact of COVID-19, media independence)?
4. How successfully has PACMAS responded to unforeseen needs, including arising from COVID-19?
5. What are the main needs of the Pacific media sector which the next [three- year] phase of PACMAS will need to address?

The second section looks at how PACMAS 3 meets the development criteria - relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and gender equity and social inclusion - and in doing so, how it supports DFAT's Pacific development priorities.

The third section provides an in depth look at the Monitoring and Evaluation framework for PACMAS to identify how it has been able to capture the performance of the program.

The findings and analysis were informed by research and interviews with a range of stakeholders and Pacific commentators in response to questions guided by the assessment queries and development criteria (See Attachment 1). The PACMAS Impact Assessment undertaken in 2020 was also an important reference.

Overall, the evaluation team found that PACMAS 3 has made a strong and widely appreciated contribution to supporting quality media in the Pacific despite operating in a resource-challenged industry. The emergence of COVID-19 from early 2020 has also had a major impact on the program requiring restructuring in its operating model while the industry has been hard hit financially. Nevertheless, PACMAS was flexible and agile in its responsiveness to the new challenges wrought by the pandemic with earlier work providing a firm foundation for the adjustments.

The Five Assessment Queries

Question 1. To what extent has PACMAS 3 met each of its three end-of-investment outcomes (and targeted outputs listed in the design)?

Outcome 1: Organisations in the Pacific deliver well-designed training programs in journalism and related technical disciplines

The evaluation found that overall, the TVET/university courses operating in some of the priority countries are not meeting media industry needs and that to bring it up to industry standards requires support and assistance beyond PACMAS scope and resources. PACMAS has struggled to engage effectively with the tertiary education sector responsible for delivering journalism courses. But that struggle is largely due to the inherent inadequacies in capability

and resourcing of most of the journalism schools or courses in the priority countries and notably in Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and Samoa where the course has now been closed. Often the institutions only have one or two staff members able to work with PACMAS on joint initiatives such as updating curriculums, while also doing their existing jobs with limited resources. After vane attempts to work with course coordinators in other countries, PACMAS has issued open invitations to those course students to attend its workshops.

However, PACMAS has been able to assist Tonga's Institute of Higher Education journalism course in its goal to be eligible for regionally-recognised accreditation. In addition, collaboration with the University of South Pacific (USP) has led to PACMAS reserving two to three spots for students on regional and Fiji-based programs to ensure student journalists could interact with working media colleagues and access specialised news and learning opportunities. Also following the review by Dr Shailendra Singh of the USP Journalism School in 2019 of the PACMAS curriculum module developed under PACMAS 2, five of the modules were incorporated into the USP course.

A frequent complaint heard from the media industry during the review was about the state of the journalism courses run by Pacific tertiary institutes with the familiar catchcry being that the course graduates were not job-ready. As summed up by one major media representative, "we recruited 11 students and they were terrible." But at the same time, there was a strong desire for better tertiary educated journalists. While on-the-job training was important and in the current context, essential, there was recognition that better journalists needed better education before they entered the newsroom. This need was exemplified by the fact that in one of the region's more successful public broadcasters, VBTC, there are only two employees in the whole organisation that have a degree.

The demand for well-trained tertiary educated journalists is evident but the factors that hobble this demand being met include the inadequate courses currently being run. A TVET scoping analysis conducted by PACMAS in 2018 found a shortage of qualified teaching staff across the TVETs with existing staff having no time to review the course curricula to ensure accreditation.

Addressing the underlying structural and financial factors is well beyond the current scope and budget of PACMAS. In recognition of these difficulties, there had been an agreement with DFAT in 2018 that this outcome would be difficult to achieve given the TVET and university weaknesses and that trainer programs for local trainers should be aligned to this outcome. In keeping with this realignment, PACMAS started a 15 month training program in November 2018 to develop a group of 12 editors and senior journalists from five countries to provide economic and business journalism training, mentoring and support to their colleagues in partnership with national media associations. A mid-line evaluation of the activity found that of the 11 participants who responded, 78% rated the usefulness of the training as 9 or 10 out of 10. This first phase was followed up in 2019 with a range of training local trainer initiatives including a Pacific Business and Economic Report Colloquium for 15 participants in Australia and a training grants initiative for national level business and economic training. Following the training, PACMAS trainers in the Solomon Islands and Palau were employed by UNDP as media trainers to work with journalists on anti-corruption.

This initiative proved to be timely given the impact of COVID-19 and the inability of Australian trainers to travel to the Pacific. However, there was feedback from some stakeholders that there needed to be more local trainers in part because of their deeper understanding of Pacific media conditions. Significantly, this determination to take on more of the training stemmed from a growth in confidence and capacity for which PACMAS was given the credit.

Outcome 2: Media practitioners and cross-sectoral interlocutors are better equipped to support key development priorities in the Pacific

In approaching this outcome, PACMAS has conducted numerous training programs and activities addressing key development issues and responded quickly to emerging development challenges. The issues addressed include election and parliamentary report, disaster management and response, climate change, economics, fisheries, health and notably COVID-19. The training workshops are based on a partnership approach to include media, government, business and civil society and so ensure information exchange and encourage better understanding of the media's role in informing the public about priority development issues.

A wide swathe of the interviewed stakeholders was highly positive of PACMAS work in this, and almost all wanted to stress how helpful and essential PACMAS was. It was also noted that PACMAS was often the only body providing much needed support. This very positive feedback was also reflected in the results of the 2020 Impact Assessment.

However, as reassuring as that might read, measuring the "better equipped" aspect of this outcome is not straight forward. One of the difficulties in being able to measure performance over time is the ephemeral nature of the media's outputs. But a challenge particular to the Pacific is the exceedingly high turnover of journalists in all five countries. As such, media organisations and by association PACMAS face the reality that almost all new journalist recruits need to be trained to make them job ready. (The reasons behind this high turnover are addressed further later in this report.) As noted above, graduates from university/TVET courses are not job ready on graduation. And in countries such as Solomon Islands and Vanuatu, the new recruits are almost entirely straight out of school and have no training at all. In short, training needs to be a constant reality just to stay at square one.

That aside, the anecdotal evidence of "better equipped" is strong and should not be dismissed coming in part from informed but disinterested observers including DFAT posts. Examples cited include clear improvements in reporting in Honiara following budget reporting workshops. Elsewhere improvements have been seen in parliamentary reporting and the coverage of Pacific Forum meetings. Separately, the editor of a national daily said he didn't need to double check the news content so closely anymore.

Strong endorsement of PACMAS' contribution to key development priorities was also provided by the Australia Pacific Climate Partnership (APCP) which found that working with PACMAS to improve the capacity of Pacific media to report on climate and disaster related topics had led to stronger partnerships with climate change experts. This in turn had led to more accurate and effective reporting about climate change. Importantly, mentoring by ABC journalists had built capacity of Pacific journalists in producing higher quality climate change stories. Additionally, APCP maintained that government media liaison officers had also improved their capacity to communicate extreme weather events.

Also aimed at improving coverage and understanding of disasters is the radio program, Pacific Prepared. A pilot co-production, the program is designed to improve the skills of the Pacific journalists and technical staff engaged in its production while informing audiences about the ways they can prepare for disasters and their impact. Partnership agreements for broadcasting and production have been signed with Radio Australia, Radio New Zealand, PNG's NBC, Tonga Broadcasting Commission, Radio 2AP Samoa and Capitol FM 107 in Vanuatu. Stringers in other Pacific countries have also been engaged.

The development dividend of tradecraft training was another example cited as the way in which PACMAS supports development priorities. Despite the high attrition rates across the region's newsrooms, the benefits of the training persist as the beneficiary moves away from journalism and into communications. One longstanding stakeholder emphasised that

importance citing the ways in which she had benefitted and grown through the skills and knowledge she had gained thanks to PACMAS 2 and 3 as she moved through the journalism and communication ranks.

Another development benefit cited by several stakeholders are the industry and regional networks that open up for the beneficiaries through PACMAS.

Outcome 3: Key national and regional organisations strengthen the reach and effectiveness of their public communication and engagement

Connecting media and communication specialists with regional and national organisations has been an important focus for PACMAS. One way it has done this is through its work with the national media associations in each of the five priority countries supporting them both administratively to strengthen their volunteer-run organisations as well as developing or updating codes of ethics or practice followed by outreach activities. Tradecraft training has also been a feature of these partnerships.

Run by volunteers with full time jobs and little time to spare, the cash-strapped associations face major challenges in keeping themselves together and each found the PACMAS support invaluable for their survival. All say that sustained survival requires dedicated paid staff and other resources to enable them to endure and function adequately.

But the Journalist Association of Samoa (JAWS) warned that there was a fine line between asking for support and not being tied to a line required or expected because of that support. Yet, there was gratitude for the PACMAS activities including the creation and translation of a Code of Ethics.

A standout case of collaboration is the work PACMAS has undertaken in partnership with the Fijian Media Association (FMA) where in addition to providing administrative support and tradecraft workshops, it commissioned a media capability study in 2020 which is now being used to map out training needs and associated schedules.

For the Media Association of Vanuatu (MAV), PACMAS was seen as the only one assisting the media. While this is not the reality, it is important to note that the PACMAS brand is overshadowing other support, linked to both the training and support relevance of PACMAS' activities as well as its longevity.

The Solomon Islands media association, MASI, noted that the PACMAS training had enhanced its members' skills which were starting at a low base since most of the reporters only had high school. But PACMAS wasn't the only source of support and there was a reluctance to single out any one partner as the better one although the MASI representative acknowledged that PACMAS carried out most of the training.

PACMAS has also worked closely with the Pacific Islands News Association (PINA) to ensure their members had priority access to regional media training opportunities delivered on behalf of or in partnership with regional agencies. The usual arrangement was that PACMAS delivered the activity and PINA supported with promotion and participant selection. Participant content was also shared with PACNEWS for distribution as part of this arrangement.

Other regional organisations PACMAS has worked with include the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF), South Pacific Regional Environment Program (SPREP), University of South Pacific (USP) and the Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA).

Feedback points to a strong and constructive relationship with PIF nurtured by the then Secretary General, Dame Meg Taylor which resulted in a series of capacity building activities

linked to various forum ministers' meetings as well as the leaders' meeting. For example, using the 2019 Forum Economic Ministers' Meeting as the focus, PACMAS in partnership with PIFS conducted a workshop to strengthen the capacity of regional journalists to cover the FEMM and so improve public understanding of the decisions made at the meeting.

Given the positive feedback and strong support for this activity, it was repeated for the 2020 FEMM although the impact of COVID-19 meant it had to be conducted online as was the Pacific Island Forum media masterclass for journalists covering the 2020 Forum Special Leaders Retreat. Participants pointed to the value of information sharing via a dedicated Facebook group that was established for participants. Yet, feedback given to the team shows that there is some concern that for the 2021 FEMM preparations, PACMAS should be using more local trainers building on what it had achieved in the two previous years.

A similar training approach had been taken in 2018 in partnership with the FFA when a workshop was conducted at the Western Central Pacific Fisheries Commission meeting. The workshop aimed to improve the journalists' ability in communicating the outcomes of the commission meeting. Participants reported that the workshop had improved their ability to understand and communicate complex fishing issues.

Similarly, feedback from SPREP has been positive about the nature of the partnership with PACMAS. For SPREP, the value has been the way they have been able to work together towards the same communication goals avoiding duplication and strengthening the communication skills of key staff both within SPREP and in associated organisations. However, it was recognised that capacity building takes time.

PIF feedback highlighted the significant impact of the PACMAS support for both media organisations and the regional organisations communication sections during the pandemic, saying it had made the difference from a haphazard approach to informed, quality articles.

Question 2: Is PACMAS contributing to a better quality, strong and independent Pacific media sector?

Despite a challenging and difficult operating context made worse by COVID-19, PACMAS is supporting a stronger media sector. At a minimum, it is helping it from going backwards by providing training to new recruits in an industry suffering huge staff turnover.

That conclusion flows from listening to a variety of observations across all five countries reflecting the different national operating contexts influenced by culture, commercial pressures and the degree of political restrictions in place.

In summary, there is a long list of constraints hindering better, stronger and more independent media across the Pacific and include exogenous challenges such as poor infrastructure, low internet/mobile connection rates, geography and small but widely dispersed populations. Industry-specific difficulties (which are dealt with in more detail in Assessment Query 3) include:
- country-specific cultural mores and expectations that leaders and elders shouldn't be asked difficult questions
- a high turnover of young, inexperienced and under-educated journalism recruits
- financial impact of social media on media business models
- reliance by journalists on unreliable social media sources for information
- the economic impact of COVID on already economically fragile media businesses.

Despite these challenges, PACMAS was seen as making a strong contribution to supporting a better quality media. But there was often the caveat that their ability to do better was in part restricted by external factors beyond the control of PACMAS or even the media practitioners.

As for relevance of the ABC's involvement with PACMAS, this was much appreciated because it provided PACMAS beneficiaries ready access to a broader media peer to peer network and expertise facilitated by the PACMAS management team.

In Samoa, those interviewed had seen an improvement in the media in recent years, with PACMAS activities targeting the critical areas identified by local media organisations. The tradecraft training was seen as crucial in keeping government accountable in the absence of an effective opposition until recently and in light of the current political stalemate. The Samoan-based regional activities were viewed positively with a noticeable improvement in communication sharing proactively by organisations previously media-shy. The caveat was a warning that improvement takes time.

In the Solomon Islands, the view overall was that the media had been strengthened thanks to the new skills and knowledge provided by PACMAS. But the contribution has had partial success because of the pressure exerted on journalists and even the editor when stories may be unfavourable to certain local interests. ″

In Tonga, PACMAS' work on the Tongan Code of Ethics for journalists, its support for the Tonga Institute of Higher Education and the re-establishment of Media Association of Tonga were considered to be strong contributions to a better Tongan media.

The ni-Vanuatu perspective varied. One stakeholder observed that the general quality of journalism in Vanuatu remained quite low but when asked what that was compared to acknowledged that compared to Australia it was very low but compared to what it was 5 years ago locally, it had improved. Another saw PACMAS as contributing to a stronger media sector while another was less positive commenting that it had been helpful but ~~added~~ that legislative changes had constrained free speech

In Fiji, there was across-the-board acclamation for what PACMAS had contributed in its work with local media organisations and the FMA despite the constrained environment. Its Fiji-based regional work particularly through the Pacific Islands Forum was also viewed as making an important contribution. Aside from the restrictive operating environment, the big turnover of staff was another challenge for media organisations leading to even more reliance on PACMAS training to make the young recruits job-ready.

As for the gaps and where PACMAS could do better, these included:
- more local trainers
- more emphasis on mentoring and less on multi-day workshops which presented challenges for newsrooms with already limited staff numbers; for similar reasons after-hours training would be preferable
- bridging programs to make graduates and other new recruits job-ready
- more engagement with senior management rather than just editors and below
- more training beyond the newsrooms

It was also evident that close liaison with the country media association was welcomed but missed when liaison was not as close as it should be. This seems to be a function of the individual PACMAS coordinators in-country. In some cases, this was working well, in others, there were gaps. It is also possibly an outcome of how well the local media association is operating. For example, in Solomon Islands, MASI stressed it was important for PACMAS to

coordinate with them but also acknowledged that there may have been issues with past MASI leaders.

Another issue which was only raised in Solomon Islands but may be occurring elsewhere is the payment of per diems to course participants. There was a concern that the payments were too high so that participants were largely attending because of the money.

Question 3: Is PACMAS well placed to support Pacific media in the future, given the changes to the media landscape? What are the emerging challenges facing Pacific Media?

The Pacific media landscape continues to evolve. It is quite tightly controlled, often politically or government sponsored with few media reports going unchallenged[10]. It is becoming less economically viable as advertising revenues diminish and social media grows in prominence. Misinformation is rife and media freedom is threatened. The influence of state-controlled media models such as China's is rising. This is all compounded by the ongoing turnover of qualified journalists to higher paid positions and rapidly changing technology, including mass surveillance systems and the need to understand "big data" analytics to generate more informed content.

Given the changing media landscape, PACMAS remains highly relevant. It works with journalists and media associations to address capacity gaps. PACMAS is widely acknowledged as being flexible and adaptive which has enabled it to meet the short-term needs of media organisations, media associations and to some extent educational institutions in all participating countries. One of its key strengths is its ability to empower journalists by establishing formal and informal networks. Journalists are able to reach into this network, including ABC journalists, to get support on how to deal with problems and to maintain moral and motivation. Informants acknowledged that the ABC brings an expertise to PACMAS which you don't readily find elsewhere thanks to their international expertise, networks and diversity of supporting activities. In this respect PACMAS is well positioned to build on these foundational elements to support Pacific media in the future.

Although initially designed as a regional program it has shifted to being demand driven through bilateral arrangements. There is strong recognition of PACMAS as a brand that has had a positive impact on journalism and media in the Pacific, however this is not strong across all countries. One key informant said some countries see PACMAS as "gold" while regionally there is less visibility.

Strong relationships drive positive engagement and learning. Over the last few years relationship building has been a focus after senior management of media organisations became disengaged due to a lack of consultation on training content. PACMAS has now developed these relationships and is delivering the type of training media organisations want and is being responsive to their needs. These relationships are critical for supporting Pacific media in the future and must be maintained for effective delivery.

PACMAS has also adapted well to the current restrictions imposed by the COVID pandemic, with a rapid shift to online training. This would not have been possible if it were not for strong partnerships, a network of local coordinators and trainers, and support for media associations who have been able to drive a number of local initiatives with the resources provided through PACMAS.

While these foundational elements put PACMAS in a strong position to support Pacific media in the future, there are many areas that will require strengthening to meet the emerging challenges and to sustain the benefits of the current investments. The emerging challenges are summarised in Box 2.

While PACMAS has established the foundations for moving into the next phase it needs to build a more sustainable framework incorporating media associations, universities and technical colleges to achieve sustainable outcomes. As seen earlier, PACMAS has struggled with its engagement with the technical colleges and universities who provide media and journalism training. While PACMAS has established relationships with these institutions, its engagement in the future will need a refocus to have any substantial impact. This may include establishing strong linkages with equivalent Australian institutions to provide ongoing support, sponsored exchange programs or sabbatical placements of Australian media academics within institutions in the Pacific.

Currently the delivery modality of PACMAS was recognised by many as having both positive and negative aspects that will affect how PACMAS is positioned in the future. The flexibility and adaptability of the program, particularly during the COVID 19 pandemic, has allowed the program to be effectively implemented while meeting the changing needs of media in the Pacific. However, many informants raised the issue that the ad hoc nature of interventions gives the impression that the program lacks overall coherence about how interventions work together to achieve the intended outcomes. One informant commented that the "mix is out of balance" given some countries received infrastructure and others received training.

Box 2 - Summary of the challenges

- **Staff retention and turnover.** Many qualified journalists can earn 3-4 times the salary in other related professions such as political liaison officers or media liaison officers for government. This issue was raised by most informants as a key constraining issue.

- **Sustaining the benefits of PACMAS given the staff turnover.** To sustain the benefits of PACMAS requires having local institutions and trainers that can provide ongoing support to journalists and media organisations, while also focusing on institutional strengthening.

- **Graduates ill equipped to commence professional careers in journalism.** Media organisations claim that fresh graduates are not sufficiently skilled to commence work in newsrooms without additional training and support. Educational institutions need strengthening or bridging programs are required.

- **Diminishing resource base due to a decline in advertising**. Social media and other online applications such as search engines are competing for advertising revenue. Traditional advertising channels are becoming less relevant to those that spend significant amounts of time online. Less advertising revenue also means less access to suitable equipment and technologies to enable digital transformation in order to compete.

- **Changing business models from print to digital**. Media organisations have needed to adapt rapidly to new business models as they shift from traditional print media to online systems, including developing purpose-built media apps. This has accelerated due to social distancing restrictions imposed by COVID 19. Most people are consuming content through mobile devices and advertising revenue is increasingly competitive with many diverse channels. For media organisations to survive commercially will require new and innovative business models.

- **Higher dependence on donors and governments for revenue.** Media organisations are captive to government and donor requirements. Press freedom is challenged. Maintaining objectivity and neutrality when revenues increasingly depend on government advertising is problematic.

- **Maintaining professional media standards and integrity**. As demands increase to produce more content with fewer resources and social media influences the way people consume and produce the news, journalists need to take short cuts to find and produce stories. This means less fact checking and the use of unverified online sources leading to more misinformation. COVID 19 restrictions have meant journalists are now operating more remotely.

- **Increasing use of data analytics and artificial intelligence to create content and target advertising.** Globally media organisations are getting smarter about the way they generate content from "big data" analytics. They are using artificial intelligence to target advertising providing a significant competitive advantage. This is an area that will need strengthening in the Pacific for media organisations to remain relevant and competitive.

- **Rising influence of state-controlled media and journalism models**. China is becoming a significant donor in Pacific media and its model is having an influence on journalism and the media sector.

The ability to respond to short term demands ensures the program is addressing the immediate needs of media organisations. This flexibility may, however, compromise the achievement of sustainable longer-term outcomes without having a cohesive capacity building framework around which to prioritise investments that are self-reinforcing and ultimately sustainable. A capacity building framework that operates from an institutional perspective can help guide prioritisation and identify emerging gaps. Typically, this involves addressing things like management, staff attraction and retention, policies, culture, technology, leadership, knowledge management, stakeholder engagement and networking. One approach is to establish a strategic "envelope" against which each intervention is tested to see how it fits within an overall capacity building framework. One informant also acknowledged that regional solidarity is important and that a regional architecture for PACMAS may help achieve this. This would involve charting skills development needs by country in a table that covers all countries receiving media development support thus identifying where needs were shared and responses could be merged. It was recognised that the program had shifted towards being driven through bilateral arrangements and to some extent the lack of a regional approach had become a weakness going forward.

One critical challenge for the next phase is the need to undertake institutional strengthening for both media associations and media organisations given the changing media landscape. As discussed earlier, many media associations struggle to maintain continuity due to the dependence on volunteers to keep the association running. Some financial support is provided by donors. These associations take on responsibility for running local training programs but without continuous support and funding they will not be sustainable. The experience of PACMAS in working with media associations has it well positioned for the next phase. The different experiences with media associations in each country has raised some valuable lessons that PACMAS can build on going forward. In the Solomon Islands for example it was about not "going too big, too fast" but addressing the institutional needs first such as basic administration and governance, and ensuring it is driven locally. Given the critical role media associations can play in supporting the media landscape and sustaining the benefits of PACMAS capacity building efforts, more support should be provided to media associations from a regional and country perspective.

Similarly, media organisations need to adapt their business models as they transition to digital environments and a blend of mainstream and social media. Younger journalists are focusing more on social media platforms and on influencing through video and storytelling using mobile devices. A cadre of young and enthusiastic journalists focusing on social media platforms can help transform many traditional media organisations.

It will be important for PACMAS to showcase what is happening elsewhere so that Pacific media organisations can "leapfrog" to sustainable business models and digital transformation that are adapted to current global media trends. This will require assistance in business planning, technology, content management, building organisational capital, revenue raising, staff training and staff retention. Currently it was reported that some media organisations would not exist if it were not for PACMAS supporting them. This dependency is a concern and needs to be addressed during the next phase through business planning support. One informant suggested that PACMAS should build sustainable media organisations like the Australian community broadcasting models.

The demand for training has become continuous with high staff turnover and a need to train graduates to prepare them for the workplace. Some media associations have been able to tap into local talent to deliver training but media associations need to be able to be sustained in order to do this. At the same time media organisations cannot afford to send journalists to conventional training programs for days at a time when they have fewer staff and less

resources to work with. In-house mentoring is preferred. However, this is more resource intensive. PACMAS needs to look at a mix of workplace mentoring, online training and support for media associations to conduct out of hours training programs.

Another significant challenge is the lack of fact checking and in-depth analysis which has been driven by cuts in staff, reduction in working hours and revenue cuts. Journalism is also changing fast due to social media. Journalists are taking short cuts to meet deadlines. There is less fact checking and in-depth analysis into key issues are becoming harder to justify. PACMAS is well positioned to continue its work on media ethics, misinformation and fact checking. It can build on the training programs it has established and continue to use local senior trainers to drive these programs through media associations.

As shown in the earlier Pacific Context chapter, the media landscape across the Pacific is changing fast with other players increasing their assistance relative to Australia. PACMAS and the ABC are well positioned to work with DFAT to enhance Australia's contribution. As one key informant noted *"Australia should be at the vanguard of protecting and projecting Pacific culture".*

Ques 4: How successfully has PACMAS responded to unforeseen needs, including those arising from COVID-19?

Overall, as a program designed from the outset to respond to changing development priorities and circumstances, PACMAS has demonstrated a high degree of flexibility and responsiveness. However, the cost, as discussed above, has been the challenge of adhering to a coherent framework in light of the push/pull nature of largely ad hoc bilateral activities required by posts.

An overview of the activities undertaken in the past four years shows a significant weighting in the program towards the ad hoc rather than programmed and foreseen activity. This is underscored by the fact that instead of the initial anticipated budget of $2.4m over three years for phase 3, funding has expanded out to $11.39m over 4 years with the bulk of that additional funding sourced from bilateral and thematic budgets for one off activities. A look at the range of activities (see Attachment 4) undertaken by PACMAS 3 demonstrates the breadth of its work but also demonstrates the way in which the program has increasingly been used to respond to bilateral "shopping lists" rather than consider a coherent program (both regionally and bilaterally) that contributes to more sustainable longer term outcomes.

In some cases, it is clear that PACMAS has been used as the smoother and quicker administrative channel to implement media-related activities requested by the post on behalf of partner governments. The Samoa infrastructure undertaking is a noteworthy example. That is not a criticism of this approach which can be a vastly more effective and efficient pathway particularly in this case as the ABC has a long-standing involvement and technical understanding of Samoa's transmissions facilities. But it does highlight the high degree of flexibility required of PACMAS.

That agility proved to be a much-needed feature of PACMAS with the onset of COVID, the resulting adjustments to the overarching DFAT strategy for the Pacific and the urgent need to support Pacific governments, organisations and media in their response to the tsunami of information demands and at times misinformation about the pandemic. Its activities ranged from drawing on the ABC's own domestic response to develop Pacific-relevant guidelines for the Pacific media through to regular analysis of social media coverage of COVID-19 identifying areas of misinformation and confusion. Training was restructured to make greater use of local trainers and internet-based communications for workshops on COVID reporting.

It is also clear that COVID has had a very significant impact on the way in which PACMAS can operate with an emphasis now on online activities including increasing the capacity of local trainers to conduct in-country workshops which in itself will make a longer term contribution to sustainability.

Looking forward, the issue will be how to support the media and related industries to make the transition to post-COVID while confronted by the massive economic damage that the pandemic has caused the Pacific Island countries and consequently, already revenue-deficient local media organisations.

Question 5: What are the main needs of the Pacific media sector which the next phase of PACMAS should address?

The next phase of PACMAS will need to address several critical issues, in particular the financial sustainability of media organisations and media associations as they transition more towards a digital future with decreasing traditional advertising revenues. This will require a greater focus on institutional strengthening and sustainability and possibly a change in business models as they adapt to the digital transformation. Key informants noted that some media organisations and media associations would not survive if it were not for PACMAS funding and support. COVID 19 has had a significant impact on revenue streams and this will continue to be an issue during the next phase.

While the current approach of being flexible and responsive to the needs of media organisations has been extremely useful in building a trusted brand, strong relationships, and effective partnerships, the next phase will need to focus on institutional reform as part of a natural progression towards systemic change and sustainability. The complexity and scale of the problem indicates that a piecemeal approach will not be adequate for the next phase with the need to address both media practice and education along with commercial viability of media organisations and media associations.

It is evident that the media sector still needs resources, continuous training, equipment, staff retention strategies and business models that accommodate a diversity of media sources while embracing both mainstream and social media. Interventions need to be chosen that clearly fit within a robust capacity building framework that contributes towards strengthening the institution rather than just the individuals working within it. This will require PACMAS to develop a capacity building framework that supports the development of resilient media organisations based on future trends. Hopefully this will give Pacific media organisations the opportunity to "leapfrog" into modern media business organisations.

Developing attraction and retention strategies will be fundamental for many media organisations to survive and continue to produce quality content. PACMAS can play a significant role in helping organisations address this issue. The hidden costs of having to replace staff who leave can be substantial to any organisation so there is both a financial incentive and a need to retain organisational capital and experience. Attraction and recruitment strategies commence with supporting graduates and continue through to senior staff and management embracing a change in workplace culture and gender equality to retain promising young journalists and media practitioners.

Recovering economically from the COVID pandemic and a new way of working will require longer term institutional strengthening and revisiting business models as discussed above. This is an area where PACMAS could build on the work it has already done but work more with senior management to address workplace culture, staff retention and potential revenue streams. Senior management have reportedly had trouble engaging with PACMAS. This is

an area that needs to be strengthened to help address workplace culture and to also ensure those trained are able to apply what they have learned in the workplace.

For PACMAS to focus on institutional issues will require more certainty around funding in order to develop longer term programs based on a capacity building framework. This means training programs and interventions that continue to build towards the longer term outcomes rather than a series of adhoc training programs. Many informants recognised that three year phases are too short for establishing a programmatic approach that can address institutional reforms.

One area of support that could be improved is to develop institutional links with Australian media and to encourage more Pacific voices in Australian media. Similarly the Fiji Media Association identified an initiative to have an annual media workshop to bring together global media thinkers to inject ideas based on the ongoing digital transformation. This is about bringing in global innovation combined with an understanding the local context. In a post pandemic world there should be more opportunities to work industry to industry regionally and globally. According to many informants working on higher end programs with professionals is where media practitioners in the region really want to be heading. This will require PACMAS to become more involved in co-production and cooperative programming building on its initiatives such Pacific Prepared and the Changemakers.

Strengthening local and regional media education programs continues to be a significant issue with more needing to be done to supply graduates who can adapt quickly to the workplace. PACMAS could look at strengthening ties with Australian education providers, encouraging reciprocal academic placements and possible sabbatical postings in Pacific Universities to assist with curriculum development and delivery. Building stronger linkages to Australian institutions with reciprocal arrangements was a frequent request amongst informants interviewed as part of this evaluation.

Given the reduction in revenues, staff turnover and transition to content being sourced and delivered through social media platforms, maintaining professional media standards and integrity will continue to be a challenge during the next phase. PACMAS has worked with media associations to reinforce ethics and standards. The value of this work was emphasised by many informants. It was seen as critical that this is upheld and delivered through local media associations. This will be increasingly important in the future, particularly as significant revenue comes from governments and foreign donors which can heavily influence media content and reporting.

One informant noted that "Social media is making it increasingly less viable for traditional media". People are consuming content in different ways and do not expect to have to pay for news. People consume short grabs of information rather than reading in-depth analysis. At the same time misinformation is becoming prevalent with journalists quoting anonymous sources. The pressure to deliver articles to a deadline with limited resources is leading to short cuts in journalism to the point where some are questioning whether sources are made up or just coming from social media. There is an ongoing need to combat misinformation.

A number of key informants raised the issue of "data journalism". This was about using online data sources and statistics, including "big data" analytics, to create unique content. There are significant amounts of data online that can be tapped and analysed using various tools to create new information and reveal new insights. Examples include comparing satellite imagery from Google Maps over a number of years to illustrate logging, land clearance, or illegal mining activities; monitoring trends in imports and exports; using census data to show new community insights; or tracking social media, google searches or twitter feeds to identify trending topics for reporting. PACMAS could support this increasingly important area to help journalists mine data and information and present it in a more interesting and digestible form.

Development criteria

Relevance

PACMAS is still considered highly relevant by all stakeholders and is directly addressing the needs of Pacific media and DFAT. It does this by undertaking regular needs assessments and working regionally and bilaterally with DFAT and key partners in the sector. Its flexibility has allowed it to remain relevant at a time of rapid global change.

In terms of relevance to Australia's foreign policy, PACMAS supports Australia's key policy objectives as outlined in the 2017 Foreign Policy White Paper.[11] Strengthening Pacific media helps to promote democratic processes that protect the international rules that underpin regional security and prosperity. PACMAS empowers journalists to report on key development issues in the Pacific, as well as promoting economic cooperation and integration while maintaining cultural values. It promotes greater awareness of key development issues that promote economic growth and regional stability such as climate change mitigation, disaster preparedness, gender equality, social inclusion, anti-corruption, sustainable economic development, and democratic elections. It also has a key role in guarding against foreign interference. PACMAS promotes a free and open media while reinforcing ethical reporting and combatting misinformation.

Over the last 18 months PACMAS has shifted its focus to become highly relevant in supporting the Pacific Regional COVID-19 Development Response Plan 2020-2022. PACMAS has been working with governments to develop communication tools to inform the public on critical issues surrounding the pandemic and addressing misinformation promoted through social media. PACMAS has a key role to play going forward in promoting vaccination campaigns and balancing public health concerns with maintaining economic stability.

PACMAS could increase its relevance in the next phase by strengthening people to people links and building stronger connections between Australian and Pacific media and educational institutions.

Effectiveness

Effectiveness is judged by the extent to which outcomes are being achieved from the outputs being delivered by the program. For example, for the majority of PACMAS activities the outputs are the trained journalists and the intended outcomes are improvements in the quality of media and the supporting institutions.

There is no doubt that PACMAS is making a significant contribution to supporting quality media in the Pacific despite the limited resources and challenges faced by the industry. Many informants commented that the quality of media had improved over the last 5 years. However the sustainability of these benefits is undermined somewhat by the turnover in local journalists in the industry.

PACMAS has achieved good outcomes at the individual level with many of those interviewed acknowledging the value they received from attending PACMAS training and how it improved their work. Some indicated that they passed on this training to others in their workplace which indicates some degree of organisational strengthening. However, a lack of engagement with senior management in better using the skills of those trained or strengthening work practices or culture has limited its overall effectiveness. Some informants reported that after workshops and training staff go back to their usual work routines with the training having limited long term impact.

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[11] https://www.dfat.gov.au/publications/minisite/2017-foreign-policy-white-paper/fpwhitepaper/foreign-policy-white-paper.html

As noted, PACMAS has struggled to effectively engage with the tertiary sector responsible for delivering journalism courses. There have been some examples of success but overall the resource limits of these institutions make it difficult for PACMAS to engage effectively.

In terms of reporting on development issues, PACMAS has been effective in improving the capacity of journalists to report on climate change, disaster management, elections, anti-corruption and business. This mainly pertains to the capacity of the individual rather than media organisations adopting a position on improving reporting on development issues.

PACMAS has had some success working with media associations in each of the priority countries. They have been effective in supporting them by identifying training needs, conducting training activities and updating their code of ethics. Most of these organisations are run by volunteers and have very limited resources. To be more effective and to sustain the benefits PACMAS would need to focus on institutional reforms, governance and revenue raising activities to ensure they are more sustainable and operated by paid staff.

PACMAS has demonstrated some success at the regional level with organisations such as PIF, SPREP and the Forum Fisheries Agency. The capacity building activities associated with these regional bodies have been effective in enabling journalists to report on key events such as regional meetings of ministers. While those attending the training praised the work of PACMAS in assisting them to report on these events, the impact will diminish over time unless support is ongoing.

Efficiency

PACMAS is a mature program using a tried and tested delivery modality. Continuity with ABCID as the implementing agency has allowed it to continue to build on past achievements, continuously improve and build corporate knowledge and organisational capital (such as data bases, expertise, reputation, networks and partnerships). These factors all contribute to a more efficient and effective operation over time.

The development of local coordinators, trainers and partners has not only ensured a certain degree of sustainability but has also reduced the costs of involving international advisers. PACMAS is able to draw on these local counterparts to identify needs, build strong relationships and coordinate and deliver training activities. Local knowledge and experience also ensure the right people are targeted for training activities.

PACMAS has also demonstrated an ability to be flexible and adaptive, operating with a high degree of agility to respond to emerging needs and constraints, such as those created by the COVID-19 pandemic. PACMAS was able to pivot quickly to delivering training online, using its local networks to assist in identifying needs and selecting participants.

However, there are several characteristics of the delivery modality that also limit the efficiency. The ad hoc nature of programming means that it is difficult to achieve economies of scale that can be achieved through a planned programmatic approach. For instance, if there is a planned sequence of activities that are all revolve around related topics, then the materials can be designed in such a way that they can be reused from one training to the next or from one location to the next. Reusing intellectual property in this way leads to a very efficient program delivery model over time. This is occurring to some extent through the train the trainer programs provided the local trainers are able to use ABCID's intellectual property to conduct local training. Whereas designing and implementing one-off training activities is expensive. Similarly, certainty around funding and long-term programming allows the program to retain staff for longer periods, which will also attract higher calibre staff to key positions. Being able to give more longer-term certainty to potential recruits will attract more applicants and lead to a more efficient operation. The trade-off is that it may be less agile in adapting to rapid changes in direction.

Many training workshops are based on a partnership approach which includes media, government, business and civil society. Efficiencies are achieved by bringing these groups together to establish networks and share information about development issues and priorities. This supports the media's role in informing the public about development issues based on local examples.

Efficiencies are also be gained by working with local media associations, media organisations, universities and other donors by identifying synergies between programs and activities, and using local organisations to deliver training. Initial transaction costs may be higher (for instance in negotiating contributions and organising arrangements with partners) but combining activities and sharing facilities may result in achieving more efficient and effective outcomes in the longer term. PACMAS has achieved some efficiencies by inviting students from educational institutions to its training activities, however, uptake has been minimal. It has also worked extensively with media associations who have also organised training activities resulting in more efficient delivery with PACMAS assistance.

Gender and Social Inclusion

The PACMAS approach to addressing gender and social inclusion (GESI) issues has been to incorporate the GESI principles across the program. This is evident in a number of ways such as ensuring a gender balance amongst the trainers and the trainees and weaving gender sensitive and gender inclusive reporting into general tradecraft workshops rather than holding gender-specific workshops which now draw few people due to "gender-workshop fatigue".

PACMAS also draws on the ABC's expertise in gender and disability issues to identify the best ways they can be incorporated into content. In addition, it has undertaken targeted initiatives at the national level. A particular example is its work with Pacific Girl through Pacific Women focusing on cyber safety for young women and girls in Tonga. It is also a partner in the 2020 Global Media Mapping Project which is an ongoing longitudinal study on gender in the world's media.

In terms of its approach to disability inclusion, there is specific encouragement for people with disabilities to participate in PACMAS activities and where it is thematically relevant, workshop attendees are encouraged to consider the position of people with disabilities e.g. the impact of a disaster. It also aims to include Pacific minorities and Australia's indigenous peoples both in the Pacific and Australia in its activities.

Overall, PACMAS has adopted the gender equity and social inclusion principles applying them both to the process and outputs of its activities successfully mainstreaming GESI principles in its work. The impact assessment noted that most of those attending PACMAS training indicated that gender issues were frequently raised and that their understanding of gender-based violence, social inclusion and women's economic empowerment had improved. PACMAS's approach to monitoring and evaluation ensures gender and disability disaggregated data, and it has conducted specific studies into gender equality and women's empowerment in Pacific media as part of the Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP).

What hobbles the outcomes of this approach is the enduring challenges to women's equity across the Pacific. Apart from the well-observed and widely reported cultural barriers, there are the practical daily realities particularly in Solomon Islands and Vanuatu where men dominate the newsrooms. When it comes to recruitment, it will be the men who will be recruited even if women have better qualifications. A notable exception is Samoa where there are high rates of tertiary educated women and more women are in senior positions through the private and public sectors, including the media.

Yet, despite these entrenched barriers, it would seem that editors at least in Solomon Islands are starting to prioritise gender issues with reporters (albeit male not female) covering women's issues because of the training that has sensitised them. Yet one observer noted that

when the newsroom is confronted by overwhelming challenges such as COVID and their own financial survival, the GESI approach is soon lost.

M&E Framework - capturing the outcomes

The interviews highlighted the need to develop a stronger evidence base about the impact of the program and better ways of measuring medium- and long-term outcomes. This has been a challenge for PACMAS due to the ad hoc nature of programming and limited resources allocated to monitoring and evaluation (M&E). Monitoring outcomes using qualitative and quantitative methods is usually labour intensive.

Other criticisms noted during the interviews included a need to share more M&E information publicly and to keep trainers informed of results from surveys and evaluations.

The M&E system has evolved over time and does not appear to have had the level of visibility it could have given the work completed. There is no separate M&E plan.
The key components of the M&E system that have been developed by PACMAS includes:
- Participant databases - all feedback forms and tracking by attendance sheet
- Activity database - registers each activity by thematic area and location
- Evaluation database - responses to activities – post activity evaluation
- Content database - all content pieces from participants over the course of the program -author, publication, etc. – there are about 400 pieces of content
- Speaker database - names of all speakers - by organisations

For larger activities PACMAS has conducted pre and post evaluation surveys. For instance with the economic and business reporting where there have been multiple rounds where they have been able to track outcomes more effectively. For train the trainer programs they have looked at things like the level of confidence of trainers. For one off training they have focused mainly on end of training assessments. There appears to be limited workplace assessments to understand what has been put into practice as a result of training.

PACMAS has not conducted in-depth case study analysis apart from publishing success stories. One way to strengthen this area is to conduct case studies on organisations (e.g. media associations) and individuals, both successful and least successful, to examine what works and what doesn't. The main issue PACMAS has is identifying what interventions are likely to be programmed long term and what are one-off exercises due to the way funding is organised through bilateral programs. For instance the work on code of ethics, court reporting and helping media associations has increased over time in response to demand. If activities had been pre-planned then more resources could have been allocated to establishing a baseline and monitoring outcomes over the course of the program.

Longer term planning would assist in building a more robust M&E framework. The current M&E is based on the original design document. PACMAS started on a small scale with only $800,000 per year to run the program. Allocating around 7% of the core budget to M&E is also not sufficient given the current scope, diversity of activities and locations.

PACMAS has also not systematically monitored media for key development themes across the Pacific except for reporting on climate change. They have done some work with Monash University on monitoring the reporting on climate change through content analysis in 8 countries. They have also funded some research work into labour mobility and cybersecurity. Applying a similar media monitoring approach to other themes would be one way to detect the impact of the program on media content, for instance the number and quality of articles published on GESI, election reporting and other development issues arising from PACMAS training.

In terms of learning, PACMAS has done a significant amount of work on meta-analysis to understand more about what works and under what conditions:

- Meta-analysis for 2020 on general training delivery of PACMAS activities producing a training checklist on learning how to do training remotely
- Meta-analysis on business stream highlighting experience and key learning points, with areas of improvement
- Meta-analysis of post training with 11 different trainer of trainer activities including participant perceptions.

They have applied these learnings to ensure continuous improvement, most noticeable over the last 2 years of the program in the way they have adapted to COVID and built stronger relationships and partnerships.

In terms of establishing a baseline for long term impact assessment, the program has supported the development of regional "State of Media and Communication" reports[12] and for each of the 14 Pacific Island Countries (PICs). These were completed in 2013 and undertaken through a partnership between RMIT University (Australia), the University of Goroka (UoG, Papua New Guinea) and UNITEC (New Zealand). The study was commissioned as a baseline study to inform PACMAS activities across 14 countries. The study was developed and undertaken between June 2012 and April 2013, and included visits to each country to conduct a total of 212 individual interviews, and the establishment of a Panel of Expertise for verification. The reports covered (1) Media and policy liaison; (2) Media and communication systems; (3) Media capacity building and (4) Media content. Each of these areas were explored through the cross cutting themes of gender, disability and youth and across six strategic activities:

- Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVETs)
- Pacific Emergency Broadcasting Systems (PEBS)
- Pacific Communication Technicians
- National Media and Communication Associations
- Non Communicable Diseases (NCDs)
- Climate Change.

These reports represent a useful country-wide baseline and could be conducted again in 2023 to examine the longer term impacts of PACMAS with the countries involved in the program over a 10 year period. If these reports were repeated in 2023 it would provide a useful mechanism to examine the contribution PACMAS has made to areas of significant change.
For the next phase it is recommended that PACMAS develop a specific M&E Plan based on the lessons learned and incorporating the work done so far. This should be properly costed and resourced and include conducting the State of Media reporting again in 2023 to support a 10 year impact study which could be part of the next evaluation in 2024. It should be noted here that 2013 State of the Media exercise cost around $400K.

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[12] See https://www.abc.net.au/cm/lb/9248758/data/pacmas-regional-state-of-media-report-data.pdf

Conclusions and recommendations

Conclusions

Within its limited scope of services and budget and despite the momentous and deleterious impact of COVID-19 halfway through the current phase, PACMAS 3 has made a strong contribution to improving the capacity of journalists and communication practitioners to report on the key issues affecting development.

But there is a clear and outstanding need for media development activities to continue and to be strengthened beyond the existing PACMAS 3 scope.

This is not because PACMAS 3 has been less effective than required but because of the Pacific media context. PACMAS in its current form is too small and not ambitious enough for the pressing industry and strategic tasks at hand. It is important to recognise that locally owned or managed media in the Pacific face a range of fundamental threats, some of which are shared by media elsewhere while others are endemic to the Pacific. The shared challenge is digital disruption and its impact on the media's underlying business model. Responding to this "disruption" is what brings the Pacific media into its own sea of difficulties with the rise of social media as alternative sources of news manipulating news quality and undermining the local media's already fragile financial viability.

Add this to the list of other Pacific social and economic challenges - poor and unreliable public infrastructure including electricity and communications; scant and restricted opportunity for advertising revenue in under-developed economies; under-skilled human resources - all of which the media need to survive. There are also cultural mores, political and legislative restrictions, and influential pressures which can and do undermine credible and independent reporting.

PACMAS has resisted the temptation to address this broad range of exogenous constraints and instead focuses on its areas of competence. At times, this has been difficult as the demands for support put to them are extensive but it would seem that the flexibility built into the PACMAS design enabled it to be responsive and very effective at a time of greatest need for agility when the effects of COVID-19 became evident.

Overall, PACMAS has supported improvements in the quality of media in the Pacific through its workshops and training programs with feedback pointing to journalists being better informed and knowledgeable on issues. However the high turnover of staff was highlighted as a challenge in Pacific newsrooms with more experienced journalists, many benefitting from PACMAS training, moving into Communication and Public Relations work, leaving a gap in the newsroom.

PACMAS was not able to engage effectively with the tertiary education sector responsible for delivering journalism courses at universities and TVETs. This is largely due to the inadequacy of capability and resourcing of these tertiary institutions. Graduates from these institutions are usually not ready for the job.

Most of the respondents commended PACMAS for its flexibility and the way it was able to blend into the Pacific way of doing things. This however is seen as an ad hoc rather than planned activity and part of a comprehensive evolving framework.

Gender equity is an important component of the PACMAS program but for some Pacific countries this is a difficult principle to put into action. Males dominate the newsrooms while females are dominant in other parts of the media industry.

The partnership approach PACMAS takes with other stakeholders was highly commended. This is needed in order for them not to duplicate communication goals. National media associations despite the challenges they face, welcomed the support provided by PACMAS for industry workers.

In summary, the evaluation concluded:

- Despite a challenged and difficult operating context made worse by COVID-19, PACMAS 3 has contributed to a stronger media sector. At a minimum, in an industry challenged by rapid turnover of young, under-skilled recruits, it helps to stop it from going backwards through its availability of training.
- A wide range of stakeholders are very positive about the PACMAS role in equipping media practitioners to support key development priorities.
- The PACMAS brand is widely recognised and respected and is often seen as the only effective agency providing much needed media training.
- Gender and social inclusion principles have been very soundly incorporated into PACMAS. A rare development assistance example of successful mainstreaming and one worth sharing with other non-media aid programs in the Pacific.
- PACMAS has worked effectively with key national and regional organisations in response to needs and demands but within the PACMAS framework.
- But the high degree of flexibility and responsiveness has been achieved at the cost of a comprehensive and evolving framework contributing to a sense of short-termism.
- Longer term planning would assist in building a more robust M&E framework.
- Monitoring and evaluation have been energetic but the results have not been as visible as they could be resulting in a limited public narrative and appreciation of achievements
- Need to develop a stronger evidence base about the impact of the program and better ways of measuring medium- and long-term outcomes.
- M&E has also been adversely affected by the short term ad hoc nature of a number of the activities.
- Addressing the factors contributing to the region's under-resourced tertiary training institutions is beyond the current scope and budget of PACMAS.

In terms of meeting the development criteria, the PACMAS performance in this regard is summarised as follows:

Relevance: PACMAS is still considered highly relevant by all stakeholders and is directly addressing the needs of Pacific media and DFAT. It does this by undertaking regular needs assessments and working regionally and bilaterally with DFAT and key partners in the sector. Its flexibility has allowed it to remain relevant at a time of rapid global change.

Effectiveness: PACMAS is making a significant contribution to supporting quality media in the Pacific despite the limited resources and challenges faced by the industry. Many informants commented that the quality of media had improved over the last 5 years. However the sustainability of these benefits is undermined somewhat by the turnover in local journalists in the industry.

Efficiency: PACMAS is a mature program using a tried and tested delivery modality. Continuity with ABCID as the implementing agency has allowed it to build on past achievements, continuously improve and build corporate knowledge and organisational capital (such as data bases, expertise, reputation, networks and partnerships). These factors all contribute to a more efficient and effective operation over time. However, there are several characteristics of the delivery modality that also limit the efficiency. The ad hoc nature of

programming means that it is difficult to achieve economies of scale that can be achieved through a planned programmatic approach.

Gender equity and social inclusion: PACMAS has wholeheartedly adopted the gender equity and social inclusion principles applying them both to the process and outputs of its activities successfully mainstreaming GESI principles in its work. PACMAS's approach to monitoring and evaluation ensures gender and disability disaggregated data, and it has conducted specific studies into gender equality and women's empowerment in Pacific media as part of the Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP). There have been numerous specific gender training activities including gender sensitive reporting and gender inclusive reporting to support reporting on national election campaigns.

Recommendations

There are some areas where PACMAS 3 could strengthen or realign its activities to improve outcomes. These recommendations fall into three main headings: capacity building, monitoring and evaluation, and operational constraints.

In putting these recommendations together, the evaluation team has assumed that there will be a successor to PACMAS 3. Whether that is PACMAS 4 or something else, a successor to the current program will require a full design process to meet DFAT's design requirements. If that is the case, the evaluation team has further assumed that given the critical Pacific development and strategic issues currently at play, any gap between Australian media development initiatives across the Pacific would be undesirable. This will be particularly important in the continuing COVID-19 circumstances as PACMAS continues to support Pacific media in their efforts to combat misinformation about the pandemic. The team was also advised by several stakeholders that any gap left by Australia in media support would be filled by others.

Therefore PACMAS 3 should continue beyond its current end date of 31 December 2021 until such time its successor was ready to mobilise which could take between 12 to 18 months from the start of the design process pending the contracting arrangements.

The full set of recommendations flowing out of the conclusions are set out in Box 3 below.

Beyond these recommendations, the evaluation team has provided a rationale and outline of a possible PACMAS 3 successor in the following chapter.

Box 3 - Recommendations for remainder of PACMAS 3
stemming from key conclusions

Recommendations	Element:	Key conclusions
• Maintain tradecraft training and issues-specific workshops but with greater use of on-the-job and shorter out-of-hours modules • Continue to expand cohort of local trainers through training of trainers • Due to high newsroom attrition rates, bridging programs in collaboration with national media associations to cover journalism basics for incoming recruits • Existing mentoring strengthened and formalised drawing on well-respected senior local and regional media practitioners including in Australia • Training beyond the newsroom extending to media business managers, broadcasting technicians and other relevant disciplines • Regional practitioner networks encouraged to reap the greatest ongoing and sustained benefits of peer to peer interaction	Capacity building	A difficult and challenging operating context exacerbated by COVID-19-related working conditions and its economic impact on advertising revenue in addition to high turnover of staff with young recruits under-trained and inexperienced \. Wide range of stakeholders are very positive about the PACMAS role in equipping media practitioners to support key development priorities. PACMAS brand is widely recognised and respected and is often seen as the only effective agency providing much needed media training. Addressing the factors contributing to the region's under-resourced tertiary training institutions is beyond the current scope and budget of PACMAS.
• State of the Media Report repeated to provide comparative analysis with state of Pacific media since last report in 2013 • Strengthened capacity building framework	*Monitoring and evaluation*	Monitoring and evaluation have been energetic but the results have not been as visible as they could be resulting in a limited public narrative and appreciation of achievements. Longer term planning would assist in building a more robust M&E framework. M&E has also been adversely affected by the short term ad hoc nature of a number of the activities.
• Greater interaction with senior managers to address the business model issues including digital transition challenges	Operational constraints	Locally owned or managed media in the Pacific face a range of fundamental threats undermining their capacity and viability. These include:

- More support for local media's ability to operate more effectively in response to regulative and legislative restrictions on the media - Strengthen opportunity for collaborative productions with Australian media entities		- limited opportunity for advertising revenue in under-developed economies and linked to impact of COVID-19 and the digital disruption; - under-skilled and high turnover of human resources; - political and legislative restrictions; and - other influential pressures which can and do undermine credible and independent reporting

Future options post Phase 3

Australia has long been a major, if not dominant influence, on the Pacific media. The ABC's international broadcasting services and notably Radio Australia have played a critical role in not just news coverage but also as a model for independent and credible reporting. Equally, Australia has encouraged a stronger media through aid-funded media strengthening programs for around 20 years both at the regional level through PACMAS and its predecessor and bilaterally in PNG (MDI) and Solomon Islands (SOLMAS).

But as noted earlier in this report, Australia's position as a major influencing agent on the shape of Pacific media is declining due to increasing involvement of other donors such as USA, China and New Zealand in this sector.

It is now clear that this decline needs to be reversed. Focusing on the development perspective, this report has demonstrated that the Pacific media still has a critical need for ongoing capacity building and strengthening. But responding to this stubborn yawning gap in capability will require a more comprehensive and cohesive aid investment than PACMAS 3 represents.

This evaluation has also found that despite the abiding constraints and difficult operating context, PACMAS 3 has played a vital part in responding to the capacity gap but in many ways, it can be likened to the little boy with his finger in the dyke. The needs are greater than PACMAS in its current format can deal with and the pressures have been intensified by the impact of COVID which is undermining the already fragile financial viability of many Pacific media organisations. Social media too is causing a business model and information disruption. Intersecting with these specific regional challenges is the near invisibility of the Pacific in the Australian media which feeds an undermining domestic sense of irrelevance.

Any future activity needs to collectively address the critical pressure points and gaps identified in the evaluation to achieve a cohesive and sustained outcome. At the same time, it provides the opportunity for Australia to match its Pacific media development goals with its geo-strategic interests. And to encourage greater Australian engagement in and with the Pacific media, it should be based on a partnership framework that would encourage greater exchange and engagement.

In terms of development priorities, stakeholders identified three main areas of concern, (1) recovering economically from the COVID pandemic, (2) climate change and (3) the influence of China's state-controlled media models. In terms of GESI it was noted that this is being hardwired into the culture while also protecting local cultural values. It continues to be strengthened with the support of a wide range of aid programs but given a voice through PACMAS. The other issue raised where journalists are seeking assistance is the reporting on

the exploitation and destruction of natural resources which is often underreported because the issues are complicated and localised, and the vested interests have significant political power. This includes destruction of natural areas, logging, mining and fishing.

In terms of climate change, PACMAS has done excellent work connecting journalists to credible information sources and linking it to community level impacts. Journalists have appreciated being able to report confidently on climate change. Prior to PACMAS the main source of information was coming directly from politicians and government officials[13]. This information was not balanced with scientific information leading to misreporting. Climate change was conflated with natural disasters rather than understanding the long term impacts. The connection created between journalists and climate experts led to more accurate reporting and local stories around climate change which was picked up by social media and other traditional media organisations. This work is valued and should continue as a regional approach to build regional solidarity and support around climate issues.

Some stakeholders noted that there was an erosion of the tradition of independent journalism in part because of Chinese influence with the Chinese government offering scholarships in addition to financial partnerships with media organisations that are struggling.

Taking all this into account, the activity's development goal could be to facilitate informed debate and discourse on development across government, business and civil society, via Pacific media. Its objective would be to strengthen the capacity of the region's journalists and communication practitioners. In meeting this aspiration, it would take a multi-pronged approach in addressing the capacity gaps and economic viability pressures identified in this evaluation report. In doing so, it would require working in five areas to ensure a comprehensive and solid approach to the challenge. Those five areas are:
1. Capacity and skills
2. Media economics and business practice
3. Media systems
4. Coordination and cooperation
5. Research and analysis

A possible framework for a future activity is set out in Box 4 below.

Geographic focus should be determined by a combination of development priorities and geo-strategic considerations. As such, it should probably be expanded beyond the current five countries, keeping them as priorities but adding relevant Micronesian countries.

It would seek formalised engagement with Australia's public and private media organisations as well as tertiary journalism/communication institutions. Management for the overall program should rest with an organisation with strong credentials and in-depth experience in working with the Pacific media as well as convening skills to bring together the range of potential Pacific and Australian partners. It should also have a Pacific office to underscore its Pacific focus and work closely with the MDI in PNG.

As an official aid investment, it is anticipated that any expanded media assistance initiative would be aligned to the government's Pacific aid policy settings contributing to the overarching aid goals and objectives. It should also be included into a whole of government coordinated toolbox of policy settings that encompass the breadth of Australia's engagement and partnership with the Pacific in media and communications. In other words, it should be part of a comprehensive strategy.

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[13] From research undertaken by the Australia Pacific Climate Partnership

Box 4 - Possible future activity framework

Goal: to facilitate informed debate and discourse on development across government, business and civil society via Pacific media

Objective: strengthen the capacity of the region's journalists and communication practitioners

Component: Capacity and skills	**Activities:** Target cohorts - newsrooms - technical streams - national, government, regional orgs and CSO communications - journalism course coordinators - journalism course students **Approaches:** - structured mentoring programs - structured and progressive training courses by country - training partnerships between Australian and regional tertiary journalism/communication courses - journalism scholarships - exchanges to Aust and NZ media organisations - ability to respond to ad hoc requests - support for media associations to identify training needs - co-productions (Aust/Pac) engaging public and private Australian media
Component: Media economics and business practice	**Activities:** Engagement in co-productions Business training for senior management (in-country and placements) Revision of business models
Component: Media systems	**Activities:** - Learning, training and exchange opportunities to coordinate and improvement knowledge of Pacific broadcast and IT engineers - Scheduled program of training, webinars and conferences on social media use and access - Infrastructure upgrade - Equipment provision
Component: Coordination and cooperation	**Activities:** - Strengthened and formalised coordination with like-minded donors to enhance impact - Agreements for delegated responsibility where comparative advantage lies with other donor e.g. USA in parts of Micronesia - Formalised agreements with Australian media organisations to enhance engagement and exchange with Pacific media - Support for national media associations to provide in-country coordination guidance
Component: Research and learning	**Activities:** Comprehensive M&E framework to track improvements, gaps and lessons Drawing from the M&E findings to improve the narrative about the media initiative for public distribution in Australia and the Pacific Regular update of State of the Media reports to track media coverage and access

Attachment 1: Assessment queries and associated questions

Assessment query	Evaluation questions	Criterion addressed
1. To what extent has PACMAS 3 met each of its three end-of-investment outcomes (and targeted outputs listed in the design)?	*Outcome 1:* To what extent are organisations in the Pacific delivering well-designed training programs in journalism and related technical disciplines? Which organisations have shown interest and sustained engagement in PACMAS and its approach?	Efficiency and effectiveness Relevance and sustainability
	Outcome 2 To what extent are media practitioners and cross-sectoral interlocutors better equipped to support key development priorities in the Pacific? What has worked better or not worked at all in achieving the improvements?	Effectiveness Effectiveness
	Outcome 3 Which national and regional organisations are interested and engaged? Why some and not others? To what extent are they strengthening the reach and effectiveness of their public communication and engagement? What are the key factors influencing their approach?	Relevance & sustainability Efficiency & effectiveness Effectiveness
	Outcome 4 - GESI cross sectoral To what extent has PACMAS been able to address gender equality and social inclusion issues across all outcome areas? What strategies/activities have worked best in addressing GESI? How is the response and pick-up of the GESI approaches and practice?	Effectiveness Effectiveness Relevance
2. Is PACMAS contributing to a better quality, strong and independent Pacific media sector?	How do PACMAS' various activities make a contribution? What are the most effective and how has this been determined? What worked well and what didn't work? Where are the gaps and/or abiding constraints? Do the institutional strengths of the ABC contribute to PACMAS' outcomes? If so, how?	Relevance & effectiveness Effectiveness Effectiveness & efficiency Relevance Effectiveness, efficiency & relevance
3. Is PACMAS well placed to support Pacific media in the future, given the changes to the media landscape?	What are the emerging challenges facing PAC media? What changes or different approaches are needed to address these challenges What should PACMAS do in its next phase to respond to the expected changes To what extent should the main focus for support shift for Phase 4?	Relevance Relevance & effectiveness Relevance Relevance & effectiveness
4. How successfully has PACMAS responded to unforeseen needs, including arising from COVID-19?	How successfully has PACMAS responded to unforeseen needs, including arising from COVID-19? What worked well and what didn't work? How will working under COVID-19 conditions affect the next phase of implementation?	Effectiveness & relevance Effectiveness Effectiveness, efficiency and relevance
5. What are the main needs of the Pacific media sector which the next [three- year] phase of PACMAS will need to address?	What should the development priorities be in the next phase of the program? How can the next phase build on the previous phases to ensure benefits are sustained? What external factors and DFAT policies need to be taken into account when designing the next phase?	Relevance Effectiveness & sustainability Relevance & coherence

Attachment 2: List of stakeholders interviewed

Name	Organisation	Position	Scheduling
Peta Donald	DFAT	Asst Director, Pacific strategic analysis and comms, Office of the Pacific	Friday 4 June (f2f & webex)
Rebecca Worner	DFAT	Director, Pac strategic analysis and comms, Office of the Pacific	Friday 4 June (f2f & webex)
Marcus Khan	DFAT	former DFAT PACMAS manager	Friday 4 June (f2f & webex)
Alex Park	DFAT	former 1st secretary Fiji	Friday 4 June (f2f & webex)
Grace Williams	DFAT	former 2nd sec SI	Friday 4 June (f2f & webex)
Rhona McPhee	DFAT	Director, Micronesia Section and former DHOM Tonga	Friday 4 June (f2f & webex)
Kate Duggan	Aust Pac Climate Parnership	team leader	Friday 4 June (f2f & webex)
Marsali Mackinnon	DFAT	Investment manager, Change Maker; Stay Strong Pacific; Virtual Museum	Friday 4 June (f2f & webex)
Penny Denis	DFAT	Pacific aid quality section	Friday 4 June (f2f & webex)
Melissa Tipping	DFAT	1st sec, Fiji	Friday 4 June (f2f & webex)
Jo Elsom	ABC-ID	Lead, International Dev	Roundtable 7 June 10am
Vipul Khosla	ABC-ID	Program manager	Roundtable 7 June 10am
Kate Seymour	ABC-ID	Project manager	Roundtable 7 June 10am
Amelia Makutu	ABC-ID	Fiji PACMAS	Roundtable Tuesday 8 June 11.30am
Nina Tuhaika	ABC-ID	SI PACMAS	Roundtable Tuesday 8 June 11.30am
Yasmine Bjornum	ABC-ID	Vanuatu PACMAS	Roundtable Tuesday 8 June 11.30am
Taina Enoka	ABC-ID	Tonga PACMAS	
Tipi Autagavaia	ABC-ID	Samoa PACMAS	18 June
Shane McLeod	Lowy Institute	Research fellow, Pacific Program	27 May (f2f)
Jonathan Pryke	Lowy Institute	Director, Pacific Program	27 May (f2f)
Anthony Bubalo	Judith Nielsen Institute for	Deputy Director	27 May (f2f)

	Journalism and Ideas		
Bonnie Bley	Judith Nielsen Institute for Journalism and Ideas	Manager, Grants and Evaluation	27 May (f2f)
Jemima Garrett	coord, AAPMI	PACMAS trainer	3 June
Aaron Kearney	ABC	producer/trainer	3 June
Natasha Meleisea	Pasifika TV	CEO	3 June
Chris Greene	formerly BBC Media Action	contractor & former head of BBC Asia	14 July
Amanda Stark	MFAT, NZ	Pacific media capacity building	22 June
Casi Gentzel	State Dept, US Govt	Global Engagement Center, Hawaii	24 June
Kristina Ryan	State Dept, US Govt	US Embassy, Canberra	24 June
Stanley Simpson	Mai TV/Fiji Media Assoc	Director	21 June
Rosi Doviverate	Fiji Sun/Fiji Media Assoc	Managing Editor, Digital	21 June
Indra Singh	Fiji Broadcasting Corp	Manager, News and Sports	18 June
Dr Shailendra Singh	USP	Coordinator, Journalist School	15 June
Tara Chetty	Pacific Women	Partnership lead	22 June
Rita Narayan	Loop Pacific	News editor	17 June
Nanise Saune-Qaloewai	UNDP	Parliamentary and Democracy adviser	18 June
Melissa Tipping	DFAT	First secretary (dev coop)	15 June
Malcolm Paterson	DFAT	First secretary (pol.)	15 June
Lisa Williams-Lahari	Pacific Islands Frum	Public Affairs adviser	28 July
Rudy Bartley	JAWS/WT Media	Outgoing pres & owner	16 June
Alex Rheeny	Samoa Observer	Editor	18 June
Nanette Woonton	SPREP	Comms lead	15 June
Laura McIlhenny	DFAT	Second secretary	10 June
Director Nisha	UNESCO	Pacific director	30 June
Georgina Kekea	MASI	President	11 June
Georgina Maka'a	MASI	Training coordinator	11 June
Joel Lamani	Paoa FM	General manager	10 June
Priestley Habru	Island Sun	publisher	7 June
Ofani Eremae	Island Sun	editor	7 June
George Herming	Govt. Communications	director	9 June
Casper	People with Disability SI		June
Rosalie Nongebatu	DFAT	Senior comms manager	10 June
Lisa Osifelo	Media One	Director	7 June
Johnson Honimaew	SIBC	CEO	8 June

Cullen Ghala Mamu	Solomon Star	Editor	June
Robert Iroga	Solomon Business Magazine	Editor	Link failed; sending written reply
Tane Kauvaka	TiHE	Media studies lead	22 June
Nanise Fifita	Govt Ombudsman	Comms officer	21 June
Kalafi Moala	Talanoa o'Tonga	media owner	15 June
Pesi Forua	Matangi Tonga	publisher/editor	15 June
Anau Taufa	DFAT	PACMAS focal point	21 June
Francis Herman	VBTC	CEO	8 June
Franky Valea	MAV/Right to Information	Exec member	11 June
Wilson Toa	Balance of Power	country manager	14 June
Karim Maher	FM107	owner	11 June
Ellenson Taurakoto	DFAT	Public diplomacy manager	11 June
Cordell Ryan	DFAT	second secretary	11 June

Attachment 3: Pacific context tables

Table 1 World Press Freedom Index 2021

The World Press Freedom Index compiled by RSF (Reporters Sans Frontières) every year ranks media freedom in 180 countries. Only five developing Pacific countries were included in the 2021 index. As a point of comparison to the five, New Zealand was ranked eighth in the top 10 countries while Australia came in below Samoa at 25, USA was 44 while China was ranked at 177.

Country	2021 ranking	2020 ranking	Index Comment
PNG	47	46	Media enjoys a relatively benign legislative environment but political pressure, concerns of publishers and lack of funding and material resources hinder independent and credible reporting
Solomon Islands	not ranked	not ranked	Enjoys media freedom guaranteed by article 12 of the Constitution. But defamation law intimidates journalists and encourages self-censorship
Fiji	55	52	2010 Media Industry Development Decree was turned into law in 2018. Violation of the law risks two years in prison. Sedition laws also encourage self-censorship.
Samoa	21	21	Fears about Samoa losing its status as a regional press freedom model following the restoration in 2017 of a law criminalising defamation. In 2020 Prime Minister Tuilaepa threatened to ban Facebook.
Tonga	46	50	Independent media outlets increasingly assumed a watchdog role although politicians prone to sue media outlets exposing them to costly damages awards.

Table 2 Australia's Pacific media support engagement

Executor	Activity	Type of engagement	Period	Budget
DFAT	PACMAS	development assistance	since 2007; current phase 17/18 - 21/22	Phase 3: $11.39m to date
DFAT	MDI (PNG)	development assistance	2005 - ongoing	$1.5m approx p.a.
DFAT	Women in News and Sport	training and mentoring	2020-2022 (Phase 3)	$0.5m
DFAT	DFAT/ABC	Pacific sports TV & radio programs	2020-202121	$1.2m
DFAT	DFAT/ABC	Douglas Gabb and John Doherty Pacific Internships	ongoing	determined annually
DFAT	Diplomatic posts	ad hoc support	ongoing	unknown
DITRDC/Free TV (Communications)	Pacific/Aus TV	content provision	2019-2021	$17.1 m over 3 years
Judith Nielsen Institute	Guardian Pacific Project	content exchange and publishing opportunity	2019 - present	unknown
ABC	ABC Radio Australia & ABC Australia	international broadcasting	ongoing	annually $11m (but includes Asia)
Walkley Foundation/Google News Initiative	Walkley	training webinar through Pacific Island News Assoc and Pacific Media Network (NZ)	2020/21	unknown

Attachment 4: PACMAS 3 activity by location and date

Regional

LOCATION	ACTIVITY	DATE/STATUS
Fiji	13th Triennial Conference of Pacific Women Workshop & Supported coverage	Sept 17
Tonga	Tonga Gender Senstive Elections	Oct 17
Phillipines	Tunanomics Pacific Editors Dialogue Workshop & Supported Covearge, 2017	Dec 17
Regional	Technical Broadcast and Transmission workshop	April 18
Fiji	TVET - Media Education support scoping	Aug 18
Fiji	Digital and Social Media workshop support- Fourth Pacific Islands Climate Outlook Forum (PICOF-4)	Oct 18
Vanuatu	Digital and Social media support for National Broadcasters	Nov 18
Samoa	Digital & Social Media Workshop - SPREP	Mar 18
Samoa	Samoa Film Challenge - Centre for Samoan Studies	Sept 18
Regional	Economic and Business Reporting - Training of trainers (Phase 1)	Oct 18
Hawaii	Tunanomics Pacific Editors Dialogue Workshop & Supported Coverage, 2018	Dec 18
Suva	Forum Economic Ministers Meeting, April 2019	April 19
Samoa	Support for Pacific Journalist	July 19
Samoa	Samoa Code of Practice	Aug 19
Tuvalu	Forum Leaders Meeting, August 2019	Aug 19
Regional	Economic and Business Reporting - Training of trainers (Phase 2)	June 19
Vanuatu	Balance of Power - Vanuatu Elections	Dec 19
Vanuatu	Vanuatu Budget Activity	Nov 19
Adelaide	Regional Reps Workshop	Oct 19
Nadi, Fiji	Youth Leaders Dialogue (SPC)	Oct 19
Samoa	Kordia Mast Expenses (Pre Contract)	17/18
Suva	Pacific Resilience Meeting	April 19
Online	FEMM 2020	July 20
Samoa	Reporting on Justice	Sept 20
Online, multiple locations	Regional COVID19 Response includes a number of activities: (1) Media advice for covering COVID-19, (2) Curb the infodemic (Social media tracking) and (3) COVID-19 workshops in Solomon Islands, Niue and Palau	Ongoing
Online, multiple location	Explainers - basic training resources in four main areas: (i) gender based violence (ii) parliamentary reporting (iii) budgets and (iv) getting started as a business reporter	Ongoing
Regional	Global Media Mapping	Ongoing
Online	Impact Assessment	Ongoing
Samoa, Tonga and Vanuatu	Media law and ethics	Ongoing

Bilateral

LOCATION	ACTIVITY	DATE
Solomon Islands	SI Elections	April 17
Samoa	Samoa Mast	Aug 18
	Pacific Games Coverage	July 19
	Samoa COVID19 Workshop	Aug 20
	Samoa Gov Comms COVID-19 Workshop	Jan 21
Tonga	Tonga Scoping and Consultations	Nov 18
	TIHE support	Nov 18
	Consultations with Media Association of Tonga	Ongoing
	TONGA NEMO Emergency broadcasting roundtable	April 19
	Tonga provincial elections support	April 19
	Media assoc. of Tonga 16 DOA	Nov/Dec 19
	Tonga press club planning and implementation	Feb 20
	Tonga Parliamentary planning support activity	Ongoing
Fiji	Fiji Parliamentary Reporters	Feb 19

	Fiji Broadcast Technicians Training	Nov 19
	Budget reporting	May 19
	DINFO Digital and Social Media	Aug 19
	Fiji DINFO Animation Workshop	2020
	FMA consultations and support	Ongoing
	FMA - Media Capacity Mapping	July 20
	Fiji COVID19 Response	August 20
Vanuatu	Vanuatu - Sista 16DOA	Dec 21

Thematic and Special Projects

LOCATION	ACTIVITY	DATE
Regional	Digital archives - The Memory Project	Oct 18
Solomon Islands	Labour Mobility Economic Reporting Masterclass	Oct 18
Solomon Islands	Change Makers - Solomon Islands	Feb-June 18
Tonga and Vanuatu	Labour Mobility - Communications Research Study	Ongoing
Tonga	Pacific Women Cybersmart	Nov 19
	Stay Strong Pacific - Series of short films about impact of COVID-19 in the Pacific region	Aug 20
Vanuatu	Video story and research support for Vanuatu LM	Oct 20
	Pacific Virtual Museum	Completed
Fiji, Solomons & Tonga	Youth Pacific Change Makers	Ongoing
8 countries (Fiji, PNG, Palau, Samoa, Tonga, Vanuatu, NZ and Australia)	Pacific Prepared	Ongoing