

## 2019 Solomon Islands Education Sector Support Program (ESSP) Performance Linked Aid Assessment DFAT Management Response

Recommendation/ Statement from the PLA Report	Response	Explanation	Action Plan
<p><b><u>Recommendation 1: Performance payment</u></b></p> <p>The overall recommended Performance Linked Aid (PLA) payment for 2019 is 82.3 per cent.</p>	Agree	DFAT and Solomon Islands Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development (MEHRD) agree with the assessor's findings for all targets.	DFAT will make this payment in early 2021, under the Direct Funding Agreement between DFAT and Solomon Islands Government.
<p><b><u>Suggestion 1: Future Performance Indicators</u></b></p> <p>The report makes a number of suggestions to inform the development of indicators and targets for 2020 and beyond:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a mix of strategically critical long-term indicators and shorter-term annual indicators</li> <li>• Develop interdependent indicators sequenced over time to achieve a target</li> <li>• Set targets in advance and/or for multiple years</li> <li>• Consider partnership, coordination, communication indicators</li> <li>• Specific to the COVID context <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Recognise and respond realistically within the current COVID context</li> <li>- Use MEHRD's COVID-19 Response Plan and revised Annual Work Plan to set targets (including for WASH and learning continuity activities)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Consider developing indicators focused on Education Authorities' Improvement Plans</li> </ul>	Agree in principle	Noting the intention for future PLA indicators and targets to be drawn from the MEHRD Education Performance Matrix and the Education Sector Support Program (ESSP) Monitoring and Evaluation Framework, DFAT agrees to consider these suggestions in developing future PLA indicators and targets. DFAT particularly agrees with the benefits of taking a longer-term approach.	ESSP PMT will incorporate these suggestions (where possible) in developing proposed PLA indicators and targets for forward years.
<p><b><u>Suggestion 2: Strengthening the Partnership Approach through the Education Sector Support Program (ESSP)</u></b></p> <p>[...] the ESSP-PMT [Program Management Team] provides an excellent mechanism to facilitate and coordinate the PLA assessment by strengthening the partnership approach for MEHRD, DFAT and MFAT.</p>	Agree	DFAT would like future PLA processes to be led by the ESSP PMT, in collaboration with MEHRD M&E officers, and integrated into ESSP Governance Committee processes. This will help strengthen the partnership between	ESSP PMT will develop an ESSP Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (MEF) derived from MEHRD's Education Performance Matrix (EPM).  Future PLA targets can be drawn from the MEHRD EPM, in consultation with MEHRD

		MEHRD, DFAT and MFAT, enable joint decision-making, and improve efficiencies.	M&E officers and with the approval of the ESSP Governance Committee.  Future PLA assessments will be prepared by the ESSP PMT in consultation with MEHRD SSU M&E officers, for consideration by the ESSP Governance Committee (with DFAT to make the final decision on PLA payments).
<p><b><u>Suggestion 3: Strengthening the evidence through qualitative data</u></b></p> <p>The PLA indicators, targets and data collection process relies almost entirely upon quantitative data – this limits the potential to capture and describe the rich ‘stories of change’ through qualitative M&amp;E techniques. The consultation process is mainly focused on verification of quantitative data. Perhaps areas of research could be agreed and undertaken in the year prior to PLA to feed into the process and value-add to the quantitative data collection.</p>	Noted for future consideration	DFAT will consider this suggestion in future if indicators/targets based on qualitative data are incorporated into the MEHRD’s Education Performance Matrix, from which the PLA targets will be drawn.	
<p><b><u>Suggestion 4: Engaging in PLA as an incentive</u></b></p> <p>There is an opportunity under ESSP to engage with MEHRD officers more deeply to not only set the targets but collaborate on how the targets can be met.</p>	Agree	DFAT agrees that increasing awareness of PLA targets within MEHRD is important to maximise the incentivising effect.	The ESSP PMT will incorporate into the its workplan engagement by Technical Advisers with MEHRD counterparts on PLA targets (awareness, collaborative approaches to meeting targets).
<p><b><u>Suggestion 5: Leadership and management of PLA assessments</u></b></p> <p>Last year’s AHC [DFAT] management response suggested the ESSP PMT would take responsibility for managing the PLA [assessment] this year – delays to the establishment of the PMT delayed this.</p>	Noted	The planned approach under ESSP is for MEHRD’s systems to produce PLA assessment data which the ESSP PMT will verify and use to prepare the report. It is intended that this will promote consistency and avoid duplication of effort, as well as increasing collaboration.	Future PLA assessments will be prepared by the ESSP PMT, using data from MEHRD’s systems, and with engagement by MEHRD M&E officers (as per response to suggestion 6) and the ESSP Governance Committee (as per the response to suggestion 2).
<p><b><u>Suggestion 6: Assessment as a partnership</u></b></p> <p>In line with the development of indicators in a genuine partnership, the assessment should be carried out in partnership too. This does not mean the assessor is not able to make recommendations with which MEHRD might not agree. The</p>	Noted	DFAT supports the inclusion of MEHRD M&E officers in the PLA assessment process.	The ESSP PMT will include MEHRD M&E officers in future PLA assessment processes.

<p>inclusion of MEHRD M&amp;E officers in the process this year was resoundingly successful both as an opportunity to collaborate but also as a particularly useful capacity building activity. The process did not diminish the efficacy of the results – it value added and enhanced the capability of MEHRD M&amp;E.</p>			
---	--	--	--