**Independent Progress Review**

**Tonga TVET Support Program 1**

**July 2012**

# Aid Activity Summary

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| --- | --- |
| **Aid Activity Name** | **Tonga TVET Support Program Phase 1 (TSP 1)** |
| **AidWorks initiative number** |  |
| **Commencement date** | **May 2010** | **Completion date** | **June 2014** |
| **Total Australian $** | **$3.71 million** |
| **Total New Zealand $** | **$3.71 million** |
| **Implementing Partner** | **Ministry of Training, Employment, Youth and Sports (MOTEYS)**  |
| **Delivery organisation** | **TSP Office, MOTEYS** |
| **Country/Region** | **Tonga** |
| **Primary Sector** | **TVET** |

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The views expressed in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the Government of Australia, the Government of New Zealand or the Government of Tonga.

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# Acronyms

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| AP | Annual Plan |
| APTC | Australian Pacific Technical College |
| APW | Alternative Pathways |
| AUD | Australian Dollar |
| AusAID | Australian Agency for International Development |
| CBT | Competency Based Training |
| CEO | Chief Executive Officer |
| DPM | Deputy Program Manager |
| ETF | Employment and Training Fund (TSP1) |
| HIES | Household Income and Expenditure Survey |
| ITACs | Industry Training Advisory Councils |
| KPI | Key Performance Indicator |
| KRA | Key Result Area |
| M&E | Monitoring and Evaluation |
| MET | Ministry of Education and Training |
| MEWAC | Ministry of Education, Women’s Affairs and Culture |
| MFAT | Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (New Zealand) |
| MFNP | Ministry of Finance and National Planning  |
| MLCI | Ministry of Labour, Commerce and Industry |
| MOTEYS | Ministry of Training, Employment, Youth and Sports |
| NGOs | Non-Government Organisations |
| NSPF | National Strategic Planning Framework |
| NTSF | National TVET Stakeholder Forum (previously National Steering Committee) |
| NZ | New Zealand |
| NZAP | New Zealand Aid Program (formerly NZAID) |
| OECD DAC | Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development -Development Assistance Committee |
| PESDA | Pacific Education and Skills Development Agenda |
| PDD | Program Design Document |
| POME | Program Officer for Monitoring & Evaluation |
| PPD | Partnership for Development |
| PSC | Program Steering Committee |
| PTM | Program Technical Manager |
| QA | Quality Assurance |
| RTO | Registered Training Organisation |
| SME | Small to Medium Enterprises |
| STA | Short Term Adviser |
| TAA | Training and Assessment |
| TAFE | Technical and Further Education |
| TATVET | Tonga Association for TVET |
| TCCI | Tonga Chamber of Commerce and Industry |
| TIST | Tonga Institute of Science and Technology |
| TMIS | TVET Management Information System  |
| TNA | Training Needs Assessment |
| TNQAB | Tonga National Qualifications and Accreditation Board |
| TOP | Tongan Pa’anga |
| TOR | Terms of Reference |
| TSP1 | Tonga TVET Support Program Phase 1 |
| TVET | Technical and Vocational Education and Training |

# Executive summary

The Tonga TVET Support Program Phase1 (TSP1) was designed as a four year program and commenced in May 2010 under a Delegated Cooperation Arrangement between Australia and New Zealand.

The overarching objective of TSP1 is to make Tongans more competitive in domestic, regional and international labour markets through improved demand based TVET and internationally recognised qualifications.

This Independent Progress Review (IPR) was commissioned in April 2012 with the following objectives:

* *Provide an independent assessment of the progress against objectives of the Tonga Technical and Vocational Education (TVET) Support Program (TSP1) referencing AusAID assessment criteria. In particular, the evaluation will examine the activity’s scope and its management model, strengths and comparative advantages and also provide lessons for future support to TVET in Tonga.*
* *Identify issues that need to be addressed to improve the implementation and management of TSP1 through to April 2013 and recommend a course of action to accomplish this.*

The IPR evaluates TSP1 progress against eight AusAID OECD/DAC aid effectiveness criteria. A commentary and a score against each of these criteria are provided in **Annex 2: Quality at Implementation Assessment.** While the TSP1 strategic objective is still regarded as being highly relevant, a range of causal factors have compounded to impede TSP1 progress overall and the assessment against the other seven criteria is low, indicating that major work is needed to rectify.

In addition to the *Quality at Implementation Assessment*, the IPR also includes an assessment of the TSP1 design and its progress to date, particularly with respect to its operational model, implementation strategies, performance management, value for money and integration with other donor and Government of Tonga national and regional activities and frameworks.

**1. Operational Model**

TSP1 is programmatic in design, with a focus on working through Government of Tonga structures and systems in accordance with the Paris Declaration and Accra Agenda for Action. The IPR concludes that the design assumption that the TSP1 could be readily integrated and delivered through Government of Tonga systems and processes was overly ambitious. A number of reasons are cited to substantiate this conclusion.

Firstly it has been difficult to establish ownership of the Program in the absence of a common appreciation of TSP1 objectives and the means by which these objectives might be met. A general lack of understanding of demand based TVET concepts and approaches has hampered the development of a common vision for TVET within the Government.

The TSP1 design assigned responsibility for TSP1 implementation to the Ministry of Training, Employment, Youth and Sports (MOTEYS) which at the time was a relatively new Ministry (2006), had limited TVET experience amongst its staff and did not have legislated responsibilities for TVET as indicated in a footnote on Page 11 of the design document - ‘legislation formalising MOTEYS’ responsibilities is under preparation and is expected to be in place by the start of TSP1’.

In these circumstances, leaving aside the risk of assigning full program responsibility to a Ministry before it had acquired formal authority, it is surprising that a purely programmatic modality based on Paris and Accra principles was adopted. It is even more surprising when legislation was not in place at the time and the impacts of such legislation was not known in the workplace.

Governance for the Program resides in a Program Steering Committee (PSC) which includes representatives of the Tonga, Australia and New Zealand Governments. The alignment of the Program to the Government of Tonga priorities systems and processes was made difficult by the respective layers of administration and accountability required by each of the partner Governments. Delays in funding approvals contributed to slow progress overall.

The Program continues to track well behind budget. In the first 13 months of operation, expenditure was only 58% of the planned TSP1 budget. In the 9 months since then, expenditure sits at only 29% of the 2011/2012 annual budget. Slow progress is attributable to a number of factors cited in this review such as inexperienced management, overly ambitious planning, complex bureaucratic processes across the three Governments, capacity constraints and high levels of staff turnover.

Donor harmonisation between Australia and New Zealand under a delegated cooperation agreement has not been as efficient as planned. Instead of the Government of Tonga having to deal with just one donor, as intended under the agreement, both donors played an active role through the PSC in Program administration and funding approvals resulting in delayed decision making.

Effective management has also been hindered by the lack of a cohesive and systematic approach to monitoring and evaluation over the life of the Program. The problems with M&E stem from a confusing mix of outcome, output and input indicators in the TSP1 design, a lack of clarity as to the relationship between expected outcomes and indicators and an overly complicated framework requiring substantial levels of data collection and analysis. The issues with M&E have been exacerbated by the fact that the first M&E officer was not appointed until after 8 months of Program operations. The subsequent resignation of that officer after 6 months resulted in the position being vacant for another month before the appointment of the current M&E officer. It is pleasing to note, however, that the quality and quantity of M&E has improved over the past 9 months under the current officer with support from a short term adviser and the Program Technical Manager.

While the programmatic approach is in accordance with Paris/Accra principles and is consistent with the Government of Tonga’s Aid Management Policy and the policies of the two donors, the general level of underperformance in relation to these principles raises the question as to whether this modality was appropriate given the lack of program management experience amongst MOTEYS and donor personnel, and the absence of established and commonly understood systems and processes within which they should operate.

**2. Implementation Model (including Achievements)**

Program momentum has improved over the past 6 months or so following the appointment of a new Program Technical Manager (PTM). Constructive management relationships have been developed between the new PTM and both the former and current TSP1 Program Directors and a stable and capable staffing platform is now being built.

This has not always been the case as TSP1 implementation has been adversely affected by significant levels of disruption caused by difficult procurement processes delaying staff appointments and high levels of staff turnover.

The following is a comment on TSP1 achievements and issues in relation to each of the three Program design components:

 **Component 1. Developing a National System**

Industry Training Advisory Committees have been established in two sectors that were identified as priorities in the TSP1 design – tourism and hospitality, and construction. With short term advisory assistance these committees identified a long list of competency standards and courses thought appropriate to the respective industry sectors. In both instances these competency standards have now been submitted to the Tonga National Qualifications and Assessment Board (TNQAB) for accreditation.

While acknowledging this achievement, the IPR finds that in the Tourism and Hospitality case a lack of consideration of TNQAB processes has resulted in significant delays in accreditation. There has also been a general lack of concern for the quantification of skills demand. Labour market information is scarce and there has been little attempt, if any, to build a better understanding of the dynamics of the labour market. Without this it is difficult to gear training investment or determine the most effective means by which skills training demand can be met.

Support for the TNQAB is now progressing with TSP1 assisting training provider compliance with TNQAB registration and accreditation processes as well as capacity building of TNQAB personnel. It has been unfortunate that there was not the same level of interaction between the TNQAB and TSP1 in the earlier stages of the Program when competency standards and courses were being identified for the tourism and hospitality sector. Lack of engagement at that time has resulted in a protracted accreditation process caused by lack of compliance with TNQAB requirements. More recently, the development of construction sector competencies have occurred in a much more collaborative manner with the TNQAB.

Over 70 trainers have successfully completed a Certificate IV in Training and Assessment delivered by the APTC but again in the absence of quantifiable evidence of skill demand it is difficult to assess how the selection of trainers was targeted.

A significant investment in study tours early in the Program was premature given the early stages of development of demand driven TVET in Tonga and the lack of technical experience amongst the touring parties. Without a conceptual frame of reference it is difficult for those on study tours to draw comparisons with sophisticated systems that have been in development for decades.

The TSP1 design envisaged the availability of equipment grants would provide an incentive for training providers to ‘…meet the requirements of program accreditation and to deliver training in designated priority areas.’[[1]](#footnote-1) Equipment grant approval processes have been put in place and a number of grants have been made but most, judging by TNQAB records, have preceded course accreditation. Inexperience with equipment procurement procedures and a desire for local purchase has also, in some cases, resulted in the supply of tools and equipment better suited to a handyman environment than a simulated trade environment in schools.

In the absence of broader systemic developments the Alternate Pathways (APW) Pilot in eight non-government schools has emerged as a primary focus of TSP1. While understandable in the context, an overemphasis on school level alternative pathways has distracted and diverted resources away from more strategic investments in the tertiary sector.

**Component 2. Promoting Demand Driven Training**

An Employment and Training Fund (ETF) was seen in the TSP1 design as a primary mechanism to encourage a demand focused, responsive and flexible training system. While recent TSP1 activity has facilitated the finalisation of arrangements for the delivery of one ETF funded program in the hospitality sector, there has been no other short course delivery during the 24 months of TSP1 implementation. The primary reason for this is that for an ETF to be effective at a systemic level, it is necessary that a number of conditions are in place including evidence of skill development priorities, availability of courses, availability of qualified trainers, training provider managers with commercial acumen and industry confidence to enter into partnership arrangements. While these conditions are still in development under TSP1 it is unrealistic to anticipate any effective deployment of an ETF.

**Component 3. Program Management**

Significant program management issues have arisen during the life of the Program. These include:

* An overly ambitious assumption that the capacity and resources to manage a large donor funded program existed within MOTEYS and the donors.
* Despite a delegated cooperation arrangement there emerged different administration requirements by the two donors and a lack of institutional support to resolve differences.
* Irregular and infrequent meetings of the Program Steering Committee (PSC).
* Unrealistic expectations by TSP1 management that the PSC would ‘rubber stamp’ proposals despite lack of consultation and the presentation of voluminous documentation on short notice.
* Unclear linkage between some TSP1 financial requests and TSP1 objectives.
* High levels of staff turnover.
* Complex procurement processes.
* Inexperience with recruitment and performance management of international personnel.
* Poorly implemented TVET Management Information System (TMIS).

Over the past 9 months or so there have been improvements especially in financial acquittals and reporting but the Program remains significantly underspent in relation to budgeted activity.

Good work is now proceeding with monitoring and evaluation but as yet, 24 months into implementation, significant gaps still exist in baseline data and there has been little consideration of progress against indicators.

**3. Cross Cutting Issues**

At this stage there is little evidence that TSP1 has adequately identified, addressed, monitored and reported gender equality issues. In addition, with respect to disability support, a decision was taken on donor advice to defer activities until the third or fourth year due to a lack of technical leadership, high staff turnover and limited capacity within MOTEYS to mainstream disability approaches within TSP1 operations.

**4. Coherence and linkages**

TSP1 has not contemplated a coherent and integrated approach to national system reform. Opportunities have been missed, for example in tourism, where the New Zealand Government is actively supporting the Tongan tourism sector as a whole. Targeted training support aligned to the Government of Tonga and donor activity in the tourism sector would not only have met identified skills training needs but would also have established a model of demand driven training linked to economic development.

**5. Relevance to broader donor objectives**

The TSP1 strategic objective to improve the employability of Tongans in domestic and international labour markets through an improved TVET system remains relevant and is consistent with the Tonga Strategic Development Framework 2011- 2014, the Australian Government Pacific Education and Skills Development Agenda (2011) (PESDA) and its emerging Pacific Tertiary Education Strategy.

The Partnership Agreement between Australia and Tonga and the Commitment Agreement between New Zealand and Tonga both cite employability and improved TVET as a priority outcome.

**6. Strategic & operational lessons**

A number of higher level lessons have been observed as follows:

* A programmatic approach is difficult when partner Government systems and counterpart experience are underdeveloped. In these circumstances, consideration should be given to a complementary project modality whereby technical, human resource, financial and performance management risks are managed and counterpart capacity is strengthened to enable transition to a programmatic approach.
* If a delegated cooperation agreement is to be efficient, donors need to develop binding financial management protocols.
* Where donor funded programs are to be implemented within partner Government systems and processes it is essential that donor personnel be given the tools and resources to manage effectively.
* In the absence of an agreed policy framework within which to operate, it is very difficult for personnel with limited TVET experience to interpret design intentions, to see the inter-relationships between component parts and to develop a coherent approach to program implementation.
* Where there is a lack of technical understanding, a consultative and collaborative approach to policy development can build a common vision and increase ownership of policy outcomes.
* Shifting to a demand driven training system requires both a quantitative and qualitative understanding of skill demands. Labour market studies to identify current and projected skill demand should inform competency standard and course selection processes.
* It is critical that program level monitoring and evaluation frameworks are simply expressed and are commensurate with available resource capacity to collect, analyse and report data.
* TSP1 program level strategic objectives and associated outcomes should be aligned to and inform higher level outcome objectives such as the Tonga Strategic Development Framework, Partnership Agreements and PESDA.
* Recruitment, contracting and performance management of international technical assistance is often outside the experience and systems of developing countries such as Tonga. Consideration should be given to contracting external support to manage the risks associated with this process.
* Successful deployment of employment and training funds as an incentive mechanism to promote a more responsive and demand driven training system require greater levels of TVET system development than has been the case in Tonga.
* The TSP1 strategic objective and component structure point to the development of an improved national training system as a pre-condition for improved employability of Tongans at home and abroad. In fact the converse could be true. That is, through targeted interventions, models could be developed to improve employability and inform understanding of what an effective national TVET system might comprise which in turn could be articulated into national policy.

**7. Sustainability**

Elements of a sustainable TVET system are in place including: the TNQAB which is fully operational (albeit with continuing donor support), a number of franchise arrangements to deliver internationally recognised qualifications are in operation, there is strong support for TVET at senior Government levels and local industry in the tourism and hospitality and construction sectors have demonstrated their willingness to be integral partners in the TVET system.

However these gains remain fragile given an uncertainty surrounding the transfer of TVET responsibilities to a traditionally academically orientated Ministry with high level competing demands from other elements of the education portfolio and a generally held view in the broader community about the low status of TVET.

If TSP1 is unable to demonstrate improved graduate outcomes in the labour market it will continue to be difficult to gain community and political support.

**The next 9 months to April, 2013**

The IPR has identified a complex mix of causal factors that have led to unsatisfactory performance against almost all of the AusAID OECD/DAC evaluation criteria.

In this context it is recommended that the three partner Governments commence consultations to determine the best way forward for TVET in Tonga.

While these discussions proceed it is important to provide TSP1 staff and TVET stakeholders a level of certainty about the immediate future.

A **Workplan** covering the next 9 months until the end of April 2013 is provided in **Annex 1.**

Foremost among the planned activities is a labour market study incorporating both an analysis of the current domestic and regional[[2]](#footnote-2) labour markets (including skill shortages, skill gaps and training priorities) and a projection of skill needs over the next 5 years.

A second major activity will be a consultative and collaborative process to develop a national TVET policy, informed in part by the labour market study. While the policy outcome is important, equally important will be the policy development process through which a common vision for TVET in Tonga should emerge.

Both of these activities will be led by short term technical assistance and they are seen as major professional development opportunities for TSP1 and relevant MET staff.

# Introduction

The Tonga TVET Support Program Phase1 (TSP1) was designed as a four year program and commenced in May 2010 under a *Delegated Cooperation Arrangement* between Australia and New Zealand.

The overarching objective of TSP1 is to make Tongans more competitive in domestic, regional and international labour markets through improved demand based TVET and internationally recognised qualifications.

The primary assumption underpinning this objective is that the introduction of a demand based TVET system would lead to the delivery and acquisition of internationally recognised qualifications, which in turn would improve the employability of Tongan TVET graduates at home and abroad.

The TSP1 design envisaged that this objective would be achieved through the implementation of three inter-connected components:

* Develop a national training system
* Promote demand driven training
* Strengthen TVET management structures in the Ministry of Training, Employment, Youth and Sports (MOTEYS)

A number of elements have been identified under the first component to develop a national training system including support for the Tonga National Qualifications and Assessment Board (TNQAB), a national qualifications framework built on internationally benchmarked skills standards, and the strengthening of training providers to enable full compliance with TNQAB quality requirements and the integration of Tongan qualifications within regional and international qualifications systems.

For the promotion of demand driven training, the TSP1 design relies heavily on an Employment and Training Fund (ETF) as an incentive mechanism for training providers to realign both their long course and short course delivery to areas of skill demand within both the national and international labour markets.

In 2006 MOTEYS was mandated by the Government of Tonga to oversee the continuing development of the Tongan TVET system. As such, it became responsible for TSP1 with the MOTEYS Chief Executive Officer (CEO) given overall policy and management responsibility for TSP1 implementation. The TSP1 design provided for institutional strengthening of MOTEYS including capacity building and improved approaches to monitoring and evaluation and risk management.

Funding for TSP1 is being provided by both Australia and New Zealand under a donor funding arrangement which provides for a contribution of AUD3.71 million each. The donor agreement stipulates that AusAID will hold, administer and implement the donor partner contributions to TSP1 implementation.

# Methodology

## IPR Objectives

This Independent Progress Review was commissioned in April 2012 with the following objectives[[3]](#footnote-3):

*Provide an independent assessment of the progress against objectives of the Tonga Technical and Vocational Education (TVET) Support Program (TSP1) referencing AusAID assessment criteria[[4]](#footnote-4). In particular, the evaluation will examine the activity’s scope and its management model, strengths and comparative advantages and also provide lessons for future support to TVET in Tonga.*

*Identify issues that need to be addressed to improve the implementation and management of TSP1 through to April 2013 and recommend a course of action to accomplish this.*

## Approach

The findings and recommendations in this IPR report have been derived from a combination of:

* Preliminary desk research
* In-country consultation and the preparation of an Aide Memoire
* Continuing research and discussions during the preparation of reports

**Desk Research**[[5]](#footnote-5)

Prior to the in-country mission, extensive documentation was reviewed and applied to inform the development of the evaluation instruments and to prepare the team for in-country consultations. The documents that have been reviewed include relevant government strategic plans, policies, partnership agreements, financial statements and TSP1 plans and reports.

**In-country Mission**[[6]](#footnote-6)

The in-country mission was conducted over a two week period (April 30 – May 12, 2012). Consultative meetings were held with key TVET stakeholders in Tonga including:

* Relevant Government departments and agencies
* Donors
* Private sector representatives and umbrella organisations
* Training providers and umbrella organisations
* Relevant non-government organisations
* TSP1 team members

**Preparation of Reports**

This IPR report examines and reports TSP1 progress against eight aid effectiveness criteria[[7]](#footnote-7). In addition it assesses TSP1 program design and implementation progress, particularly with respect to management models, operational strategies, performance management, value for money and integration with other donor and Government of Tonga national and regional activities and frameworks.

## Challenges

In addition to the usual constraints associated with limited resources and short timeframes there are two other factors that have contributed to the complexity of the review:

* There is a high level of interest in the review outcomes at senior levels of the Tongan Government and amongst the donor partners.

The restructure of the Tongan civil service and the transference of TVET responsibilities to the newly created Ministry for Education and Training (MET) provide both opportunity and risk for the continuing reform of the TVET system in Tonga. The review team was advised by the Minister that the Education Act is currently being reviewed and amended and that the preparation of the TVET component within the new Act is awaiting the outcome of the review.

Both the donor partners expressed similar levels of expectation that the review outcomes and recommendations will have a direct bearing on their individual and collective strategies going forward for continuing support of the Tongan education and training sector generally.

* In completing the review mission the TSP1 IPR team were highly conscious of the fact that while the team has strong international TVET experience in developing countries, they had not previously had the opportunity to work in Tonga. It is difficult for a review team with this background to appreciate fully the unique Tongan context within a short period of time and to avoid easy comparisons with systems and approaches observed/experienced elsewhere. The input of the Government of Tonga representative on the review team was invaluable in this regard. His deep understanding of the background and current context of TVET reform in Tonga, has enabled the development of more objective observations specific to the Tongan context and not simply a comparative and subjective analysis of the TSP1 in relation to donor funded TVET reforms in other developing countries.

# Observations

## Operational Model

TSP1 is programmatic in design, with a focus on working through Government of Tonga structures and systems in accordance with the Paris Declaration[[8]](#footnote-8) and Accra Agenda for Action[[9]](#footnote-9). The design in fact maps the proposed approach against Paris and Accra principles[[10]](#footnote-10), specifically:

* Strengthening developing country ownership of aid
* Alignment of aid to partner government priorities, systems and processes
* Harmonisation between donors
* Managing for results
* Mutual accountability between donors, partners and populations

The following assessment provides comments on how well these principles have been achieved.

**Strengthening developing country ownership of aid**

Ownership is built on common understanding of purpose, principles and intended practices. The TSP1 design assumed such understanding was broadly held across the Government of Tonga and donors alike. While the review team observed that some progress is now being made to build the conceptual infrastructure within which systematic implementation might occur, it also notes that it is now almost two years into a four-year program.

An opportunity to build a common vision and ownership through a consultative policy development process has been missed up until now. Before embarking on an outputs orientated program delivery strategy it would have been advantageous for the TSP1 to facilitate a process to develop a policy framework to guide the achievement of the Government’s strategic objective to:

*‘Appropriately skilled workforce to meet available opportunities in Tonga and overseas by delivery of improved TVET’[[11]](#footnote-11)*

Such a process would have not only built a common vision but it would have laid the groundwork for a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders, both public and private, in a nationwide TVET sector. It would also have established the operating environment within which TSP1 would be implemented, and clarified an understanding that TSP1 is not the TVET sector in itself but a mechanism by which the Tongan TVET sector might be developed and strengthened more broadly.

The absence of a National TVET Policy is recognised in the new Ministry of Education and Training (MET) *Education Policy Framework, July 2012,* which highlights that there is a ‘lack of clear policy direction, and a holistic vision for post-secondary education in Tonga.’[[12]](#footnote-12)

It is the absence of an agreed policy framework that has contributed to a non-integrated approach to program implementation, which has perpetuated the component silos of the design and established a staccato pattern of isolated output delivery.

There has also been a lack of data, particularly labour market information and skills plans to inform policy development and TSP1 implementation strategies. It is unfortunate that TSP1 did not identify the need or facilitate a process to build labour market information or skills plans as a first step to determining demand and identifying appropriate units of competence and courses.

**Alignment of aid to partner government priorities, systems and processes**

Responsibility for TSP1 program management was assigned to the Ministry for Training, Employment, Youth and Sports (MOTEYS) in which was established a Program Office comprised of MOTEYS TVET staff and six technical advisers (one international and five national).

The embedding of TSP1 within a Government ministry and the level of localisation of technical assistance are both worthy of commendation in Paris and Accra terms. However, with limited experience in the implementation of a large donor funded program, both from a technical and program management perspective, it was difficult at the outset for the Program Management team to perceive the opportunities and risks in the TSP1 design, and to define and direct a coherent approach to program implementation in line with broader priorities, systems and processes in Tonga.

Overall policy and management responsibility rested with the MOTEYS Chief Executive Officer who was to be supported by an international Program Technical Manager (PTM). Unfortunately difficult professional relationships between the MOTEYS CEO and the PTM resulted in the resignation of the PTM only seven months into the Program and it took 9 months to field a replacement. During this period, all of the original national technical advisers also resigned. It was further reported that at times TVET staff were diverted to support other MOTEYS activities.

The compound effects of limited absorptive capacity in MOTEYS, a difficult management environment, high levels of staff turnover and the absence of an experienced PTM for an extended period of time exacerbated the negative impact of limited experience on program implementation and its successful embedding within local systems.

The TSP1 design designated Program oversight to a National Steering Committee (NSC) comprised of representation from related Government agencies, donors, training providers and the private sector. It was recognised early that such a body, with its broad representation and twice yearly meeting schedule, could not be responsive to emerging issues as they arose nor was it an appropriate body to provide fiduciary oversight of Program operations.

As a consequence a Program Steering Committee (PSC) was established and the NSC was rebadged as a National TVET Stakeholder Forum (NTSF) with revised terms of reference.

The PSC is chaired by AusAID and comprises senior level representatives from NZ MFAT, MOTEYS, MEWAC, TNQAB, TATVET and TCCI. Its functions included policy guidance, funding approvals and performance review.

Despite these changes, which were intended to improve the governance structure, program implementation often stalled. Infrequent meetings of the PSC and/or protracted PSC decision making processes outside of meetings have impeded responsiveness and added further delays to program activity.

The extent of program delay is perhaps best represented by TSP1 financial records. Auditors[[13]](#footnote-13) reported that the Program had under-expended against budget by 58% in the 13 month period from program commencement to June 30, 2011. The situation appears to be even worse in the 2011/2012 financial year with figures showing that only 29% of the budget for the period had been expended up to the end of March, 2012[[14]](#footnote-14).

One of the reasons for under-expenditure has been difficulties within the Ministry of Finance and National Planning (MFNP) particularly in the procurement and accounts payable sections. For example, recruitment of short term advisers is very complex, especially for a ‘sole supplier’ (i.e. a specific adviser) which can take up to 6 months. The MFNP uses a manual system for accounts payment and TSP1 personnel have had to follow up payments frequently.

While the level of expenditure may be commensurate with TSP1 progress to date, it is difficult at this stage to identify any real value for money, in either development or monetary terms, in relation to the Program’s four-year objectives. One of the donors remarked that the level of progress to date seemed to be what might have been expected after 6 or 9 months rather than the 24 months that have passed in actuality. The lack of progress in combination with high opportunity costs raises significant questions in value for money terms.

It also highlights the fact that despite the best intentions to the contrary, the alignment to partner government priorities, systems and processes was made difficult by the respective layers of accountability required by each of the partner Governments. As one TSP1 manager commented during interview:

‘*There were no guidelines and there were different expectations from each donor – MOTEYS needed a clearer understanding of donor financial management processes’.*

**Harmonisation between donors**

Funding for the Program is being provided through a formal donor funding agreement between the Australian and New Zealand Governments. Under this agreement, AusAID has delegated authority to hold, administer and implement the MFAT (NZ) contribution towards the support of TSP1. This arrangement appears to be based on a TSP1 design assumption that a high level of harmonisation existed between Australian and New Zealand Government development systems and approaches to program administration.

However, in practice both donors have played an active role in program implementation particularly with respect to their participation in the Program Steering Committee and its stated responsibility to ‘consider, approve, decline or defer TSP1 funding proposals’.[[15]](#footnote-15)

During interviews, MOTEYS and TSP1 personnel, while acknowledging difficulties with Government of Tonga program management approaches, also expressed concern about donor funding approval processes. For example:

* *‘Everything had to go through the donors so things only happened when the donors were ready’*
* *‘There was no donor structure to manage the Program’*
* *‘Donors were not technical either’*
* *‘There needed to be clearer delegations’*
* *‘Changes in management styles when donor personnel changed during implementation and no program management structure or guidelines to operate within’*

It is interesting to note that some of these difficulties were reflected in conversations with donors themselves and the following quote from a report on the Tonga-Australia Partnership is pertinent:[[16]](#footnote-16)

*Delegated cooperation arrangements are intended to increase efficiency and reduce transaction costs by allowing the Government of Tonga to engage with only one donor rather than two. The experience to date is that delegated arrangements between Australia and New Zealand have not increased efficiency as planned. Australia, Tonga and New Zealand will take lessons from the delegation experience with TVET into consideration in designing joint Australian and New Zealand support for basic education*.

Other than reference to the joint funding arrangement between Australia and New Zealand, the TSP1 design makes no reference to potential linkages and harmonisation of TSP1 activities to other donor activity, either within or outside the education and training sector.

**Managing for result**

In the same Partnership Report cited above it was noted that there had been no significant results relevant to Partnership targets by the time of its writing (August 2011). This is understandable given the higher order nature of Partnership targets and the fact that TSP1 had only been operational for just over a year. However, what is surprising is the report noting that ‘a key challenge in measuring future progress is the lack of a baseline.’[[17]](#footnote-17) Thirteen months into implementation it is reasonable to expect that the identification and collection of relevant baseline data would have been well progressed. A major reason for this would appear to be a lack of priority given to monitoring and evaluation (M&E) as evidenced by delays in the appointment of M&E personnel. The first M&E Program Officer and Short Term Adviser beginning 8 months and 12 months after Program commencement respectively.

Problems with TSP1 M&E also arise within the Program design which presents, under a heading of *Intended Outcomes,* a mix of outcomes, outputs and inputs. Performance indicators are defined for each ‘outcome’ and while these indicators are specific and measurable, questions arise as to whether they are attainable, realistic and timely. It is also not clear in some cases what the connection is between the outcome and the indicator. For example, Outcome 1 is *a system wide shift from provider focussed training to training focused on workforce and industry skill needs* and yet the indicators for this outcome are:

* *80% of all TVET courses showing sustained increased participation by women, the disabled and other disadvantaged groups.*
* *MOTEYS TVET staff trained, including through short-term attachments in New Zealand and/or Australia to manage training functions within 18 months.*
* *Providers design more relevant training from feedback on outcomes from graduates as evidenced by TNQAB reports.*

It is not clear how meeting these targets could lead confidently to a conclusion that the shift to demand driven training had been achieved.

A Results Framework is provided which includes ‘*performance indicators, process indicators and measures of intermediate outcomes’* for each sub-component. In all there are 29 separate indicators, each requiring baseline data and on-going data collection and monitoring.

Attempts by the Program to interpret the design’s intentions resulted in an overly complicated M&E framework incorporating a heavy data collection load and difficult to measure indicators, e.g. ‘*schools selected to participate are appropriately engaged*’.

It is not clear how this volume of data collection and entry in the yet to be developed TVET Management Information System (TMIS), as well as analysis and reporting, will be accomplished.

The work to simplify the TSP1 approach to M&E is now underway by the current Program Office M&E Officer and an international Short Term Adviser and it is pleasing to note that there are a number of recent examples of concerted M&E activity such as a Graduate Tracer Survey 2007-2010 [completed in May 2012] and a review of TSP1 funded trainer training programs in 2009 and 2011.

Nevertheless at this halfway stage of program implementation, apart from these more recent examples, there is little evidence of a systematic and cohesive response to M&E over the life of the Program. At the time of the review, minimal baseline data had been collected, minimal follow up data had been collected and there had been no development of a comprehensive TSP1 Evaluation Report covering the first 24 months of implementation. This is not a reflection on the current M&E officer who has only been in the position for the past 9 months. It is however a reflection of a difficult M&E framework in the TSP1 design and an apparent lack of consideration for M&E in the early stages of implementation with the first M&E officer not commencing until 8 months after commencement. There was a further period of one month when the M&E officer position was vacant following this officer’s resignation after just 6 months on the job.

**Mutual accountability between donors, partners and populations**

Joint Government and donor participation in the Program Steering Committee, has facilitated combined review of Program progress and transparent disclosures of financial planning and expenditures. The Terms of Reference for the PSC provides for quarterly meetings but it is noted that to date the PSC has only met twice.[[18]](#footnote-18) While there have been limited formal meetings, the Review Team was advised that there was considerable interaction between PSC members outside of the two formal meetings.

The foregoing analysis of the Operational Model leads to a conclusion that the implementation of TSP1, based on Paris and Accra principles, has proved to be problematic. While the approach is entirely consistent with the Government of Tonga’s Aid Management Policy,[[19]](#footnote-19) it is clear that in implementation, it has been difficult to fully apply the principles resulting in TSP1 underperforming against every criterion.

With this consistent level of underperformance, the question arises as to whether a programmatic approach was appropriate given the lack of program management experience amongst MOTEYS and donor personnel and the absence of established and commonly understood systems and processes within which they should operate.

Without this enabling environment, it became particularly difficult to introduce new and sometimes difficult concepts associated with the reform of a national TVET system.

During the review, both Government and donor personnel commented on the inherent weaknesses in the current program management modality. In light of this, a transitional approach, from program to project, should be the considered. The adoption of a project modality would enable the management of technical, human resource, financial and performance management risks while at the same time facilitate policy development, concept modelling, systems integration and capacity development as national understanding, policies, systems and human resource capacity are increasingly strengthened.

## Implementation Model (including Achievements)

**Background**

A number of achievements have been identified but there is a general sense amongst those interviewed that the Program is tracking well behind expected progress to date.

Since the appointment of the new Program Technical Manager (PTM) in November 2011 the Program has picked up momentum largely due to improved professional relationships between the PTM and both the former and current Program Technical Directors. Within this improved leadership environment, it has been possible to build an increasingly capable and stable program implementation team.

This has not always been the case. There has been a high level of staff turnover and significant periods when positions have remained vacant. In only two instances have there been contiguous transition from one person to another, meaning that there has been limited opportunity for handover from previous staff to new staff. Most of the current staff have been in their respective positions for less than twelve months.

Such an irregular staffing pattern has been detrimental to TSP1 progress by any measure of effectiveness or efficiency. Loss of staff is particularly critical in an environment where there is minimal experience of the technical and program management requirements associated with a large donor funded program. There has been little chance to consistently build staff capacity and any initial gains have been lost when original staff departed, often without handover. This has not only meant a disconnected, stop/start approach to implementation but has also increased the likelihood of confused or mixed messages, with each new staff member bringing to Program concepts their own individual perceptions and interpretations which are not necessarily consistent with those of their predecessors.

The following table illustrates the long term staffing pattern over the past two years.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 2010 | 2011 | 2012 |
|  | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May |
| Program Director (national) |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Program Technical Manager (international) |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Program Officer National Training System (national) |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Procurement Officer (national) |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Program Officer Demand Driven Training (national) |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Program Officer M&E (national) |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Administrative Officer (national) |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Previous Staff |  | Current Staff |  | Vacant Positions |

The negative impact of high staff turnover in combination with the cost of multiple recruitments, training and then retraining, as well as the opportunity cost of having positions vacant for any period of time point to significant underperformance from a value for money perspective.

Given the current team’s relative inexperience and the absence of an overarching strategic framework, TSP1 implementation has tended to focus on individual component level outputs rather than building a platform of common understanding as to the inter-relationships between the components and to establish models for integrated delivery.

Nevertheless TSP1 staff are responding well to training and guidance provided under the Program and are now collectively improving their understanding of TVET principles and practices, and restoring the confidence of TVET stakeholders, Government officials and donors in the potential for TSP1 to meet its objectives.

The following is a commentary on TSP1 achievements and overall implementation issues structured around the three TSP1 components:

1. Developing a National Training System
2. Promoting Demand Driven Training
3. Program Management and Institutional Strengthening
4. **Developing the National Training System**
	1. The establishment of two Industry Training and Advisory Committees (Tourism and Hospitality and Construction) has led to the identification of a number of relevant courses and units of competence. The Construction sector activity was just being completed at the time of the review.

With the Tourism and Hospitality ITAC a total of 14 courses from Certificate 1 to Diploma level were identified[[20]](#footnote-20).

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Courses | Units ofCompetency |
| Certificate I | 2 | 17 |
| Certificate II | 3 | 39 |
| Certificate III | 5 | 96 |
| Certificate IV | 2 | 51 |
| Diploma | 2 | 72 |
|  | 14 | 275 |

This would seem a reasonable achievement and it is clear that the ITACs were highly professional and contributed long hours to the development of such a comprehensive list of competencies and courses under the leadership of international technical assistance.

However this review makes the observation that this process could have been far better targeted and focused on specific high priority areas that were deliverable in the Tongan context. In other words, without real analysis of actual demand (skill shortages, skill gaps, size of labour market, dynamics of labour market and so forth) or consideration of the capacity of Tongan training providers to deliver it is inevitable that ITACs, when presented with a long list of internationally recognised competencies and courses, would see most of them as appropriate or ‘good to have’.

It should also be noted at this point that a number of training providers are already delivering higher-level programs under franchise arrangements with New Zealand institutes.

The ‘good to have approach’ together with the availability of franchised courses raises a number of questions:

* Why spend so much time and resources working with an ITAC to develop courses that to a large extent will be beyond the capacity of Tongan training providers to provide in their own right?
* Why clog up the TNQAB accreditation process with so much material when in reality much of it will never be used?
* Why attempt to emulate or duplicate internationally recognised qualifications when these are readily accessible through franchise arrangements?

The approach to competency standards development has also been flawed in two other respects:

* No cost/benefit analysis was provided for in the TSP1 design to examine the relative efficiencies and effectiveness of alternative methods to deliver internationally recognised qualifications in Tonga. For example, on close analysis it could be that franchise arrangements which offer a number of advantages such as no development cost, local provider capacity development, external quality assurance and immediate international recognition could obviate the need for national development of comparable courses.

While concern was raised that high franchise course fees preclude access by poorer sections of the community, a cost/benefit analysis may in fact demonstrate that this option requires less investment from Government and that savings could be applied to subsidise fees.

In addition, donors may find that a national scholarship arrangement facilitating more universal access to franchised programs may be one of a number of cost effective methods to achieve the TSP1 employability objective.

There is also the possibility that with TSP1 support Tongan training providers could be strengthened to enable delivery under franchise of internationally accredited short courses for industry which would provide an additional revenue stream that could be applied in part to reducing fees for long-cycle tertiary programs.

* There is a lack of labour market information and skills planning to inform demand. No attempt was made through the ITAC process or otherwise to determine the numbers of trainees in each employment category that might be absorbed into the tourism and hospitality industry each year – either in Tonga or internationally.

With a better understanding of actual demand, the energy of the ITAC would have been better directed toward endorsing competencies and courses for those specific demand areas.

Such analysis would have also identified gaps on the supply side enabling TSP1 to target its training provider support strategies accordingly.

* 1. Current cooperative activity between the Program and the Tonga National Qualifications and Accreditation Board (TNQAB) and support for the preparation of Guidelines for National Qualifications Development and the Tonga Qualifications Framework are encouraging but a cooperative approach has not always been the case.

There has been a significant delay in the accreditation of the Tourism and Hospitality courses and units of competence. This is in no small part due to the deliberate exclusion by Program technical advisers of the TNQAB in competency standards development.

The reason offered at the time was a perception that a conflict of interest arises when the accrediting authority is also involved in standards development. In a strict legal sense this may be the case but under these circumstances, where the TNQAB is being asked to accredit competency standards that already have international accreditation, one wonders where any real conflict of interest arises. The question also arises as to whether such a high level of sensitivity is a luxury ill-afforded in a resource poor, system development process.

The impact of this over-sensitivity was in fact to stall the accreditation process. In interview, the CEO of the TNQAB indicated that there were no issues with accreditation of international competency standards but the standards need to be in a format that is compliant with TNQAB requirements. The delay in the accreditation of the Tourism and Hospitality units is simply due to this fact, which could have been avoided had the TNQAB been consulted and engaged in the process from the outset.

It is pleasing to note that the development of the construction units of competency has occurred in a much more collaborative manner with the TNQAB.

* 1. Over 70 trainers have successfully completed a Certificate IV in Training and Assessment course delivered by the Australian Pacific Technical College.

While the advantages of this trainer upgrading is understood in a systemic sense, it is less clear from a Program perspective. Given the Program objective for better targeted training in response to identified skill demand it would normally be expected that decisions about which trainers to be trained would be linked to identified demand areas and there is no evidence of such strategic thinking having underpinned the selection of trainers trained.

* 1. Study tours were conducted to Australia, Fiji and Vanuatu within the first 6 months of implementation at a cost of AUD95,000.

In concept, the idea of study tours, particularly to regional locations, has merit but in this case they seem to have been undertaken prematurely. Given the early stage of TVET system development in Tonga and the relative inexperience of the touring parties it is questionable what real benefits the participants gained by observing sophisticated systems that have had the benefit of decades of development. Even in Vanuatu, which shares many of the economic challenges of Tonga, there has been over 15 years of TVET system development funded by AusAID and other donors. It is little wonder that expectations were unrealistically raised and ultimately not realised.

* 1. Equipment Grants were provided in the TSP1 design to help training providers ‘…meet the requirements of program accreditation and to deliver training in designated priority areas.’[[21]](#footnote-21) While the Equipment Grant scheme has progressed it is difficult to tell how well this criterion has been applied. Financial records for the 13 month period up to June 30, 2011 indicate Small Equipment Grant expenditure of AUD88,000 presumably under *Component 1.3 – Capacity Building of Training Providers* and yet TNQAB records shows very few applications for accreditation and only one course accredited at the time.

In the period since June 1, 2011 there has been no expenditure against the Component 1.3. There has however been $48,000 worth of Equipment Grants spent against *Component 1.4 – Alternative Pathways* line. While for the most part these grants align to the priority areas identified in the TSP1 design (automotive, construction, tourism and hospitality), there is little evidence that the equipment grant ‘carrot’ had been applied to encourage accredited course development as a condition, prior to grant approval.

Inexperience with equipment procurement procedures and a desire for local purchase has, in some cases, resulted in the supply of tools and equipment better suited to a handyman environment than a simulated trade environment in schools. The expected low level of durability of this equipment in a school environment raises further questions about cost-effectiveness and value for money.

* 1. An Alternative Pathways (APW) Pilot Scheme is being implemented for eight non-government schools and colleges to strengthen their capacity to deliver pre-vocational courses in order to:
1. *Create a range of sustainable options for students in forms 4-6 to develop practical and technical skills (vocational) suited for the workplace; and*
2. *Reduce the number of voluntary school leavers exiting at Forms 4-5[[22]](#footnote-22)*

Again, while worthy in its own right, the scheme has lacked a specific demand focus and decisions about trainer training and material support in the form of equipment grants has not been linked directly to solid data related to demand. In most cases, trainers have been trained and equipment has been ordered and delivered in advance of course development.

The APW Pilot has emerged as a primary focus of TSP1. At the beginning of the Program there was a high level (and perhaps unrealistic) expectation about the potential overall benefits of TSP1. As the Program stalled there was increasing frustration amongst stakeholders with the pace of delivery. In this context the APW became an important mechanism to restore good will and build positive relationships. Participation in trainer training programs and the equipment grant scheme have been very well received by the 8 participating non-government schools.

While understandable in the context, an overemphasis on school level alternative pathways has distracted and diverted resources away from more strategic investments in the tertiary sector.

It should be noted that the APW Pilot is only operating in the non-Government school sector. The reason is apparently due to the strong view held in MEWAC at the time (early 2011) that general education was the responsibility of MEWAC and there was no place for TVET in general education.

With the transference in July of TVET responsibility to the newly created Ministry of Education and Training (MET), there will be a reversal of this position, with both the Minister and the current MEWAC CEO expressing strong interest in the APW concept. In fact, MEWAC has commenced a review of upper secondary curriculum including the development of a technical pathway that will focus on vocational skills training.

1. **Promoting Demand Driven Training**

It is noteworthy that, since commencement just 9 months ago, the current Program Officer - Demand Driven Training, in collaboration with other TSP1 staff, has been working to improve the level of activity in this component. This effort has yielded the imminent delivery of one ETF funded activity. However, apart from this, there is little to comment on in relation to Component 2 activity over the first 2 years of TSP1 implementation.

The TSP1 design envisaged an Employment and Training Fund (ETF) as the primary mechanism to leverage a shift to demand driven training. It assumed that the availability of the ETF would encourage the formation of partnerships between training providers and industry/productive sectors to deliver either accredited full or short courses that would either improve productivity of the existing workforce or improve the employability of unemployed youth.

This has proven to be an overly ambitious assumption as evidenced by the fact that at this midway stage of Program implementation there is only one activity in the pipeline and no ETF funded activity has actually been delivered.

Critically, for an ETF to be effective at the systemic level there is a need to have fundamental building blocks in place such as:

* a common understanding of what demand driven training means;
* evidence of skill development priorities;
* registered training providers and accredited programs;
* suitably qualified trainers;
* training providers with the capacity to release trainers or recruit trainers for this purpose;
* training provider managers with the capacity and commercial acumen to rethink their traditional supply and time based delivery models;
* industry awareness and confidence to enter into partnership arrangements; and
* flexible and responsive funding arrangements.

Within the current TVET context in Tonga, where few of these building blocks are in place, the timing and expected performance levels for this component are unrealistic.

So far no short courses to facilitate youth employment or further training have been developed or delivered.

1. **Program Management**

Substantial comment on Program Management has already been provided above in *Section 3.2 Operational Model*. In summary, there are a number of concerns related to program management including:

* a Program Management structure falsely based on assumed administrative and technical capacity within MOTEYS and the donors to implement a large (by Tongan standards) development cooperation program;
* difficulties in implementation of the Donor Funding Arrangement caused by differences in administration requirements between the Governments of Australia and New Zealand and the lack of institutional support to avert or resolve differences where they arose;
* irregular and infrequent meetings of the Program Steering Committee (PSC) to address and redress issues as they occurred;
* unrealistic expectations by TSP1 management that the PSC would simply ‘rubber stamp’ requests despite lack of consultation/communication in the preparation of proposals and the presentation of voluminous documentation on short notice;
* lack of clarity as to the relationship between some TSP1 management funding requests and overall Program objectives;
* poor human resource management practices leading to high levels of staff turnover;
* inexperience with recruitment and performance management of internationally recruited technical assistance; and
* slow development of an effective TVET Management Information System (TMIS) which appears to be overly cumbersome and inflexible due in part to an overly complicated monitoring and evaluation system, an inadequate brief and an apparent lack of systems analysis at the beginning.

On the brighter side:

* Financial management systems have improved and regular acquittal and reporting is now being provided to management but there remains two areas of concern:
	+ systems for disbursement of funds are unnecessarily complex and more flexibility and authority should be given to the Program Office in relation to procurement decisions; and
	+ the Program remains significantly underspent in relation to budget. This is symptomatic of slow progress against planned activity. Annual Plans have been over-optimistic in relation to expected outputs and future planning needs to be more realistic both in scope and budget.
* There is awareness among Program staff that the approach to M&E still requires considerable work. In this context it is encouraging that the new M&E Adviser and the Program M&E Officer are working closely to improve systems overall. The latter is responding very well to the coaching and mentoring being provided by both the M&E Adviser and the PTM.
* Professional offices have been established with reliable office systems and support.

## Cross Cutting Issues

The Government of Tonga has clearly defined gender equality as a primary strategy to achieve the outcome objective for strong inclusive communities. The Tonga Strategic Development Framework (TSDF)[[23]](#footnote-23) cites support for an increase in the level of gender balanced economic opportunities and activities throughout Tonga. The partnership agreement between Australia and Tonga specifically refers to equal opportunity for all within *Priority Outcome 3 – Improved Technical and Vocational Skills*. The Commitment Agreement between New Zealand and Tonga is underpinned by the New Zealand aid program objective ‘…to increase overall human wellbeing by promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women…’[[24]](#footnote-24)

However, at this stage it is difficult to find evidence that TSP1 has adequately identified, addressed, monitored and reported gender equality issues or improved female access to TVET training in Tonga.

By its own admission, TSP1 notes in its Year 2 Annual Plan that ‘during Year 1 there has been little explicit emphasis on gender equality’.[[25]](#footnote-25) It cites one of the primary reasons for this is that Gender Equality was not fully integrated into the TSP1 design. This may well be the case. While the design makes reference to inclusiveness and equity as guiding principles for implementation, it offers very little in the way of strategies to achieve this other than as a criterion for ETF funding. Given the significant position of gender equality in each partner government’s policy it is a reasonable expectation that a design would provide clear guidance to the development of program specific gender related policy and implementation strategies.

Nevertheless the TSP1 Year 2 Annual Plan proposes a number of strategies intended to place increased focus on female participation in the TVET sector including:

* a Communication Strategy targeting females
* the collection of sex-disaggregated data for all M&E activities
* gender equality criteria in Equipment Grant guidelines
* gender equality criteria in ETF Grant Guidelines
* nomination of Year 3 and 4 industry sectors selection to prioritise gender equality

Unfortunately in almost every case, it was not possible to identify any marked change during the year of the Annual Plan’s implementation. A communications strategy has not been developed and no systematic M&E data collection has occurred – disaggregated or otherwise. The Equipment Grant Guidelines make no mention of gender and the suggested priority sector for Year 3 is automotive which is not traditionally an industry sector with high female participation. The one area that has proceeded as planned is the inclusion of gender equality as one of the selection criteria for ETF funding approval. This has had no impact to date because, at the time of the review, no ETF funded activity has occurred.

The recognition of gender issues is identified as a critical success factor for the Alternative Pathways Program[[26]](#footnote-26) but if the nature of the equipment grants to APW schools can be taken as a proxy indicator, there is a way to go before this critical success factor might be achieved. Of the 15 equipment grants made to date, 10 have been in the traditionally male dominated trade areas of carpentry and automotive. The remaining 5 grants have been in the hospitality and tourism sector which in Tonga attracts a higher proportion of females to males.

There has been similar numbers of men and women participating in study tours and train the trainer programs and there is gender balance within TSP1 staff. There is also a plan for TSP1 staff to undertake gender and development training this year. But beyond this, there is little evidence of any other direct approaches to establish a more inclusive TVET system. No overarching strategy is in place to consider gender equality issues that would enable the Program to pro-actively take a lead in improving participation rates of women and girls in training and employment.

Whilst there is frequent reference to improving disabled access to quality training in both the design and early planning documents, there has been little progress other than the inclusion of disability training support as a selection criterion for the ETF Grants.

The Review Team was advised that the reason for this was that in planning for Year 2, a decision was taken on donor advice that, in the absence of technical leadership and high levels of staff turnover, there was no capacity within MOTEYS to mainstream disability support within TSP1 operations. Plans for a thematic study on the specific training needs of people with a disability have been deferred to either year 3 or 4.

## Coherence and linkages

Neither the TSP1 design nor TSP1 planning documents and/or reports make reference to the identification of linkages with other donor supported initiatives and with other relevant Government of Tonga activities.

TSP1 has not contemplated a coherent and integrated approach to national system reform but rather worked from an assumption that by introducing discrete elements of a TVET system such as industry training advisory committees, competency standards, trainer training and some facilities development, a quality national TVET system would somehow emerge.

Ironically, whilst the Program has a specific objective to re-orient training to demand, its supply side focus has resulted in missed opportunities to facilitate training responses to areas of specific demand associated with other donor or Government of Tonga activities.

Tourism is a case in point where a more coherent approach could have been applied.

Tourism is a national economic development priority in Tonga and the Government of New Zealand plays a strong partnership role to promote growth of the Tongan tourism sector as a whole. In January, 2011 New Zealand committed to provide up to TOP$5.2million over three years to support tourism development in Tonga. The funding is intended to support the development of marketing activities, improved licensing and regulation of operators, heritage site development and management, better research to guide marketing and planning, and support for the private sector.

In 2009, a New Zealand Government sponsored Training Needs Analysis[[27]](#footnote-27) was prepared for the Tourism Sector in Tonga. The study quantified the scope of the tourism sector and identified a number of priority areas of skill demand such as customer service, reception, marketing and tour guiding.

Given the above, one wonders how much further advanced TSP1 would have been, and how much better might the concept of a flexible, demand driven and quality training system have been understood, had TSP1 focused on establishing a model of short course, workplace delivery in the tourism sector.

In other words, the identification of competency standards, the training of trainers, the facilitation of franchise arrangements, and the provision of equipment grants could have been aligned to priority demands, rather than beginning with an extended and generalised process of competency standard development and accreditation of every competency and course of possible interest to the tourist sector.

Such an approach could well have led to early delivery of courses and graduate outcomes. In other words, there could have been the establishment of a model yielding quick results that would not only have guided further development of the TVET sector but would have also demonstrated an integrated approach to skill development in support of national economic development initiatives.

Interestingly, a model of this type of approach already exists in the Tonga Business Enterprise Centre (TBEC) established by the Tonga Chamber of Commerce and Industry (TCCI) in 2010.

There are numerous other donor activities that potentially have specific skill development requirements able to be effectively met by the TVET system such as the growing use of renewable energy sources, expanding telecommunications with the arrival of optical fibre cabling next year and other transport related infrastructure projects funded variously through multilateral, bilateral and grant aid programs.

These opportunities for a more coherent, demand-driven and outward looking approach to Program delivery have been missed because, in reality, TSP1 has been more focused inwardly on resolving its own internal coordination issues as reported in the Annual Plan:

*There is a need for improved communication, understanding and coordination with respect to critical path activities (e.g. TNQAB accreditation processes) with other key GoT particularly TNQAB/MEWAC/ Finance.[[28]](#footnote-28)*

## Relevance to broader donor objectives

The TSP1 objective to improve the employability of Tongans in national and international labour markets through an improved TVET system remains relevant to the broad policy frameworks of the respective Governments of Tonga, Australia and New Zealand.

The *Tonga Strategic Development Framework (TSDF) 2011 – 2014* and the *Education Policy Framework July 2012* (recently developed by the new Ministry of Education and Training) both specifically cite the objective for an *‘Appropriately skilled workforce to meet available opportunities in Tonga and overseas by delivery of improved TVET’.*

The TSDF goes further and identifies two primary strategies to achieve this objective:

* Promoting skill development through appropriate development of domestic training institutions, and mobilization of external training opportunities.
* Improving the focus of education and training on increased productivity of the work force to increase production, exports and overseas employment of Tongans.

This objective and its associated strategies are reflected in the Partnership Agreement between the Governments of Tonga and Australia which cites *Improved Technical and Vocational Skills* as one of four priority outcomes under the agreement. The Partnership Agreement expressly targets:

* Increased number of Tongans completing locally or internationally accredited technical and vocational education and training (TVET) courses, including a focus on equal opportunities for all.
* Increased number of accredited technical and vocational qualifications available in Tonga.

More broadly the TSP1 objective is nested within AusAID’s Pacific Education and Skills Development Agenda (PESDA) and the emerging Pacific Tertiary Education strategy. Under PESDA the Australian Government is committed to supporting increased skills for employability/qualifications by:

* assisting a wide range of viable local training providers to ensure they are able to flexibly provide recognised skills and qualifications that are in demand and valued in the national, regional and international labour markets;
* ensuring that the opportunities to develop skills after secondary school, both locally and in the region, are accessible to women, people with a disability and those living in rural areas and on outer islands; and
* consolidating the role of industry as a critical partner in developing, delivering and monitoring the quality of regional and national training.[[29]](#footnote-29)

The Commitment Agreement between the Governments of Tonga and New Zealand specifically refers to New Zealand’s support for TVET reform in Tonga in cooperation with AusAID.

The relevance of the TSP1 objective was further endorsed by the private sector (ITACs in Hospitality and Tourism and Construction) and Government agencies engaged in labour and economic development activities such as the Department of Labour, Commerce and Industry, which is soon to subsume the Department of Tourism under the Civil Service restructure.

While the TSP1 strategic objective remains highly relevant to the three partner governments’ broader national and regional objectives it is less clear how TSP1’s current operational and implementation strategies can actually achieve the objective.

## Strategic & operational lessons

While the TSP1 strategic objective remains relevant, the Program has struggled against other AusAID/DAC evaluation criteria including effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability, monitoring and evaluation, gender equality, and analysis and learning.

There are complex causal relationships as to why this might be the case but perhaps the primary reason stems from an overly ambitious design assumption that systems and processes were in place and the technical capacity to understand and manage a large donor funded development cooperation program, such as TSP1, existed both within the Government of Tonga and the two donors at post.

Given this context, a number of strategic and operational lessons can be discerned:

1. The Australian Government is committed to the view that ‘…the best ways to improve and strengthen [partner] government systems and processes such as planning, financial, procurement and audit is to work with partner Governments rather than work outside them…where we assess these [systems and processes] as being robust.’ [[30]](#footnote-30)

It is critical therefore that decisions about aid modality in program design be based on a full assessment of the readiness of partner government systems and processes to absorb the substantial demands of donor funded program implementation – particularly where there is an acknowledged lack of program management and technical experience and where such systems are yet to be developed as appears to be the case for TSP1.

Through the design process, responsibility for TSP1 implementation was assigned to MOTEYS, which at the time was a relatively new Ministry (2006), had limited TVET experience amongst its staff and did not have legislated responsibilities for TVET as indicated in a footnote in the design document - ‘legislation formalising MOTEYS’ responsibilities is under preparation and is expected to be in place by the start of TSP1’.[[31]](#footnote-31)

In these circumstances, leaving aside the risk of assigning full program responsibility to a Ministry before it had acquired formal authority, it is surprising that a purely programmatic modality based on Paris and Accra principles was adopted. It is even more surprising when legislation was not in place and the impacts of such legislation was not known in the workplace.

The AusAID aid effectiveness review advocates that a project modality should be considered where the ‘…necessary expertise does not exist in-house…’[[32]](#footnote-32) This is not to suggest operating outside partner Government systems and processes, but more it suggests a complementary approach to facilitate a transition to a fully programmatic modality by initially building Government (and donor) systems.

In the TSP1 context, the management of technical, human resource, financial and performance management risks could have been better accommodated within a project modality which at the same time could have built the basis for a transition to a fully programmatic approach by strengthening counterpart capacity, supporting policy and procedures development, concept modelling and evaluation, and contextually based systems design and integration.

1. Funding for TSP1 was provided under a delegated cooperation arrangement between Australia and New Zealand. Under this arrangement Australia had delegated responsibility to manage New Zealand contributions. The intention for such an arrangement was to improve efficiency by enabling the Tongan Government to deal with just one donor. However, in practice both donors have played an active role in program implementation and differences in program administration systems and accountability structures have impacted negatively on TSP1 financial approval processes.

Further consideration needs to be given to clarifying the respective donor roles under the delegated cooperation agreement and to establishing agreed and binding financial management protocols within current and future delegated cooperation agreements.

It should also be recognised that the management of a large development program, with its multiple layers of complexity and accountability places considerable extra demand on donor resources at post. The capacity to absorb this additional load is tested further when staff have neither had program management experience with this scale of program nor specific program management training. Where donor funded programs are to be implemented within partner Government systems and processes it is essential that donor personnel be given the tools and resources to manage effectively.

1. The TSP1 design notes that, ‘While there is, as yet, no national TVET policy…’[[33]](#footnote-33) MOTEYS is the Ministry ‘…responsible for setting policy to guide TVET provision.’[[34]](#footnote-34) Despite this recognition of a lack of policy, the TSP1 design provides no specific guidance for the development of such a policy.

In the absence of an agreed policy framework within which to operate, it is very difficult for personnel with limited TVET experience to interpret design intentions, to see the inter-relationships between component parts and to develop a coherent approach to program implementation.

Significantly, it is not only the lack of policy that is at issue. Equally important has been the loss of opportunity to build a common vision for TVET in Tonga during the policy development process. Through a well managed process, TSP1 could have facilitated the emergence of a clear understanding of respective stakeholder roles and responsibilities and built ownership of a national TVET system.

Such a process would have also highlighted where there were weaknesses in the evidence base for policy development and established priority courses of action for TSP1 to target.

1. In response to the strategic objective to improve employability, the TSP1 design opted for a whole of system approach based on an understanding that the need to strengthen the Tongan TVET system ‘had been recognised for many years’[[35]](#footnote-35) and that the current system is ‘complex and fragmented… inefficient’[[36]](#footnote-36) and that ‘reforming training is a complex and long term commitment, which requires adequate planning and sequencing of reforms and programs.’[[37]](#footnote-37)

However, from the beginning, limited program management experience together with the lack of supportive mechanisms compounded to create a confused and reactive implementation environment. A lack of technical experience resulted in little critical analysis of the Program design and minimal consideration of how outputs might be rationalised and sequenced in a way commensurate to the context and capacity constraints that existed at that time.

In the absence of an overarching strategic framework TSP1 tended to focus on individual component level outputs rather than building a platform of common understanding as to the relationship between the components and to establish models for integrated delivery.

The lesson here is that in circumstances where there is limited conceptual understanding of critical technical elements and/or the interrelationship between elements, it is unrealistic to expect coherent leadership for system wide reform to emerge.

The employability objective could have been addressed through targeted interventions which in turn would have established models from which the conceptual infrastructure for more general reforms could have been built.

For example, a model of an effective, demand driven and quality assured TVET system could have been developed at the outset through the short course program envisaged in the design. Basic TVET principles could have been illustrated at the beginning with demand analysis of priority skill-sets and the development, with industry support, of relevant competencies for Tonga National Qualifications and Accreditation Board (TNQAB) accreditation. Training provider strengthening, including trainer training and equipment grants, could have similarly been tailored specifically to the short course skills training required. The establishment of related program management and monitoring and evaluation systems specific to the model would have provided a base from which more extensive systems could have been developed. An approach such as this would have integrated elements of all three TSP1 components and assisted the development of a common frame of reference for Program implementation overall.

1. Shifting to a demand driven training system requires both a quantitative and qualitative understanding of skill demands. In other words how many people are required to be trained, in what skill areas, and at what level at any one time?

The TSP1 design, while espousing a demand driven training objective, placed heavy emphasis on the qualitative aspects (the development of competency standards and courses) but gave no guidance as to the need for and the processes by which quantitative labour market data should be derived.

Without this evidence base it is difficult to gear training investment or determine the most effective means by which training demand can be met. It is one thing to have a list of desirable competencies but in the absence of quantitative data about the respective demand/priority for individual or sets of competencies, questions about the most suitable training response cannot be answered.

It is essential for TSP1 to place greater emphasis on labour market information and to work with established ITACs to quantify actual skill demand in their respective sectors. When asked directly as to what follows their work now that they had completed the identification of desirable competency standards and courses, the Chairs of both the Tourism and Hospitality and the Construction ITACs said they ‘didn’t know’. It is suggested by this review that assistance with the quantification of skill demand would be a useful first step.

1. There is a need for TSP1 M&E to be better aligned to Government and donor strategic frameworks.

While a need for activity level monitoring and reporting is acknowledged it is essential that scarce program resources and program monitoring do not get lost in activity level details clouding any higher level evaluation of outcomes.

The current M&E system is overly complicated with a heavy data collection and analysis load. It is believed that the reason for this stems from a confusing mix of outcomes, outputs and inputs in the TSP1 design and the fact that the relationship between notional outcomes and performance indicators was not clear in many cases.

Given this context it was surprising to read in the TSP1 Annual Plan (2011-2012) a suggestion for the Ministry of Finance and National Planning to revise and align the relevant TSDF outcomes and indicators to TSP1 outcomes and indicators when in fact the TSDF Outcome 5[[38]](#footnote-38) and its associated strategies and indicators could well serve as the basis for a simplified TSP1 M&E framework at the outcome level.

1. TSP1 has experienced significant delays in recruitment of international technical assistance. This is a product of the compounding effects of inflexible and difficult procurement policies in the Ministry of Finance and National Planning, lack of access to international labour markets for technical assistance, and lack of experience in negotiating with and contracting international personnel. Once recruited, further human resource management issues have arisen due to lack of experience with performance management. Even within a program approach consideration should be given to contracting third party support for the recruitment and performance management of international technical assistance.
2. The inclusion of an Employment Training Fund as a critical platform for leveraging a shift to a more flexible and responsive demand driven training system was premature in this case. A number of conditions need to be present such as evidence of skill development priorities, availability of courses, availability of qualified trainers, training provider managers with commercial acumen and industry confidence to enter into partnership arrangements. Given the absence of these conditions at the time of the design and the fact that the designers recognised that ‘reforming training is a complex and long term commitment’ it was unrealistic to expect any significant take-up of ETF activity in the short term.

However, the principles of an ETF could have been demonstrated by establishing targeted models that supported the development of training provider capacity and industry partnerships to respond to specific skills gaps in priority areas.

1. The TSP1 strategic objective to make Tongans more competitive in domestic, regional and international labour markets through systemic improvements in the national TVET system implies that improved employability is dependent on systemic change. The TSP1 design further acknowledges that systemic change is a complex and long term proposition requiring careful planning and sequencing of events. In other words it is unrealistic to expect any changes in employability outcomes until the conditions of a well developed TVET system is in place.

On the other hand, it could be argued that the converse would be more effective. That is, build systemic improvements in the national TVET system through smaller scale model interventions which specifically target national and international labour market opportunities. Not only would such an approach improve employability in the short term but the models would facilitate the development of a broader understanding of what a flexible and responsive demand driven system might comprise. This in turn would generate popular and political support and underpin the development of evidenced based national policy.

## Sustainability

At this point in time there are some indicators of system development:

* The TNQAB is now fully operational and has gained a level of respect amongst training providers and TVET system administrators. The concept of a quality system based on training provider registration and course accreditation appears to becoming accepted.
* The importance of international qualifications is recognised given the number of franchise arrangements between Tonga training providers and international institutions.
* There is support for a strong and effective TVET system at senior levels of Government as evidenced in the Tonga National Strategic Plan and other agency documentation.
* local industry has shown a willingness to become integral partners in the TVET system and participate in ITACs.

However these gains remain fragile.

Funding for the TNQAB CEO position remains dependent on donor (Australia and New Zealand) support.

MOTEYS’ responsibility for TVET will pass to the newly established Ministry of Education and Training (MET). The Minister and CEO have confirmed their support for the prioritisation of TVET in the new structure, and TSP1 program activities will be integrated into the core work program of existing Ministerial staff.

While this move will enable the integration of TVET into a coherent education and training structure, concern was expressed that within the traditionally academically oriented Ministry of Education, the specific needs of an emerging and comparatively expensive TVET system, particularly at the tertiary level, will not receive due attention. It is critical therefore to develop an evidenced based and consensually developed national TVET policy based on an improved evidence base – particularly labour market information and skills planning.

A further risk to sustainability is the low status of TVET amongst the broader community. If TSP1 is unable to demonstrate improved graduate outcomes in the labour market it will continue to be difficult to gain community and political support.

# 4. The next 9 months to April, 2013

This IPR has identified a complex mix of causal factors that have led to a lack of satisfactory progress in the achievement of TSP1 objectives. At this stage, two years into a planned four-year intervention, it is therefore timely to reflect on whether the current approach needs to be reconsidered.

In this context, it is recommended that the Governments of Tonga, Australia and New Zealand meet at their earliest convenience to commence discussions on the way forward with a view to reaching a common view by the end of August, 2012. During this period of discussion and any subsequent periods required to implement the outcomes of the discussions it is important to provide a level of certainty for TSP1 staff about the immediate future.

The following is a recommended list of activities for the period up to the end of April, 2013:

1. Specialist technical assistance should be engaged to assist the TSP design and implement an analysis of the current labour market in Tonga and, to the extent possible, project future skill demands for Tongans in both national and regional labour markets, including Australia, New Zealand and possibly the United States. It is understood that the Public Service Commission has commenced workforce planning for the Public Sector. This should be complemented by a similar activity undertaken by TSP1 in the private sector to build up a comprehensive understanding of workforce needs over the next 5 years.
2. Given the July 1 transfer of the TSP1 from MOTEYS to MET, it is timely to commence the system development work that to date has not been accomplished. TSP1 should identify suitable national and/or international technical assistance with skills in broad based stakeholder consultation and policy development to facilitate the drafting of National TVET Policy for consideration by Government of Tonga before the end of the year.
3. TSP1 staff should participate actively in both the labour market study and the policy development process as each of these activities will provide considerable professional development opportunities that will further enhance TSP1 staff capacity to effectively guide TVET reform within a new Ministry.
4. The processes required to complete the labour market study and the national policy will absorb substantial amounts of TSP1 staff time and it will be necessary to confine other work mostly to the completion of existing activity. A **Workplan** recommending a range of activities to be accomplished up to the end of April 2013 is included in **Annex 1**.[[39]](#footnote-39)
5. The next nine months should be considered as a period of consolidation of recent gains. Given the number and range of activities identified in the **Workplan** current staff will be fully occupied**.** To this end there should be no new initiatives. Other than the labour market and policy STAs there should be no further investment in additional personnel or in capital items such as computer networking equipment. It will not be possible to undertake study tours during this period.
6. All activity should be limited to that cited in the **Workplan.** These activities will need to be costed by TSP1 and submitted to the PSC for approval before implementation.

# Annex 1: Workplan – August 2012 – April 2013

|  | 2012 | 2013 |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | A | S | O | N | D | J | F | M | A |
| **Component 1** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **1.1 Introduce internationally benchmarked skill standards** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| * Facilitate active involvement of ITACs for Tourism and Hospitality and for Construction in both the labour market analysis and TVET policy development
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| * Ensure the Terms of Reference for the labour market analysis includes a requirement for capacity building of ITACs to facilitate their participation in on-going collection of labour market data and strategic skills planning in their respective sector
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| **1.2 TNQAB** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| * With ITAC support continue liaison with the TNQAB to finalise of accreditation of Tourism and Hospitality, and Construction units of competency and courses
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| * Continue to provide support to strengthen TNQAB quality assurance practices through the STA TNQAB and TSP1 funded technical officers including capacity building for Quality Assessment Panel members
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| * Continue to support training provider compliance with TNQAB registration and course accreditation documentation
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| * With ITAC support continue liaison with the TNQAB to finalise of accreditation of Tourism and Hospitality, and Construction units of competency and courses
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| **1.3 Capacity building – training providers** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| * Stocktake of trainer capacity in priority skill areas determined by labour market analysis and undertake final TAA course (20 participants) for trainers in priority skill areas
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| * Conduct one capacity building workshop on good practice use and maintenance of workshop equipment
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|  |
| * Conduct annual review of equipment grant allocations and prepare annual report including financial acquittal
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| **1.4 Alternative Pathways** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| * Continue to provide technical assistance through local APW adviser
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| * Continue to support APW pilot through PTM
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| * Finalise baseline data
* Continue to monitor APW pilot in line with M&E framework
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| * Ensure workshops and equipment are being used effectively
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| * Conduct research and develop a list of suitable teaching and learning materials from sources such as the Commonwealth of Learning, International Labour Organisation or other bilateral programs in the Pacific
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| * In alignment with MET’s current review of secondary school curriculum, work with relevant MET staff to review and adapt CDU core competency materials for APW trialling
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| * Trial core competency materials in APW pilot school
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| **Component 2** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **2.1 Promote demand driven training** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| * Complete ETF funded Certificate III Hospitality Program
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| * Evaluate development, delivery and outcomes for ETF Hospitality Course and incorporate findings in TSP1 M&E reports
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| * Examine closely the Tonga Business Enterprise Centre (TBEC) model for determining training needs and facilitating a training response
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|  |
| * Select highest priority skill-set need derived from labour market analysis and identify best available training solution for short course delivery – e.g. local registered provider with accredited program or franchise arrangement with local provider or through competitive tender for external supplier such as APTC or other NZ or Australian providers
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|  |  |
| * Contract successful training provider
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| * Monitor delivery and measure outcomes of the training for incorporation in TSP1 M&E
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| **Component 3** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **3.1 Program Management** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| * Office Setup – undertake minor renovations of allocated offices up to a budget ceiling of AUD50,000
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| * Develop TOR for STA Labour Market Information and Strategic Skills Planning (STA LMI) ensuring provision is made for capacity building of TSP1 and relevant MET staff as well as relevant ITACs
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|  |
| * Work closely with MFNP to expedite recruitment and field STA LMI as early as possible[[40]](#footnote-40)
* Ensure all appropriate TSP1 and relevant MET staff, as well as relevant ITACs are actively engaged in the labour market and skills planning studies
* Develop TOR for STA National TVET Policy (STA NTP) ensuring provision is made for capacity building of TSP1 and relevant MET staff
* Work closely with MFNP to expedite recruitment and field STA NTP as early as possible[[41]](#footnote-41)
* Ensure all appropriate TSP1 and relevant MET staff are actively engaged in the processes to develop the National TVET Policy
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| * Seek Ministerial/Government approval for National TVET Policy
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| * Work closely with MET and develop National TVET Policy Implementation Plan including national advocacy campaign
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| **3.2 Institutional Strengthening - MET** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| * Maintain TSP1 Governance mechanisms including revisions to Operations and Finance Manuals to reflect MET processes
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|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| * Maintain TSP1 procurement and financial management systems in accordance with MET procedures
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| * Prepare Six Month Report for July/December 2012
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| * Provide input into MET Corporate Plan
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|  |
| * Consult, develop and implement an agreed staff development plan for MET personnel engaged in TVET activities
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| **3.3 Monitoring and Evaluation** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| * Using existing resources implement simplified TMIS and provide staff training as necessary
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| * Prepare and consolidate baseline data collection and ensure entry in TMIS and M&E Framework
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| * Establish and implement routine TVET data collection processes in relation to indicators identified in the M&E Framework
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| * Establish and maintain TMIS data entry procedures
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| * Field STA M&E to complete contracted inputs as planned
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|  |
| * Conduct second Critical Reflection Group Meeting
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| * Analyse progress in relation to indicators in the M&E Framework and prepare an Evaluation Report for the 9 months (August 2012 – April 2013)
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# Annex 2: Quality at Implementation Assessment

The following is a synthesis of observations from the IPR and Situational Analysis in relation to 7 of the 8 AusAID/DAC criteria for aid effectiveness. No assessment of impact is possible at this stage of TSP1 implementation. Recommended remediation is now a matter for discussion between the Governments of Tonga, Australia and New Zealand.

Ratings have been provide in accordance with the following scale:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Satisfactory (4, 5 and 6)* | *Less than satisfactory (1, 2 and 3)* |
| **6** | Very high quality; needs ongoing management & monitoring only | **3** | Less than adequate quality; needs to be improved in core areas |
| **5** | Good quality; needs minor work to improve in some areas | **2** | Poor quality; needs major work to improve |
| **4** | Adequate quality; needs some work to improve  | **1** | Very poor quality; needs major overhaul |

| Criteria | Assessment | Rating (1-6) \* |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1. Relevance Why are we doing this? | For the most part the TSP objective to improve the employability of Tongans in national and international labour markets through an improved TVET system remains relevant to the broad policy frameworks of the respective Governments of Tonga, Australia and New Zealand.The Tonga Strategic Development Framework 2011 – 2014 and the Education Policy Framework July 2012 (recently developed by the new Ministry of Education and Training) both specifically cite the need for ‘Appropriately skilled workforce to meet available opportunities in Tonga and overseas by delivery of improved TVET’.This is reflected in the partnership agreement between the Governments of Tonga and Australia which cites Improved Technical and Vocational Skills as one of four priority outcomes under the agreement. More broadly the TSP1 objective is nested within AusAID’s Pacific Education and Skills Development Agenda and the emerging Pacific Tertiary Education strategy. The Commitment Agreement between the Governments of Tonga and New Zealand specifically refers to New Zealand’s support for TVET in cooperation with AusAID.The relevance of the TSP1 objective was further endorsed by the private sector and Government agencies engaged in labour and economic development activities. | 5 |
| 2. EffectivenessHow well is it working? | A number of factors have limited the effectiveness of Program implementation including:1. **Program Management**
* A formula based Program design which did not adequately reflect the existing TVET context in Tonga.
* A Program Management structure incorporated into the design which incorrectly assumed administrative capacity existed within MOTEYS and the donors to implement a large (by Tongan standards) development cooperation program.
* A poorly implemented Donor Funding Arrangement and complex governance structures between the Governments of Australia and New Zealand causing delays, uncertainty and confusion amongst MOTEYS and TSP Program management staff.
* Irregular and infrequent meetings of the Program Steering Committee to address and redress issues as they arose.
* Poor professional relationships between senior managers.
* Under performance of internationally recruited technical assistance.
* A propensity to unrealistically raise expectations about TSP1 delivery and a tendency to address unmet expectations with tactical responses such as a hurriedly conceived and implemented equipment grants scheme.
* An overemphasis on school level alternative pathways distracting/diverting resources away from more strategic investments in the tertiary sector.
1. **Response to key TVET challenges in Tonga**
* A lack of a common vision for TVET in Tonga and the absence of any process to build such a vision based on broad based understanding of TVET concepts and approaches.
* The absence of a national TVET policy and missed opportunity to build understanding and ownership through a policy development process.
* There has also been a lack of data, particularly labour market information and skills plans to inform policy development and TSP1 implementation strategies.
* No initiatives undertaken to build labour market information or skills plans as a first step to determining demand and identifying appropriate courses and units of competence.
* A poorly conceived Employment and Training Fund which is out of step with the current stage of TVET systems development in Tonga.
 | 2 |
| 3. Efficiency How well is it being achieved? | * Very slow progress against design and planned activity.
* Significant levels of under-expenditure in relation to budget.
* Annual Plans have been overly optimistic in relation to expected outputs and future planning needs to be more realistic both in scope and budget.
* High levels of staff turnover resulting in a loss of any previous capacity building and the need for repeat training for replacement personnel.
* Complicated recruitment processes.
* Vacant positions unfilled for extended periods particularly the key Program Technical Manager position.
* Unnecessary effort to develop competency standard and course ‘wish list’ without any real analysis of demand or consideration of the capacity of Tongan training providers to deliver.
* Significant delay in the accreditation of the Hospitality and Tourism courses and units of competence due to the deliberate exclusion by technical advisers of the TNQAB in competency standards development.
* An Alternative Pathways Pilot Scheme has lacked a specific demand focus and decisions about trainer training and material support in the form of equipment grants has not been linked directly solid data related to demand.
* In most cases, trainers have been trained and equipment has been ordered and delivered in advance of course development.
* Inexperienced equipment procurement – leading to purchase in some cases of ‘handyman’ level equipment which is unlikely to be durable in a training workshop setting.
* Overlay of three different government accountability structures exacerbating already complex procurement and financial management systems.
* Overly complicated monitoring and evaluation system requiring additional inputs to simplify with little real progress in actual monitoring and evaluation to date.
* Slow development of what appears to be a cumbersome and inflexible system TVET Management Information System.
 | 2 |
| 4. Monitoring & EvaluationHow will we know? | * The new M&E adviser and the Program M&E Officer are working closely to improve systems overall. The latter is responding very well to the coaching and mentoring being provided by both the M&E Adviser and the PTM.
* Need for TSP1 M&E to be better aligned to Government and donor strategic frameworks - TSDF has comprehensive list of outcomes and indicators which could be readily adopted by TSP1.
* Outcomes specified in TSP1 design are a confused mix of outcomes, outputs and inputs.
* Relationship between outcomes and performance indicators not clear.
* Attempts by the Program to interpret the designer’s intentions have resulted in an overly complicated M&E framework incorporating a heavy data collection load and difficult to measure indicators, e.g. ‘schools selected to participate are appropriately engaged’.
* No evidence of baseline data collected was provided to the team.
* Achievements have been cited but it is unclear against what base these achievements have been accomplished.
 | 2 |
| 5. SustainabilityWill benefits last? | At this point in time there are few indicators for sustainable change.The transfer of responsibility for TVET from MOTEYS to MET brings both risks and opportunities.The risks include:* Loss of current TSP1 (MOTEYS) experience.
* The need to sustain external linkages for the delivery of higher level skill development may not be understood.
* Competing demand for resources may mean that the cost of establishing and operating tertiary level TVET institutions may not be supported.

On the other hand, a number of opportunities arise:* TVET will be embedded in a coherent and holistic approach to education and training in Tonga.
* MET is committed to the development of a National TVET Policy.
* The current amendment to the Education Act will incorporate TVET principles and practices based on an agreed National TVET Policy.
* A collaborative policy development process will improve understanding of TVET principles and practices within MET and facilitate better understanding of TSP1 personnel of MET’s overall education and training agenda.
* TVET within a large, ‘senior’ Ministry could improve TVET status.
 | 2 |
| 6. Gender EqualityHow will we achieve gender equality? | * No specific strategies are in place to consider gender equality issues that would enable the Program to pro-actively take a lead in improving participation rates of women and girls in training and employment.
* There have been similar numbers of men and women participating in study tours and train the trainer programs but beyond this there is little evidence of any other direct approaches to establish a more inclusive TVET system.
* It is difficult to find evidence that TSP1 has adequately identified, addressed, monitored and reported gender equality issues nor improved female access to TVET training in Tonga.
* While there is reference to gender based criteria in the ETF funding guidelines there have been no ETF activities to date.
* The APW scheme has incorporated support for training in traditionally female roles but there has been little attempt to broaden female interest in training related to non-traditional occupations.
 | 2 |
| 7. Analysis and LearningHow well have we thought this through? | * Three principal areas of learning have been identified in TSP1 plans:
	+ Communications – building understanding and managing expectations.
	+ Program resourcing – recruitment and management of Technical Assistance.
	+ Program Management - planning, M&E and donor management protocols.
* But it is not clear to what extent good practices, lessons learnt, and institutional knowledge from TVET have been applied in practice.
* International study tours have been carried out but due to mismatch in the level of TVET systems development between Tonga and the countries visited, unrealistic expectations may have been raised.
* The lack of experience amongst Program Managers has fostered a conservative planning environment that has relied heavily on the original Program Design for guidance.
* More experienced managers would have taken the opportunity to critically analyse the design, identify weaknesses and put in place strategies through the Annual Planning Process to address these weaknesses.
* In this instance, the absence of an overarching policy framework and the absence of labour market data were two critical areas that should have been identified.
 | 3 |

# Annex 3: Extract from MET Education Lakalaka Framework



# Annex 4: People Consulted

|  | Agency | Name | Title |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | MOTEYS | Mrs Meleoni Uera | Acting CEO/Acting Project Director |
| 2 | MOTEYS - TSP 1 | Mr Geoff Penhall | TSP 1 Program Technical Manager |
| 3 | MOTEYS – TSP 1 Project Team  | Mr Siaosi Enosi | TSP 1 PO *fo*r National Training |
|  |  | Mr Pauli Kautoke | TSP 1 PO *for* IT & Finance |
|  |  | Mrs Luseane ‘Aho | TSP 1 PO *for* Monitoring & Evaluation |
|  |  | Mrs Kepreen Ve’etutu | TSP 1 PO *for* Demand Driven Program |
| 4 | MOTEYS –TSP 1 | Ms Ceri Bryant | TSP 1 STA M&E |
| 5 | MEWAC | Mrs Emeli Pouvalu | CEO MEWAC |
| 6 | TNQAB | Dr Uhila Fasi | CEO TNQAB |
| 7 | Alternative Pathways (APW) | Rev ‘Alifeleti ‘Atiola | Chair APW Taskforce |
| 8 | MEWAC | Dr ‘Ana Taufe’ulungaki | Minister of MEWAC |
| 9 | Public Service Commission (PSC) | Ms Falemei Ma’ake | PSC Deputy CEO Policy & Training |
| 10 | AUSAID | Ms Kaye Schofield |  |
| 11 | Montfort Technical Institute | Br Joseph Koottor | Principal  |
| 12 | Tonga Institute of Science & Technology (TIST) | Mr Nonga Soakai | Principal, TIST |
|  |  | Mr Fatuilangilangi | Principal, NCVS |
|  |  | Mrs Fina Fineanganofo | Head *of* Tourism & Hospitality |
|  |  | Capt Sateki Manu | Principal, TMPI |
| 13 | Tonga Chamber of Commerce & Industries (TCCI) | Mr Paul TaumoepeauMs ‘Aloma Johansson  | Former PresidentPresident TCCI |
| 14 | Ministry of Works (MOW) | Mr Leveni ‘Aho | Acting CEO |
| 15 | Tonga Association for TVET | Sr Kieoma Finau | President, TATVET |
| 16 | ‘Ahopanilolo Technical Institute | Sr Kieoma Finau | Principal |
| 17  | ITAC Tourism & Hospitality | Mrs Lee Miller | Chair, ITAC T&H |
| 18 | ITAC Construction | Mr Viliami Sisifa | Chair, ITAC Construction |
| 19 | Channel College - APW | Mr ‘Uto Kaufusi | Principal |
| 20  | Mailefihi College- Franchise Programs | Ms Loloahi Moimoi Mr ‘Alifeleti ‘Atiola | PrincipalPresident, FWC Education System |
| 21 | Tailulu college - APW | Mr. Paul Fonua | Principal |
| 22 | Tupou Tertiary Institute | Ms Mele’ana Puloka | Director |
| 23 | Ministry of Labour, Commerce & Industry | Mr Tatafu Moeaki | CEO |
| 24  | Tonga Business Enterprise Centre | Mr Cyril Guiramand | Manager |
| 25  | MOTEYS – TSP 1 | Mr John Larson | STA Construction |
| 26 | Tonga Statistic Dept | Mr ‘Ata’ata Finau | CEO |
| 27 | MEWAC, Curriculum Development Unit | Mr Mostyn ColemanMrs Seilose Fifita | TESP - STA, CDU, MEWACSenior Education Officer CDU |

# Annex 5: References

1. 2009 Labour Force Survey, Tonga Department of Statistics (2009) [unpublished]
2. A guide, with accompanying matrix and template, to measure and benchmark effectiveness, efficiency and equity across secondary TVET schools, September, 2010 ERF
3. Activity Development Aid Policy & Management
4. Australia-Tonga Partnership for Development; Implementation Schedule – Outcome 3 – Improved technical and vocational skills
5. Draft Education Policy Framework
6. Draft Education Policy Framework (EPF)
7. Government of Tonga Ministry of Training, Employment, Youth and Sport (MoTEYS) TVET Support Program (TSP) Six monthly progress report July – December 2011, Nuku’alofa - January 2012
8. Government of Tonga, Tonga Strategic Development Framework (TSDF) 2011 – 2014
9. Karl Taufaeteau & Associates (October 2011) Audit Report, June 2011
10. Ministry of Education Women’s Affairs and Culture Corporate Plan 2011-2014 (March 2011)
11. Ministry of Training, Employment, Youth and Sports Corporate plan 2007-2012
12. MOTEYS Annual Management Plan, 2011-12
13. Pacific Education and Skills Development Agenda, Guidance on Education and skills development across the Pacific, AusAID, June 2011
14. Pacific Education Development Framework (PEDF) 2009-2015 (March 2009)
15. Promoting Opportunities for All: Education, November 2011
16. Report on Alternative Pathways Pilot Project prepared by the short term adviser.
17. Review of Expenditure on Education Final Report, ‘Alifeleti ‘Atiola, Raelyn ‘Esau, Tevita Lavemaau, Mark Minford, June 2010
18. Strategic Choices: Education- Key Issues and Priorities for AusAID Engagement to 2015
19. Subsidiary Arrangement between the Government of Australia and the Government of Tonga for the Tonga Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Support Program (May 2010).
20. Talave Newsletter 2011
21. Technical and Vocational Education and Training in schools: Literature Review, AusAID Education Resource Facility, 9 September 2010
22. Technical and Vocational Education and Training Support Program (TSP1) Final Design Document (2009)
23. Tonga Education Policy Framework 2004-2019 Ministry of Education (2004)
24. Tonga Household Income and Expenditure Survey (2009)
25. Tonga Labour Force survey (2003)
26. Tonga National Population and Housing Census 2011 – Preliminary Count (2011)
27. Tonga National Qualifications and Accreditation Board Registration Status as at 4 October 2011
28. Tonga Tourism Training Needs Analysis Review and Recommendations, 20 October 2009, Tourism Resource Consultant, NZAID
29. Tonga TVET Support Program Phase 1, Report on In-Country Mission 4-8 April 2011, Kaye Schofield, 15 April 2011
30. Tonga-Australia Partnership for Development - Partnership Report August 2009 to August 2011
31. Tonga-Australia Partnership for Development Implementation Strategy - Priority Outcome 3: Improved Technical and Vocational Skills
32. Tonga-New Zealand Joint Commitment for Development
33. TSP1 Annual Workplan Matrix 2010-2011 (October 2010).
34. TSP1 Budget for F/Y 2010-2011-Version 3
35. TSP1 Guidelines to support applications for Equipment Grants
36. TSP1 Monitoring and Evaluation Plan – POME Orientation Period (Sept – Dec 2011)
37. TSP1 Planning Matrix – 3 Year Plan
38. TSP1 Progress Report, Jan-March 2011.
39. TSP1 Risk Management Matrix, November 2010.
40. TSP1 Six Monthly Progress Report July – December 2010, January 2011.
41. TSP1 Study Tour of Australia 3 – 11 December 2010.
42. TSP1 Summary Financial Management report (SMR2)
43. TSP1 Workplan and Outputs, 2010-2011, November 2010.
44. TSP1 Year 2 Annual Plan 2011/2012

# Annex 6: Terms of reference for review

Terms of Reference

TVET Tonga Support Program (TSP1)

Independent Progress Review & Re-Design 2012

1. Purpose

The purpose of the Independent Progress Review & Re-Design of the Tonga TVET Support Program (TSP1) is to assess the extent to which the goal and objectives of the program are being met, provide an updated analysis of the country and sector context using TSP1 design situational analysis as the baseline, potential scope of a program re-design and, subsequent re-design the program of external support to the TVET sub-sector in Tonga.

1. Background

The TSP1 is a four-year program of external assistance which commenced in June 2010 and is due to conclude in December 2014. It is supported by Australia and New Zealand.

The objective of the TSP1 is to: make Tongans more competitive in domestic, regional and international labour markets through improved demand based TVET and internationally recognised qualifications.

Accordingly, the TSP1 key performance indicators are:

* 80 percent of courses offered are competency based, by competency based qualified trainers
* There is a functioning accreditation process for TVET courses that includes overseas recognition of qualifications, and
* 80 percent of all institutions have been through the process

AusAID is designated on behalf of both development partners (New Zealand and Australia) to engage with the Government of Tonga implementing agency, the Ministry of Training, Employment, Youth and Sport (MOTEYS) on program management issues. Both development partners engage with MOTEYS on policy related issues. The total funding allocated to the Government of Tonga for the TSP1 is AUD7.4 million over four years.

The TSP1 design proposed long term support to TVET in Tonga. Subject to satisfactory outcomes and impact, a second phase is anticipated which will provide a total program timeframe of eight or more years to strengthen Tonga’s skills development system. The current arrangements for the TSP1 involve implementation of the program through Government of Tonga systems and the program is managed by the MOTEYS. Program activities are intended to be integrated into the core work program of existing MOTEYS management and staff with national and international advisers providing mentoring, technical expertise, and filling gaps. MOTEYS has established a Program Office to support implementation. MOTEYS is responsible for ensuring that sequencing and pacing of TSP1 activities are incorporated in the annual planning process.

However, the 2010 elected Government of Tonga has approved a whole of Tongan civil service restructure that is expected to be under implementation by June 2012. The restructure will reduce the number of government ministries from twenty-six to thirteen. As a consequence, the role of MOTEYS will be changed, with parts of the current portfolio being allocated to other ministries. Accordingly, it is expected that the ‘training’ component will be moved to Ministry of Education.

Given (a) these and other changes to the operating environment for the public sector in Tonga, (b) other economic and sectoral changes since the initial design of TSP1 in 2009, (c) the proposed re-structuring of MOTEYS as the implementing agency for TSP1, and (d) program implementation challenges and the development of AusAID’s Pacific Technical and Higher Education Strategy, there is an urgent need for a comprehensive review of the existing program. This should entail a strategic assessment of future options for TVET and, and reach agreement with the Government of Tonga on a re-designed program of support for workforce development in Tonga.

An Independent Progress Review and Re-Design mission will be tasked through AusAID, in partnership with the Government of Tonga and the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT), to undertake this work in two distinct phases.

**Phase 1:** Independent Progress Review (IPR) of TSP1, Situational Analysis and Re-Design Options

**Phase 2**: Re-design of a program of support to assist Tonga achieves its workforce development goal as set out in the Tonga National Strategic Planning Framework.

These Terms of Reference have been discussed and agreed with relevant stakeholders including MoTEYS, the Minister for Education and senior officials in the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Finance and National Planning.

1. Objectives of the IPR and Re-Design mission

The IPR and Re-Design mission has the following six objectives, to be achieved over two phases:-

Phase 1:

* 1. Provide an independent assessment of the progress against objectives of the Tonga Technical and Vocational Education (TVET) Support Program (TSP1) referencing AusAID assessment criteria[[42]](#footnote-42). In particular, the evaluation will examine the activity’s scope and its management model, strengths and comparative advantages and also provide lessons for future support to TVET in Tonga.
	2. Identify issues that need to be addressed to improve the implementation and management of TSP1 through to December 2012 and recommend a course of action to accomplish this.
	3. Update the situational analysis in the Program Design Document for TSP1 in light of significant changes in the country context, in the structure of the Tongan civil service and in the Tongan education sector, to inform scoping and design of future assistance to the subsector. Provide carefully considered advice to the Government of Tonga, AusAID and NZ MFAT on:

a) appropriateness of KRAs and KPIs and progress against objectives;

b) the extent to which TSP1 needs to be redesigned to take account of the changed implementation context advice on re-design options;

c) on the broad directions and nature of the re-design required, if any; and

d) recommendations on the most effective re-design process.

Phase 2

* 1. Undertake a re-design process as agreed between the Government of Tonga, AusAID and NZ MFAT and produce an activity design document for the next phase of external assistance which meets AusAID design standards and supports the GOT’s Strategic Plan, defined needs and standards.
	2. As part of the re-design process and documentation, prepare a detailed transition strategy and phased implementation roadmap that consolidates the gains made under TSP1 and helps ensure a smooth transition from TSP1 to the next phase of support to TVET in Tonga.
1. Scope of the IPR and Re-Design Mission

Phase 1:

**(A) Independent Progress Review**

* 1. The IPR will assess and rate the TSP1 against the eight criteria defined in the AusAID guideline, ‘Manage the Independent Evaluation of an Aid Activity’, which includes the five OECD DAC criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability; and the three additional AusAID criteria of monitoring and evaluation, gender equality, and analysis and learning (further detail is at Attachment A). The rating scale used is 1 – 6, with 6 indicating very high quality and 1 indicating very low quality. A rating below 4 indicates that an activity has been rated as less than satisfactory against a criterion.
	2. In undertaking the IPR, the team will examine the following issues:
1. assess the strengths, weaknesses, assumptions and appropriateness of the operational model for program management and implementation for TSP1 (including its achievements, value for money, management and review processes and monitoring and evaluation systems.
2. identify the achievements of TSP1 to date, assess the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the program and recommend a course of action to address identified constraints;
3. assess the strengths, weaknesses, assumptions and appropriateness of the implementation model for TSP1 (including its achievements, value for money, management processes and monitoring and evaluation systems);
4. assess the integration of cross cutting policies of AusAID and NZ MFAT, particularly gender, into TSP1 activities and lessons learned for future activities;
5. assess the coherence and linkages with other donor supported initiatives in and beyond the education sector and with other relevant Government of Tonga activities;
6. assess the relevance of TSP1 against the broader objectives of the NZ Aid Programme in Tonga and the Australian aid program in Tonga, including AusAID’s Pacific Education and Skills Development Agenda (PESDA) and AusAID’s proposed Pacific Technical and Higher Education Strategy ;
7. Identify the strategic and operational lessons learned from TSP1 implementation to date

**(B) Situational Analysis**

* 1. In parallel with the IPR, the team will gather and analyse available quantitative and qualitative data and information necessary to produce a comprehensive snapshot of the current status of the TVET sector in Tonga that can inform design decisions. In doing so the team will:
1. review the situational analysis in the TSP1 Program Design Document and assess the extent to which the country and sectoral context has changed since it was prepared, and the scope and nature of those changes;
2. consider progress towards and the level of national support for a whole-of-sector approach to external support for education and the perceived position of the TVET sub-sector within such an approach;
3. assess the political, legislative, regulatory, administrative, and operational (including service delivery) implications for ‘training’ and TVET arising from the re-structuring of MOTEYS and the transfer of all training function from MOTEYS to the proposed Ministry of Education and Training;
4. assess the size and scope of validated demand for development of a skilled and qualified workforce within Tonga, the sources of that demand; and how effectively is it currently being met;
5. consider the labour mobility and remittance patterns of skilled Tongans in the context of regional and international labour markets, and their implications for technical and higher education provision in Tonga;
6. consider the implications of AusAID’s proposed Technical and Higher Education Strategy for future support to post-secondary education and training in Tonga;
7. assess the current and potential future roles for the public, private and non-government sector in addressing workforce development needs in Tonga;
8. assess the Government of Tonga’s strategy and vision for workforce development as currently articulated in the Tonga Strategic Development Framework (TSDF) 2011-2014.

**(C) Advice and Recommendations on Re-Design Options**

* 1. Having regard to the IPR findings and the Situational Analysis, the team will provide the Government of Tonga, AusAID and the NZ MFAT with advice and recommendations on the extent to which TSP1 needs to be redesigned to take account of the changed implementation context.
	2. Such advice should include recommendations on the broad directions envisaged for TVET in Tonga, the nature and timing of the re-design required and recommendations on the most effective re-design process. In doing so the team will:
1. ensure that the benefits from TSP1 to date are sustained in any re-design and in any transition from MOTEYS to the new Ministry of Education and Training;
2. consider the Ministry of Education and Training’s strategy and vision for the TVET sub-sector and the implications of this for a re-design of TSP1;
3. assess the merits of moving more purposefully towards a whole-of-sector approach to education in Tonga and the associated policy and implementation challenges; and consider the commitment and capacity of the restructured Ministry of Education and Training to integrate the management and implementation of TSP1 within its operations.
	1. In undertaking the three discrete but inter-related tasks outlined above, the IPR and Re-Design team will:
4. Develop an IPR Evaluation Plan for AusAID approval. The Plan will:
5. be in accordance with the ToRs;
6. specify the evaluation and design approach;
7. detail the proposed evaluation and design questions and audience;
8. specify team member roles and responsibilities.
9. Undertake a desk study of all the documents listed at Attachment A of these ToRs and other relevant documents identified by the team or stakeholders.
10. Conduct consultations with stakeholders as identified in Attachment B, and in the course of the mission facilitate workshops and briefing/debriefing sessions with key stakeholders, as appropriate.

Phase 2:

* 1. When the Government of Tonga, AusAID and NZ MFAT have considered the outcomes of Phase 1 of the mission as outlined above, and if agreement is reached between them to proceed to a re-design of a program of support to workforce development in Tonga and on a re-design process, the team will undertake a second in-country mission to give effect to these agreements.

**(D) Design Document**

* 1. The team will produce a draft and then a final design document consistent with a supplementary Terms of Reference developed by AusAID which will reflect the agreements between and requirements of the development partners. This design document will support the development priorities of the Governments of Tonga, Australia and New Zealand.
	2. The Design Document must meet AusAID quality requirements and conform to AusAID documentary standards. AusAID’s ‘Design Team Kit’ should serve as guidance.
	3. In addition to the typical structure and content of a Design Document, the Design Document will also include a detailed transition strategy and phased implementation roadmap that consolidates the gains made under TSP1 and helps ensure a smooth transition from TSP1 to the next phase of support to workforce development in Tonga.
1. Composition of the IPR and Re-Design Team
	1. The IPR and Re-Design Team will consist of four to five members **independent of TSP1 implementation** comprising:
2. Team Leader (with monitoring and evaluation and design expertise);
3. TVET specialist;
4. Government of Tonga nominee;
5. A nominee of the Tongan Chamber of Commerce and Industry
	1. A representative of AusAID Nuku’alofa and the New Zealand High Commission who will accompany the team for some of its consultations and contribute to team deliberations.
	2. Skill set required within the team:
6. Good understanding of the labour market in Tonga;
7. Experience in program planning, design and monitoring and evaluation;
8. Technical expertise in TVET and labour market analysis;
9. Knowledge of Government of Tonga policies and of the Tongan civil service;
10. Knowledge of the Australian and New Zealand aid programs and experience in aid program development, planning, monitoring and evaluation;
11. Good understanding of the role of the private and non-government sector in workforce development;
12. Excellent interpersonal and communication skills, including a proven ability to liaise and communicate effectively with Tongans (including GoT officials);
13. Demonstrated analytical skills.
14. Ability to provide timely delivery of high-quality written reports;
15. Roles and Responsibilities of the team
	1. The Team Leader will:
16. plan, guide and develop the overall approach and methodology for the evaluation;
17. be responsible for managing and directing the evaluation’s activities, representing the evaluation team and leading consultations with government officials and other donor agencies; and
18. be primarily responsible for the reporting outputs including managing, compiling and editing inputs from other team members to ensure the quality of outputs.
	1. The TVET specialist, under the direction of the Team Leader will:
19. provide specialist advice to the team on good practice workforce development in an international development context; and
20. provide specialist advice to the team on the Tongan labour market and the implications for national workforce development strategies,
	1. Other team members will:
21. work under the overall direction of the Team Leader
22. provide advice, relevant documentation from the Government of Tonga, and an understanding of Government of Tonga processes; and
23. contribute to the required dialogue, analysis and written outputs as agreed with the Team Leader.
24. Outputs and reporting requirements
	1. The following reports are to be provided:

| **Output** | **Report** | **Format** | **Length** | **Due** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **PHASE 1** |  |  |  |  |
| (A) Independent Progress Review | **IPR Evaluation Plan** - for agreement with AusAID before mission commencement. | As advised by AusAID Nuku’alofa | No more than 5 pages | At the completion of the desk review and prior to the first mission |
|  | **IPR Aide Memoire** - to be presented to Government of Tonga, AusAID, MFAT and other stakeholders  | In accordance with AusAID Aide Memoire template | No more than 5 pages | At the end of the first in-country mission |
|  | **Draft IPR Report** – submitted to AusAID Nuku’alofa  | In accordance with AusAID Independent Progress Report template | No more than 25 pages plus appendices | Within 15 working days of completion of the first mission. Feedback from AusAID will be provided within three weeks of receiving the draft report |
|  | **Final IPR Report** - final document incorporating advice from evaluation peer review.  | In accordance with AusAID Independent Progress Report template. Lessons and recommendations should be clearly documented in the report. | No more than 25 pages plus appendices | Within 5 working days of receiving peer review feedback from AusAID |
| (B) Situational Analysis | **Draft Situational Analysis** – submitted to AusAID Nuku’alofa within 15 working days of completion of the first field study to Tonga  | As agreed with AusAID Nuku’alofa | No more than 10 pages excluding annexes | Within 15 working days of completion of the first mission. Feedback from AusAID will be provided within three weeks of receiving the draft report |
|  | **Final Situational Analysis** - final document incorporating advice from AusAID.  | As agreed with AusAID Nuku’alofa | No more than 10 pages excluding annexes | Within 5 working days of receiving feedback from AusAID |
| (C) Advice and Recommendations on Re-Design Options | **Draft Report on Re-Design Options** – submitted to AusAID Nuku’alofa  | As agreed with AusAID Nuku’alofa | No more than 10 pages | Within 15 working days of completion of the first mission. Feedback from AusAID will be provided within three weeks of receiving the draft report |
|  | **Final Report on Re-Design Options** - final document incorporating advice from AusAID.  | As agreed with AusAID Nuku’alofa | No more than 10 pages  | Within 5 working days of receiving feedback from AusAID |
| **PHASE 2** |  |  |  |  |
| (D) Design Document | **Design Aide Memoire** - to be presented to Government of Tonga, AusAID, and other stakeholders  | In accordance with AusAID Aide Memoire template | No more than 5 pages | At the end of the second in-country mission |
|  | **Draft Design Document** - submitted to AusAID Nuku'alofa  | In accordance with AusAID Design template | Up to 25 pages excluding annexes | Within 10 working days of completion of the second field study to Tonga (Feedback from AusAID will be provided within three weeks of receiving the report, followed by a peer review |
|  | **Final Design Document** - final document incorporating advice from peer review.  | In accordance with AusAID Design template | Up to 25 pages excluding annexes | Within 5 working days of receiving feedback from AusAID |

* 1. All reports will be submitted in Word format and submitted by email to the mission manager at AusAID Nuku’alofa.
1. Timing and Duration the IPR and Re-Design Mission
	1. It is expected that the first mission (Phase 1) will be undertaken in the period April-June 2012 with a two-week in-country mission in early April 2012
	2. The timing of the second mission (Phase 2) will be dependent upon discussions and agreements between the development partners but ideally a two-week design in-country mission would be undertaken in July 2012 at the latest.
	3. Expected inputs and duration of the IPR and Re-Design Mission (Phases 1 and 2) is as follows.

| **Date** | **Task** | **Location** | **Input (Days)** **(Maximum input)** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **PHASE 1** |  |  |  |  |
| **2012** |  |  | **Team Leader** | **TVET Specialist** |
| 9-11 April | Document review | Home office | 3 | 3 |
| 13 April | IPR Evaluation Plan | Home office | 1 | - |
| 17-18 April | AusAID briefings & presentation of methodology & AusAID approval of Evaluation Plan | Canberra | 2 | 1 |
| 23 April - 6 May  | Mission 1 including preparation and presentation of Aide Memoire and outline of the draft IPR. | Tonga | 14 | 14 |
| 11 - 20 May | Draft IPR Report, Situational Analysis and Report on Re-Design Options | Home Office | 10 | 6 |
| 4June | Peer review of IPR Report |  | 1 | 1 |
| 13 - 15 June | Final IPR Report, Situational Analysis & Re-Design Options after feedback from AusAID and other stakeholders | Home Office | 3 | 2 |
| **PHASE 2** |  |  |  |  |
| 4 July | Design mission planning | Home office | 1 | - |
| 11-22 July | Mission 2 including preparation and presentation of Aide Memoire | Tonga | 12 | 12 |
| 2-9 August | Draft Design Document  | Home office | 8 | 6 |
| 24 August | Peer review of Draft Design Document |  | 1 | 1 |
| 17 – 20 September | Final Design Document - incorporating advice from peer review.  | Home office | 4 | 3 |
| Travel: Phase 1 |  |  | 1 | 1 |
| Travel: Phase 2 |  |  | 1 | 1 |
|  | TOTAL DAYS |  | 62 | 51 |

# Attachment A: Key Documents

Government of Tonga Documents

|  |
| --- |
| 1 Activity Development Aid Policy & Management |
| 2. Draft Education Policy Framework (EPF) |
| 3. Government of Tonga, Tonga Strategic Development Framework (TSDF) 2011 – 2014 |
| 4. Ministry of Education Women’s Affairs and Culture Corporate Plan 2011-2014 (March 2011) |
| 5. Tonga Tourism Training Needs Analysis Review and Recommendations, 20 October 2009, Tourism Resource Consultant, NZAID |
| 6. Draft Education Policy Framework |

AusAID Documents

|  |
| --- |
| 1. A guide, with accompanying matrix and template, to measure and bench mark effectiveness, efficiency and equity across secondary TVET schools, September, 2010. ERF. |
| 2. Pacific Education and Skills Development Agenda, Guidance on Education and skills development across the Pacific, AusAID, June 2011. |
| 3. Promoting Opportunities for All: Education, November 2011 |
| 4. Review of Expenditure on Education Final Report, ‘Alifeleti ‘Atiola, Raelyn ‘Esau, Tevita Lavemaau, Mark Minford, June 2010 |
| 5. Strategic Choices: Education- Key Issues and Priorities for AusAID Engagement to 2015 |
| 6. Technical and Vocational Education and Training in schools: Literature Review, AusAID Education Resource Facility, 9 September 2010. |
| 7. Tonga TVET Support Program Phase 1, Report on In-Country Mission 4-8 April 2011, Kaye Schofield, 15 April 2011. |

*Partnership Documents*

|  |
| --- |
| AusAID Partnership Documents |
| 1. Subsidiary Arrangement between the Government of Australia and the Government of Tonga for the Tonga Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Support Program (May 2010). |
| 2. Australia-Tonga Partnership for Development; Implementation Schedule – Outcome 3 – Improved technical and vocational skills |
| New Zealand Partnership Documents |
| Tonga-New Zealand Joint Commitment for Development |

TSP1 Program Documents

|  |
| --- |
| 1. Government of Tonga (GoT) Ministry of Training, Employment, Youth and Sport (MoTEYS), TVET Support Program (TSP) Monitoring and Evaluation for the TSP Program: Monitoring Progress and Outcomes Evaluating Impact and Value, AusAID–NZ-MFAT, Nuku’alofa, June 2011.  |
| 2. Government of Tonga Ministry of Training, Employment, Youth and Sport (MoTEYS) TVET Support Program (TSP) Six monthly progress report July – December 2011, Nuku’alofa - January 2012.  |
| 3. Karl Taufaeteau & Associates (October 2011) Audit Report, June 2011. |
| 4. Ministry of Training, Employment, Youth and Sports Corporate plan 2007-2012. |
| 5. MOTEYS Annual Management Plan, 2011-12. |
| 6. Report on Alternative Pathways Pilot Project prepared by the short term adviser. |
| 7. Talave Newsletter 2011 |
| 8. Technical and Vocational Education and Training Support Program (TSP1) Final Design Document (2009). |
| 9. TVET Support Program Phase 1 (TSP1) Year 2 Annual Plan 2011/2012.  |
| 10. TVET Support Program Phase 1 (TSP1), MOTEYS Study Tour of Australia 3 – 11 December 2010. |
| 11. TVET Support Program Phase 1 (TSP1), MOTEYS, Six Monthly Progress Report July – December 2010,January 2011. |
| 12. TVET TSP1, MOTEYS, Guidelines to support applications for Equipment Grants. |
| 13. TSP1 Six-Monthly Progress Report July – December 2010 (January 2011). |
| 14. TSP1 Progress Report, Jan-March 2011. |
| 15. TSP1 Annual Workplan Matrix 2010-2011 (October 2010). |
| 16. TSP 1 Budget for F/Y 2010-2011-Version 3. |
| 17. TSP 1 Planning Matrix – 3 Year Plan  |
| 18. TSP1 Workplan and Outputs, 2010-2011, November 2010. |
| 19. TSP1 Risk Management Matrix, November 2010. |
| 20. TSP1 Summary Financial Management report (SMR2) |
| 21. TSP1 Monitoring and Evaluation Plan – POME Orientation Period (Sept – Dec 2011) |

*Other Relevant Documents*

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| 1. Asian Development Bank (2009). *Good Practice in Technical and Vocational Education and Training*. ADB, Philippines. |
| 2. New Zealand Aid Program, Activity Design Document: New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) national qualifications frameworks and quality assurance systems capability development and assistance programme with the Samoa Qualifications Authority (SQA) and the Tonga National Qualifications and Accreditation Board (TNQAB). |
| 3. Skilling the Pacific, Technical assistance for Implementing of Pacific Education Strategy: Skills Development, Pacific Island Forum Secretariat, Suva, Fiji . Richard Johnson, Paul Brady, Alex Gorham and Carmen Voigt-Graf. September 2007. |

# Attachment B: Stakeholders to be Consulted

1. CEO Ministry of Training Employment Youth and Sports – Ms. Meleoni Uera (Acting)

2. CEO Ministry of Education Women Affairs and Culture – Ms. Emeli Pouvalu

3. CEO Finance and National Planning – Mr. Tiofilusi Tiueti

4. CEO Public Service Commission – Ms. Palenitina Langa’oi

5. CEO Tonga National Qualifications and Accreditation Board

6. Tonga Association of TVET (TATVET)

7. Alternative Pathway Taskforce (Chairperson: Rev. Alifeleti Atiola)

8. TSP1 Program Technical Manager – Geoff Penhall

9. Industry Training Advisory Council (ITAC)

10.TSP1 Team

11. Minister of Education – Dr. ‘Ana Taufeulungaki

12. AusAID TVET Specialist (Kaye Schofield)

13. AusAID Senior Education Adviser (Jerry Strudwick)

14. MFAT Education Adviser (Patricia Nally)

15. Aid Management – Ms Natalia Latu

16. TVET Providers

17. TVET Students

1. TSP1 Design Document P18 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Regional in this context refers to the Pacific region including Australia, New Zealand and possibly the United States [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. A copy of the complete IPR Terms of Reference is attached as Annex 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. AusAID Guidelines: Manage the Independent Evaluation of an Aid Activity [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. See Annex 5 - References [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. See Annex 4 – People consulted [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. ‘Manage the Independent Evaluation of an Aid Activity’, which includes the five OECD DAC criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability; and the three additional AusAID criteria of monitoring and evaluation, gender equality, and analysis and learning [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (OECD,2005) [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Accra Agenda for Action (OECD, 2008) [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. TSP1 Final Design Document (2009) Annex 5 [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Tonga Strategic Development Framework 2011- 2014 Outcome Objective 5 [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. MET 2012 P22 – see Annex 3 [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Karl Taufaeteau& Associate, Chartered Accountants (October 2011) [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. TSP1 Financial Acquittal Report (July 2011 to March 2012) Expenditure AUD482,000 Budget AUD1.645 million [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. PSC Terms of Reference [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Tonga-Australia Partnership Report Draft (22 Sept 2011) [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. ibid [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. July, 2011 and March 2012 [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Activity Development and Aid Policy Management Government of Tonga Aid Management Division (2010) [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Qualifications Framework: Tourism and Hospitality P38 [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. TSP1 Design Document P18 [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Alternative Pathways Pilot – Progress Report (April, 2012) [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Tonga Strategic Development Framework 2011 - 2014 [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Empowering Women Reduces Poverty (NZAID, undated) [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. TSP1 Year 2 Annual Plan, (January 2012) P14 [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Alternative Pathways Pilot Progress Report (April, 2012) [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. NZAID Tonga Tourism Training Needs Analysis, Final Report (23 October, 2009) [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. TSP1 Year 2 Annual Plan P9 [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. PESDA (June 2011) P8 [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. An Effective Aid Program for Australia, Australian Government Canberra (2011) P53 [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. TSP1 Final Design Document P11 [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. An Effective Aid Program for Australia, Australian Government Canberra (2011) P54 [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. TSP1 Final Design Document P10 [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. ibid P11 [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. TSP1 Final Design DocumentP10 [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. ibid P11 [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. ibid P14 [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. TSDF 2011 – 2014 P32 [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. This Workplan is based on consultations with the PTM at the end of the Review mission (May 11) and subsequent development by the PTM and the Review Team. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. Should there be apparent hurdles to early recruitment, the issue should be raised as a matter of urgency with the PSC to examine what strategies might be implemented to expedite the process [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. As above [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. AusAID Guidelines: Manage the Independent Evaluation of an Aid Activity [↑](#footnote-ref-42)