



# Mid-term review of the Tautua - Human Development for All program

Revised Draft Report

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**sustineo**

OFFICIAL

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## List of acronyms and abbreviations

| Acronym | Description                                         |
|---------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| ACC     | Aid Coordinating Committee                          |
| ACWG    | ACC Working Group                                   |
| AWP     | Annual Work Plan                                    |
| CSI     | Critical Social Issue                               |
| CSO     | Civil Society Organisation                          |
| DFAT    | Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade             |
| EOPO    | End-of-Program Outcome                              |
| ESSP    | Education Sector Support Program                    |
| GEDSI   | Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion    |
| GoA     | Government of Australia                             |
| GoS     | Government of Samoa                                 |
| IMR     | Investment Monitoring Report                        |
| IA      | Implementing Agency                                 |
| IO      | Intermediate Outcome                                |
| MEC     | Ministry of Education and Culture                   |
| MEL     | Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning                 |
| MFAT    | Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade               |
| MIS     | Management Information System                       |
| MOF     | Ministry of Finance                                 |
| MOH     | Ministry of Health                                  |
| MTR     | Mid-term Review                                     |
| MWCSD   | Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development |
| NCD     | Non-Communicable Disease                            |
| NOLA    | Nuanua O Le Alofa                                   |
| NUS     | National University of Samoa                        |
| NGO     | Non-Government Organisation                         |
| OPDs    | Organisations of persons with disabilities          |
| PDS     | Pathway for the Development of Samoa                |
| SGPP    | Samoa Gender Partnerships Program                   |
| SOP     | Standard Operating Procedures                       |
| TOR     | Terms of Reference                                  |
| VFM     | Value For Money                                     |

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# 1 Executive Summary

Sustineo was commissioned by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) to undertake the mid-term review (MTR) of the Tautua: Human Development for All program in Samoa, covering Phase 1 of the program (2021–2025). The program is being delivered in two phases: Phase 1 – 2021 to 2025 (AUD21.4 million) and Phase 2 – 2025 to 2029 (AUD15.6 million) and at the time of the MTR, Tautua was transitioning from Phase 1 to Phase 2.

Tautua seeks to address critical social issues (CSIs) related to Samoa’s human development and social inclusion priorities – the prevalence of Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs), stagnated learning outcomes in schools, gender-based violence and barriers to social inclusion. These CSIs guide Tautua’s strategic intent and activity programming.

The purpose of the review was to assess the program’s performance and impact, its effectiveness and efficiency and to identify future directions to strengthen implementation in Phase 2.

The MTR used a mixed-methods approach to collect and analyse data including analysis of background documents and program data and reports and consultation with a wide range of stakeholders during an in-country mission and remote discussions in late 2025.

## 1.1 Key Findings

Overall, Tautua’s Phase 1 was highly relevant and effective and represented very good value for money. Programming was well aligned with Samoa’s national development priorities, particularly the Pathway for the Development of Samoa 2021–2026 (PDS), endorsed by the Government of Samoa (GoS) and had strong buy-in from government and civil society stakeholders. While long-term outcomes are still emerging – as expected at mid-term – Tautua made meaningful contributions to improved access to services, service quality and the Australia–Samoa partnership.

### Relevance

#### **Key review question**

*How relevant is the design and delivery of Tautua to Samoa’s human development needs and priorities?*

Tautua’s approach was strongly aligned with GoS priorities, sector plans and coordination mechanisms. Its focus on critical social issues ensured that programming responded to long-standing and systemic development challenges.

Stakeholders confirm that Tautua addressed real and urgent needs and often filled critical gaps created by funding shortfalls or limited institutional capacity. Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and government partners highlighted the program’s demand-driven, context-specific and locally-led approach.

However, the Tautua program logic is complex, with multiple frames of reference – End-of-Program Outcomes (EOPOs), Intermediate Outcomes (IOs), CSIs, interventions and

projects. Although the Tautua program logic refers to its long-term outcomes as End-of-Investment Outcomes (EOIOs), this report uses EOPOs which is the standard DFAT term. The EOPOs are broad and while this supported program breadth and responsiveness, a sharper focus on Tautua's outcomes would improve achievement and measurement of outcomes.

The CSIs are key to Tautua's relevance to Samoa's development needs, and while they are included in the program logic, the outcomes for these CSIs and their relationship to IOs and EOPOs is not direct. The Phase 2 program logic could consider elevating the role of CSI outcomes (and their strategic priorities) to sharpen the focus of the program.

### Recommendation 1

*Consider reframing the EOPOs to refer more directly to the CSIs and outcomes for intended beneficiaries.*

*This will involve review and redesign of the EOPOs to include a sharper and more specific focus on the CSI outcomes and relationship to the strategic priorities for each CSI. It is acknowledged that while this framing provides a clearer and more direct focus on outcomes for beneficiaries, and potential to link to GoS national statistics, it is a significant change to the EOPOs and will require some detailed consideration, discussion and consultation as well as delegate approval for any changes. A suggested reframing of the EOPOs is shown below.*

*Guiding principle – the EOPOs benefit all Samoans, especially women and girls, youth, persons with disabilities, the vulnerable and those living in hardship.*

- 1. Samoans have improved health outcomes, including a reduction in the rise of NCDs.*
- 2. Samoans have improved education outcomes, including a reversal in stagnated learning outcomes.*
- 3. Samoans have improved social outcomes, including reduced vulnerability and barriers to inclusion.*

The Phase 1 short–medium term outcomes are encapsulated in the IOs which are also regarded as the change pathways to achieving the EOPOs. In Phase 1, Tautua used 8 IOs and 4 are proposed for Phase 2. In each case, the IOs could show a clearer and stronger relationship between the activities (outputs) and EOPOs, although in Phase 1 the broad EOPOs and the number of IOs used created a challenge in representing this. There is also some duplication and unevenness in the proposed Phase 2 IOs.

### Recommendation 2

*Review and refine the IOs to ensure consistency in focus and a clearer strategic pathway between Tautua's outputs (activities) and EOPOs.*

*This will involve review and redesign of the IOs to remove duplication, sharpen the focus on short–medium term outcomes and provide coverage of the change pathways to achieving the EOPOs. A suggested reframing of the IOs is shown below.*

1. *Government of Samoa and NGOs are more capable of advocating for rights, increasing accountability, delivering higher quality, inclusive and accessible health, education and community services to all Samoans*
2. *Government of Samoa and NGOs have stronger policies, regulations and plans, including workforce plans and human resource development strategies*
3. *Government of Samoa and NGOs increase participation and inclusion in decision-making and service design and delivery*
4. *Government of Samoa and NGOs make better use of evidence, reflection and learning in service design and delivery*

Phase 1 delivered a broad range of activities, and while Tautua has been developing a more programmatic approach through clustering activities, greater clarity in the Phase 2 program logic can support a more strategic approach to programming, including rebalancing the focus on breadth and depth (and impact) of activities. This is addressed under Relevance and in the accompanying Recommendation 6.

Post plays an important role in managing and influencing the strategic relationships with Tautua's implementing agencies (IAs) and partners, and there are opportunities for closer engagement in programming discussions with these stakeholders.

### **Recommendation 3**

*Consider opportunities for Post to be more engaged, where it has the capacity, in discussions with implementing agencies (IAs) and partners to shape and influence the strategic programming broadly and at the level of individual activities.*

*To facilitate this, Post and Tautua could jointly identify the areas where Post's participation in stakeholder engagement can be prioritised, and Post could consider the areas and ways that it can contribute to and shape Tautua's strategic discussions with stakeholders.*

## **Coherence**

### **Key review question**

*To what extent is Tautua contributing to cohesion in Australian programming in Samoa, including complementarity with Tautai and other bilateral and regional programs?*

Tautua demonstrated strong coherence with other Australian investments, particularly its twin facility Tautai: Governance for Economic Growth, as well as with other bilateral and regional donor programs.

Coordination mechanisms with Tautai – including joint planning, shared engagement with DFAT and GoS, and structured donor coordination through national systems, as well as shared information and resources, have largely minimised duplication and enabled synergies. However, stakeholder understanding of the distinct mandates of Tautua and Tautai is mixed, particularly at the activity level, suggesting a need for clearer communication about their roles. Tautua could use communication and engagement opportunities to clarify and reinforce Tautua's distinctive role and focus.

### **Recommendation 4**

*Continue and strengthen communication about the distinctive role and focus of the Tautua and Tautai programs.*

*Addressing this primarily relates to engagement and communication, and Tautua could use opportunities to clarify and reinforce Tautua's distinctive role and focus. This could be through its regular engagement with IAs and partners and through other communication activities and products delivered under its Communication and Public Diplomacy Plan.*

Overlapping support for particular activities from Tautua and Tautai in some areas risked blurring program identities. As a result, clearer focus and consistency in activity selection will be important to reinforce the distinct strategic roles of the two facilities.

### **Recommendation 5**

*Ensure that Tautai and Tautua support for specific activities clearly communicates and reinforces their distinctive mandates.*

*This relates to activity decision-making and design, and while the Tautua activity screening workflow includes consideration of complementarity with Tautai, the application of the tool can be strengthened to avoid investment in activities that have the potential to blur the mandate of each program. This can also be addressed in programming coordination discussions with Tautai to avoid activity decisions that may blur the mandate of each.*

### **Effectiveness**

#### **Key review question**

*To what extent is Tautua progressing towards achieving its End of Program Outcomes?*

At mid-term, Tautua has made positive progress towards its EOPOs. While many outcomes are long-term and not yet fully measurable, the program delivered a large number of activities that can be expected to contribute to improved access to and quality of services across health, education and community sectors.

Phase 1 has necessarily focused on building relationships and partnerships and on support for foundational and capacity-building activities, and more progress towards the EOPOs can be expected in Phase 2, particularly as Tautua builds off the foundational work of Phase 1.

Tautua activities were designed and delivered with the intention of contributing to its EOPOs. In relation to EOPO 1 (access to services), examples of Tautua's contribution included the development of the National Youth Policy, delivery of sexual and reproductive health awareness and training programs and support for inclusive education. In relation to EOPO 2 (delivery of quality services), examples included development of the National Cancer Control Policy and Plan and support for the delivery of key services in the health and education sector, and for strengthening CSO capacity for service delivery.

Tautua prioritised a cross-sectoral approach to programming, with 35% of its 2024–2025 activities having a cross-sectoral approach. The approach was embedded in its activity decision criteria and underpinned by the program's broader communication

and engagement activities as well as its participation in sector planning meetings and discussions.

As an example, Tautua developed the National Cancer Policy and Plan of Action through collaboration with a range of GoS agencies and health and medical organisations. Tautua's cross-sectoral approach has strengthened collaboration between agencies and in some cases catalysed and expanded agency collaboration, for example in relation to disaster resilience and the Health Promoting Schools initiative. Tautua's cross-sectoral approach has contributed to more integrated and sustainable responses to complex social issues.

Tautua made progress in using a more strategic approach to programming, and this provides opportunities to enhance program effectiveness, and could be strengthened in Phase 2.

## **Recommendation 6**

*Continue and strengthen the focus on using a strategic approach to activity programming.*

*Tautua is adopting a more strategic approach to programming which can be further strengthened as the program refines the program logic, clarifies strategic pathways to guide themes, embeds the approach across the program cycle and engages with ministries and partners on this strategic shift in programming.*

This will also assist in managing expectations about ad hoc requests for support, as will clearer criteria and budget allocations for flexible or ad hoc funding, as proposed in the draft Phase 2 strategic plan. The recommendations discussed in relation to Relevance (regarding the focus of EOPOs and IOs) complement this recommendation.

## **Efficiency**

### **Key review question**

*How efficiently is Tautua operating?*

The program operated efficiently and cost-consciously, with a strong focus on value for money and Tautua's delivery processes were timely and fit-for-purpose given the operating context. While there were some delays in activity commencement and completion, these reflected factors in the program's implementation context rather than efficiency, and the program's adaptive approach ensured that programming responded to these challenges. Overall, the majority of planned activities were completed or commenced.

Tautua's approach to efficiency was supported by:

- the program's in-country presence and local expertise
- a structured approach to programming and use of screening and investment criteria
- adaptive management and flexible implementation
- strong collaboration with partners and stakeholders
- shared processes, information and resources with Tautai.

Program-wide strategies and systems also support Tautua's efficiency, including Climate Change and Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) strategies, risk management processes and criteria and guidelines for activity identification and decision-making.

There has been a strong focus on developing the Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) system, and as part of this development, support has been provided to partners and staff on data collection and reporting requirements and stakeholders have indicated the need for continued support. Tautua staff have also been supported on the use the MEL Management Information System (MIS), however as it has been recently implemented, staff have identified the need for further support on its use.

### **Recommendation 7**

*Continue support to partners and Tautua staff on using the Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) system and support to Tautua staff on using the Management Information System (MIS).*

*This will involve continuation of the support through provision of advice, guidance material and additional training where required.*

Program delivery is spread across a relatively large number of activities (59 in 2024–2025) and 3 sectors. The breadth of activity can impact efficiency, particularly when the program is delivering a diversity of activities, although these activities were clustered thematically. A more strategic and programmatic approach to activity programming in Phase 2 will support efficiency and this was discussed under 'Relevance'.

While the facility modality offered clear advantages in efficiency, some Tautua systems for supporting the program require development, including timesheets, payroll and procurement, which are currently manual and limit efficiency.

### **Recommendation 8**

*Prioritise the development of corporate systems to replace current manual processes.*

*Tautua has indicated development of these systems is planned and this will be part of the ongoing corporate system improvement process.*

There are opportunities to improve efficiencies by consolidating the breadth of activities supported by Tautua using a more strategic approach to programming, which was discussed in relation to Relevance.

## **Sustainability**

### **Key review question**

*To what extent is Tautua setting Samoa up for sustainability of outcomes in health, education, gender equality, disability equity and social inclusion beyond the life of the program?*

Consideration of sustainability underpinned Tautua's design and delivery, and was supported by a locally-led approach, strong alignment with GoS priorities and a focus on institutional strengthening. The locally-led approach ensured both relevance and ownership of Tautua activities, particularly through the endorsement of activities using

the sector governance arrangements and planning and implementation through IAs and partners.

Sustainability considerations were embedded in investment decision-making and underpinned the program's change pathways – including policy and planning, resource sustainability, research and information and workforce development. Activities that Tautua delivered supported policy development, systems strengthening, workforce capability and organisational capacity development, both for GoS agencies and civil society organisations.

While sustainability prospects varied across activities, many Tautua investments laid the foundations for longer-term outcomes through strengthened institutions, improved practices and locally owned frameworks. This included institutionalisation of policies and practices to ensure that changes supported by the program continue and this was particularly the case in relation to GEDSI principles.

Tautua's approach to capacity development, particularly in areas of need, also focused on sustainability through train-the-trainer activities and knowledge sharing associated with training programs, as well as a broader focus on workforce planning and development.

Risks to sustainability remain, particularly where ongoing implementation depends on constrained government funding, follow-up actions or staff retention. Implementation follow-up is the responsibility of partners, and this may be impacted by funding, capacity and other priorities and is a challenge for sustainability. Although this is outside Tautua's direct control, it can be a consideration in planning discussions with IAs and partners.

### **Recommendation 9**

*Ensure that expectations of partner follow-up to Tautua activities are clear in activity design and implementation to strengthen sustainability of outcomes.*

*This could include clarifying follow-up expectations in decision-making (for example in the activity screening workflow and investment guidelines) and in activity design (for specimen in concept note and proposal templates). However, as partners have responsibility for follow-up, where this is expected, follow-up strategies can be made explicit in partner activity planning and implementation.*

The locally-led approach, alignment of activities with Samoa's needs and delivery through partnerships was also seen to contribute to the strengthening of the relationship with GoS.

Overall, stakeholders express strong confidence in the sustainability of Tautua's outcomes, and the program is well-positioned to strengthen sustainability further in Phase 2 through continued emphasis on ownership, follow-through and capacity development.

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

### **Key review question**

*What evidence is there that Tautua is contributing to improved gender equality, disability and social inclusion for Samoa?*

GEDSI was strongly embedded in Tautua's design and delivery and well-aligned with GoS priorities around ending violence, reducing vulnerability and human development for all. GEDSI was systematically integrated through program logic, investment screening, activity design, implementation and monitoring, supported by the Tautua GEDSI strategy and specialist advisory inputs. This approach has strengthened the program's focus on the EOPOs – inclusive access, service quality and equitable outcomes, and has moved beyond the focus on participation to a clearer emphasis on impact.

Tautua's approach was focused on a broad GEDSI target group – women, girls, youth, persons with disabilities, the vulnerable and those living in hardship (marginalised groups) as well as fa'afafine and fa'atama. Its approach to planning and programming was informed by the needs and experiences of the GEDSI target group – elicited through engagement and partnerships with GEDSI stakeholders in the development and delivery of Tautua activities, provision of advice and training to Tautua staff and inclusion of GEDSI target group representatives in advisory and other committees.

Tautua can be expected to contribute to improved GEDSI outcomes across health, education and community sectors through both targeted GEDSI initiatives – such as the National Youth Policy and support to CSOs and organisations of persons with disabilities (OPDs) – and through mainstreaming GEDSI principles and outcomes across the program.

Tautua's approach to GEDSI was informed by its GEDSI Strategy and the mainstreaming of GEDSI principles and outcomes was guided by a gender mainstreaming checklist for use in activity design and implementation.

The mainstreaming of GEDSI principles across Tautua programming has also strengthened the GEDSI focus in sectoral and cross-sectoral discussions which can contribute to a more systemic and integrated approach across GoS agencies and encourage the participation of representatives of the GEDSI target group in local governance arrangements.

Support to CSOs and organisations of persons with disabilities (OPDs) has strengthened institutional capacity and enabled practical system-level changes, while inclusive education, safeguarding and gender-based violence prevention initiatives addressed critical gaps in services for marginalised groups. Overall, GEDSI resourcing was substantial and appropriate, the focus on GEDSI principles and outcomes is now embedded in Tautua planning and programming and its partnerships with CSOs have built a solid foundation for change and improvement in these organisations, for beneficiaries and at the system level. Tautua is now well-positioned to further continue and strengthen GEDSI outcomes in Phase 2.

#### **Recommendation 10**

*Continue to strengthen Tautua's integration of GEDSI across programming, including in planning, resourcing and monitoring.*

*This can be progressed through maintaining the strong GEDSI focus in programming, continuing to encourage GoS agencies' focus on and prioritisation of GEDSI and building on the expertise and learnings of CSO partners.*

## Future directions

Learning and improvement was also a criteria for the review and the key areas for improvement in the implementation of Tautua in Phase 2 are encapsulated in the recommendations presented in relation to the above criteria.

## 1.2 List of recommendations

The full list of recommendations is provided in Table 1, with an indication of their focus (strategic or operational), priority and implementation responsibility.

**Table 1: List of recommendations**

| Criteria  | Recommendation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Focus                     | Priority | Responsibility                                           |
|-----------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|----------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| Relevance | 1 Consider reframing the EOPOs to refer more directly to the CSIs and outcomes for intended beneficiaries.                                                                                                                                        | Strategic                 | High     | Tautua, through the MEL team and MEL advisors            |
| Relevance | 2 Review and refine the IOs to ensure consistency in focus and a clearer strategic pathway between Tautua's outputs (activities) and EOPOs.                                                                                                       | Strategic                 | High     | Tautua, through the MEL team and MEL advisors            |
| Relevance | 3 Consider opportunities for Post to be more engaged, where it has the capacity, in discussions with implementing agencies (IAs) and partners to shape and influence the strategic programming broadly and at the level of individual activities. | Strategic and Operational | Medium   | Post and Tautua                                          |
| Coherence | 4 Continue and strengthen communication about the distinctive role and focus of the Tautua and Tautai programs.                                                                                                                                   | Operational               | Medium   | Tautua, through the program team and communications team |
| Coherence | 5 Ensure that Tautai and Tautua support for specific activities                                                                                                                                                                                   | Operational               | Medium   | Tautua, through the program team, and                    |

| Criteria       | Recommendation                                                                                                                                                                              | Focus       | Priority | Responsibility                                      |
|----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|----------|-----------------------------------------------------|
|                | clearly communicates and reinforces their distinctive mandates.                                                                                                                             |             |          | through its coordination with Tautai                |
| Effectiveness  | 6 Continue and strengthen the focus on using a strategic approach to activity programming.                                                                                                  | Strategic   | High     | Tautua, through the program team                    |
| Efficiency     | 7 Continue support to partners and Tautua staff on using the Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) system and support to Tautua staff on using the Management Information System (MIS). | Operational | Medium   | Tautua, through the MEL team and advisors           |
| Efficiency     | 8 Prioritise the development of corporate systems to replace current manual processes.                                                                                                      | Operational | High     | Tautua, through the operations and finance teams    |
| Sustainability | 9 Ensure that expectations of partner follow-up to Tautua activities are clear in activity design and implementation to strengthen sustainability of outcomes.                              | Strategic   | Medium   | Tautua, through the program team                    |
| GEDSI          | 10 Continue to strengthen Tautua's integration of GEDSI across programming, including in planning, resourcing and monitoring.                                                               | Operational | Medium   | Tautua, through the program team and GEDSI advisors |

## 2 Background

Sustineo was commissioned by the DFAT to undertake the MTR of the Tautua: Human Development for All program in Samoa, covering Phase 1 of the program (2021–2025).

Tautua is designed to address critical social issues (CSIs) that have constrained Samoa in pursuing its human development and social inclusion priorities. These CSIs include the prevalence of Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs), stagnated learning outcomes in schools, gender-based violence and barriers to social inclusion. After the initial design stage, implementation of the program commenced in December 2022 and consolidated the majority of DFAT’s investments in health, education and the community sectors. The CSIs underpin Tautua’s design and strategic intent.

Tautua is an eight-year program valued at AUD37 million which is delivered through a facility modality managed by Palladium International Pty Ltd. The program is being delivered in two phases: Phase 1 – 2021 to 2025 (AUD21.4 million) and Phase 2 – 2025 to 2029 (AUD15.6 million) and at the time of the MTR, Tautua was transitioning from Phase 1 to Phase 2.

### Tautua Outcomes

Tautua seeks to address Samoa’s CSIs through the following three EOPOs.

1. Samoans, especially women and girls, youth, persons with disabilities, the vulnerable and those living in hardship, have more equitable access to health, education, disability and social protection services.
2. Samoans benefit from the delivery of more inclusive, gender responsive and higher quality health, education community and social development, and social protection services in line with Government of Samoa priority areas.
3. Tautua is an effective partnership between the Governments of Samoa and Australia that supports Samoa’s human development priorities, contributes positively to the bilateral relationship, and delivers the specific EOPOs of each of the subprograms.

Phase 1 programming of Tautua activities was guided by a detailed program logic based on the three EOPOs. Note that the program logic refers to EOPOs as End-of-Investment Outcomes or EOIOs. EOPOs is the standard DFAT term and is used in this report.

### Design and implementation

Development of the program commenced in November 2021 with a design stage and novation of existing activities and implementation commenced in December 2022. Delivery of the program was guided by Annual Work Plans (AWPs), and 4 AWP cover the delivery of Phase 1.

- Annual Work Plan 2022–2023 (for the 6-month period January–June 2023)
- Annual Work Plan 2023–2024
- Annual Work Plan 2024–2025

- Annual Work Plan 2025–2026\*

\*AWP 2025–2026 was not available for the MTR

As part of ensuring Tautua’s alignment with Samoa’s needs and priorities and engagement with each of the government agencies involved in its implementation, referred to as implementation agencies (IAs), the program design was approved by the Government of Samoa’s Aid Coordinating Committee Working Group (ACWG) in March 2023, and the full year AWP’s were approved by the relevant Health, Education and Community sector committees.

## Delivery modalities

Tautua used a range of modalities to support GoS agencies and CSOs to address CSIs, including proven solutions and new or pilot approaches. Continuing programs supported in Phase 1 were the Education Sector Support Program Phase 2 (ESSP II) and the Samoa Gender Partnerships Program (SGPP), with the ESSP Technical Assistance Support (ESSP-TAS) component ‘novated’ to Tautua. The program delivery modalities included:

- support for gender equality, disability and social inclusion (GEDSI) and youth
- technical assistance
- grants and funding
- research and knowledge sharing
- partnerships
- individual and organisational capacity development.

Through these modalities, Tautua supported a large number of individual activities addressing the CSIs and aligned to program outcomes. In addition, AWP’s included ‘enabling’ activities that underpin the delivery of program activities, such as communications, MEL and governance. For 2024–2025, the Tautua work plan covered 53 program activities (including 8 on hold), compared to 52 in 2023–2024 and 38 in 2022–2023 (for six-month period January to June). At the completion of each AWP, planned activities were at various stages of implementation – commenced, completed, not yet commenced, delayed or on hold – with activities that were continuing or yet to commence ‘rolled-over’ to the subsequent AWP. As a result, each AWP built on the progress of previous AWP’s and included new activities, which enabled the program to respond to new or emerging needs. For 2023–2024, 9 activities were rolled-over from the previous AWP and for 2024–2025 32 activities were rolled-over.

The delivery of a large number of individual activities under each AWP was aided by adopting a more strategic approach to activity programming by clustering related activities. In 2023–2024, activities were grouped under 10 intervention types and for 2024–2025 activities were grouped under 10 projects. This approach can aid cohesion between projects and improve impact.

Projects and activities were also grouped by CSIs and the relevant sectors, and the spread of activities for 2024–2025 is illustrated in Table 2. It should be noted that

Tautua AWP's are developed for financial years and Tautua Annual Reports are based on calendar years, which makes comparison between planned and reported activities more difficult. In addition, there are some slight inconsistencies in activity data within and between reports.

**Table 2: Planned Tautua program activities 2024-2025**

| Sector                                                        | CSI / project                                                                                  | Activities |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| <b>Health CSI 1 Focus and Overall Number of Activities</b>    | <b>CSI 1: Reducing the rise in NCDs</b>                                                        | <b>15</b>  |
| Health Project                                                | HP01 Improved health service delivery                                                          | 8          |
| Health Project                                                | HP02 Increased engagement of other stakeholders to reduce NCDs                                 | 3          |
| Health Project                                                | HP03 Strengthened health policy, regulations and information management                        | 4          |
| <b>Education CSI 2 Focus and Overall Number of Activities</b> | <b>CSI 2: Reversing stagnated learning outcomes</b>                                            | <b>18</b>  |
| Education Project                                             | EP01 Increase in evidence-based decision-making                                                | 3          |
| Education Project                                             | EP02 Increased parental involvement in their children's education                              | 5          |
| Education Project                                             | EPO3 Enhanced resourcing and teacher effectiveness                                             | 10         |
| <b>Community CSI 3 Focus and Overall Number of Activities</b> | <b>CSI 3: Reducing vulnerability</b>                                                           | <b>12</b>  |
| Community Project                                             | CP01 Reduce disadvantage and harm experienced by vulnerable and marginalised individuals       | 3          |
| Community Project                                             | CP02 Increase support for disadvantaged or victimised individuals                              | 2          |
| Community Project                                             | CP03 Elevate capability to deliver quality services to vulnerable and marginalised individuals | 6          |
| Community Project                                             | CP04 Enhance GEDSI awareness                                                                   | 1          |
| <b>Community CSI 4 Focus and Overall Number of Activities</b> | <b>CSI 4: Overcoming barriers to inclusive communities</b>                                     | <b>8</b>   |
| Community Project                                             | CP02 Increase support for disadvantaged or victimised individuals                              | 2          |
| Community Project                                             | CP03 Elevate capability to deliver quality services to vulnerable and marginalised individuals | 2          |
| Community Project                                             | CP04 Enhance GEDSI awareness                                                                   | 4          |
| <b>Tautua Total Number of Activities</b>                      | <b>Total</b>                                                                                   | <b>53</b>  |

The program activity costs for these activities had a total value of AUD3.53 million and ranged from AUD8,000 to AUD400,000, with an average value of AUD66,657.

Management and delivery of Tautua was facilitated through a facility, which along with Tautua's twin program (Tautai: Governance for Economic Growth) is being pioneered for development programming in Samoa.

## 3 Purpose, scope and approach

As Tautua's first phase ended in November 2025 the MTR provided an opportunity to assess Tautua's progress and performance in Phase 1 to inform the implementation of Phase 2.

### 3.1 Purpose of the review

The MTR had three objectives.

1. Assess the performance and impact of the Tautua program, particularly its progress toward achieving its EOPOs noting any major achievements or obstacles in advancing progress in gender equality, disability equity and social inclusion.
2. Evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of the modality with regards to program performance and its contribution to the Samoa–Australia partnership.
3. Provide recommendations to strengthen performance and impact in Phase 2.

The MTR was both summative (measuring Tautua's progress and results) and formative (providing directions to strengthen the delivery of the program).

### 3.2 Scope of the review

The scope of the MTR covered the implementation of Phase 1 – from inception in 2021 to completion in November 2025. The MTR encompassed Tautua's approach to programming, its key service areas, engagement with partners including government and non-government agencies, and assessed Tautua's progress and results against its EOPOs and in relation to specific review criteria – relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, gender equality, disability equity and social inclusion – as well as areas for improvement.

### 3.3 Approach and methodology

A mixed methods approach using both qualitative and quantitative techniques was used for the collection and analysis of data and information including review of relevant documents and data and fieldwork in Samoa to consult with key stakeholders and visit beneficiary projects.

#### Review criteria

Review criteria were used to assess Tautua's implementation and results, using key review questions (KRQs), aligned with the review criteria. KRQs were provided in the TOR and discussed and revised with DFAT. The review criteria and questions are shown in Table 3, including the priority assigned to each criteria by DFAT.

Table 3: MTR criteria and questions

| Criteria and key review questions (KRQs)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Priority |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| <b>1 Relevance</b><br><b>KRQ 1 How relevant is the design and delivery of Tautua to Samoa's human development needs and priorities?</b><br>1.1 How relevant is the program logic in guiding Tautua's support to the achievement of Samoa's human development priorities?<br>1.2 To what extent has the program's flexibility and responsiveness allowed DFAT to focus on emerging needs and opportunities?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | <p>This criteria focuses on the alignment of Tautua's design and strategy with Samoa's development needs and priorities.</p> <p>As the program logic guides Tautua programming, the review will assess its ongoing relevance.</p> <p>Consideration of relevance will also include adaptation of Tautua programming to changing needs and priorities,</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Medium   |
| <b>2 Coherence</b><br><b>KRQ 2 To what extent is Tautua contributing to cohesion in Australian programming in Samoa including complementarity with Tautai and other bilateral and regional programs?</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | <p>Coherence relates to the compatibility of Tautua programming with other Australia government bilateral and regional investments and can include consideration of factors such integration and connectivity, leveraging investments and minimising duplication.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Medium   |
| <b>3 Effectiveness</b><br><b>KRQ 3 To what extent is Tautua progressing towards achieving its End of Program Outcomes?</b><br>3.1 To what extent has Tautua contributed to the delivery of more equitable access to health, education, gender, disability and social protection services?<br>3.2 How well has Tautua supported partners to deliver more inclusive, gender-responsive and higher quality health, education, gender, disability and social protection services?<br>3.3 How effective has the program been in encouraging and creating opportunities for multi-sector approaches to overcoming critical social issues?<br>3.4 How has Tautua contributed to the Samoa-Australia bilateral relationship?<br>3.5 What factors (internal/external) have enhanced/hindered Tautua's progress? | <p>The focus of the effectiveness criteria is the achievement of results, or progress in achieving results, primarily in relation to the EOPOs.</p> <p>In assessing effectiveness, the review will also consider Tautua's results or progress in strengthening the capacity of sectors and partners to improve the delivery of services to achieve the EOPOs.</p> <p>Tautua is partnership between the Governments of Samoa and Australia, and the review will consider the contribution of the partnership to strengthening the bilateral relationship.</p> | High     |
| <b>4 Efficiency</b><br><b>KRQ 4 How efficiently is Tautua operating?</b><br>4.1 Are the planned outputs delivered to the expected quality, on time and within budget?<br>4.2 Is Tautua and its systems focused on value for money, including through improved productivity and strategic focus                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | <p>Efficiency is concerned with the use of resources and assessment of Tautua's efficiency will consider this within a broader value for money assessment that includes resource efficiency, systems such as MEL and risk and factors such as the use of the facility modality and planning, programming, coordination and delivery arrangements.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Medium   |

| Criteria and key review questions (KRQs)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Priority |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| <b>5 Sustainability</b><br><b>KRQ 5 To what extent is Tautua setting Samoa up for sustainability of outcomes in health, education, gender equality, disability equity and social inclusion beyond the life of the program?</b><br>5.1 To what extent has the program supported a locally-led approach to programming with the GoS?<br>5.2 What have been the key enablers of sustainability, for example locally-led development, capacity building?<br>5.3 To what extent has the program supported stronger relationships between the Government of Samoa and NGOs? | Sustainability relates to the likelihood that the results and benefits of the program and individual activities will continue without ongoing support. This criteria will consider Tautua's approach to supporting sustainability, particularly through its focus on locally-led development and other approaches. | Medium   |
| <b>6 Gender equality, disability and social inclusion</b><br><b>KRQ 6 What evidence is there that Tautua is contributing to improved gender equality, disability and social inclusion for Samoa?</b><br>6.1 To what extent has Tautua been inclusive of women, people with disabilities and marginalized groups in planning, decision making and implementation?<br>6.2 To what extent has the program ensured appropriate resourcing are made available towards the achievement of gender equality, disability equity and social inclusion outcomes?                 | This criteria will be used to assess the mainstreaming of gender equality, disability and social inclusion (GEDSI) objectives in Tautua programming, both through the inclusion of GEDSI perspectives and voices in planning and implementation and through resourcing allocated to GEDSI outcomes.                | High     |
| <b>7 Learning and improvement</b><br><b>KRQ 7 What are the key learnings and areas for improvement for the next phase of Tautua to enhance its success in achieving its EOPOs?</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | The learning and improvement criteria focuses on the future implementation of the program by identifying key learnings from the implementation of Phase 1 of the program, as well as areas to improve the implementation of Phase 2.                                                                               | High     |

## Data collection

The primary methods used for data collection were document review and analysis and stakeholder consultations. The documents reviewed were provide by DFAT and are listed in Appendix A. Stakeholders were consulted during an in-country mission to Samoa during the period 24 November to 5 December 2025, with some remote consultation in the following weeks. The stakeholders consulted are listed in Appendix B. Data collection was guided by a data collection matrix which mapped the document sources and stakeholders to the review criteria and questions to guide document review and stakeholder interviews.

## Analysis

Data was analysed using a qualitative categorisation process to identify key themes emerging in relation to the review criteria and questions and guided by performance criteria developed for each review criteria and questions.

## Validation

At the conclusion of the in-county mission, DFAT and Tautua were provided a briefing on the initial findings and directions emerging from the review, and discussions informed the development of the review report.

## Limitations

There were some limitations in the collection of data, however these are not considered to have impacted the review findings.

### Phase 1 transition

The review was conducted after the completion of Phase 1 (June 2025) and during the commencement of Phase 2. While the data reviewed related to Phase 1, some activities implemented during Phase 1 were still in progress during the review period and external stakeholders may not have distinguished between Phase 1 and the early stages of Phase 2. Neither of these factors significantly affected the review findings.

### Planning and reporting periods

Tautua AWP's are developed for each financial year while its annual reports are based on a calendar year and DFAT Investment Monitoring Reports (IMRs) are based on irregular periods (November 2021 to July 2024 and January 2024 to March 2025). In addition, some data in these reports relate to previous reporting periods. As a result, the actual results reported for Tautua don't directly correlate with the planned activities and budget. While this presents a challenge for comparison between planning and results, it did not significantly impact the review analysis.

In addition, the 2025 Annual Report is not yet available, and the AWP 2025–2026 was not available for the review, both of which limited the analysis of planned activities and reported results. However, as the MTR is essentially strategic in nature, this is not seen to adversely affect the key themes of the review.

### Data sources

Data collection was limited to documentation provided by DFAT and did not include collection of external data such as information collected or reported by GoS agencies, the Samoa Bureau of Statistics or other national agencies.

In addition, stakeholder consultation was based on availability during the consultation period, and a small number of stakeholders were either unavailable or unable to attend scheduled consultations. In the latter case, alternative times were offered and, in some cases, consultations were able to rescheduled. However, the review was able to consult with a large number of stakeholders, and this number was sufficiently representative for the review.

## 4 Findings

The key findings of the review are discussed in relation to each of the first 6 review criteria: relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and GEDSI. Discussion of the seventh criterion, areas for improvement, is integrated with each of the above criteria.

### 4.1 Relevance

#### **Key review question**

*How relevant is the design and delivery of Tautua to Samoa's human development needs and priorities?*

The review found that Tautua was highly relevant to the Samoa's human development needs and priorities. Tautua's EOPOs were directly related to the GoS medium-term outcomes and programming was closely aligned with specific GoS development needs and priorities. Tautua's design and delivery approach, including a locally-led and partnership approach which worked closely with GoS aid coordination arrangements, ensured that the program and activities were highly relevant and responsive to local needs and contexts. For Phase 2, the program can benefit from a clearer program logic to guide programming, a stronger focus on the CSI outcomes and an increased strategic focus in programming.

#### **Supporting Samoa's human development needs and priorities**

Tautua's approach to the design and delivery of program activities focused on Samoa's human development needs and priorities through clear alignment with GoS development planning and coordination arrangements.

#### **Development planning architecture**

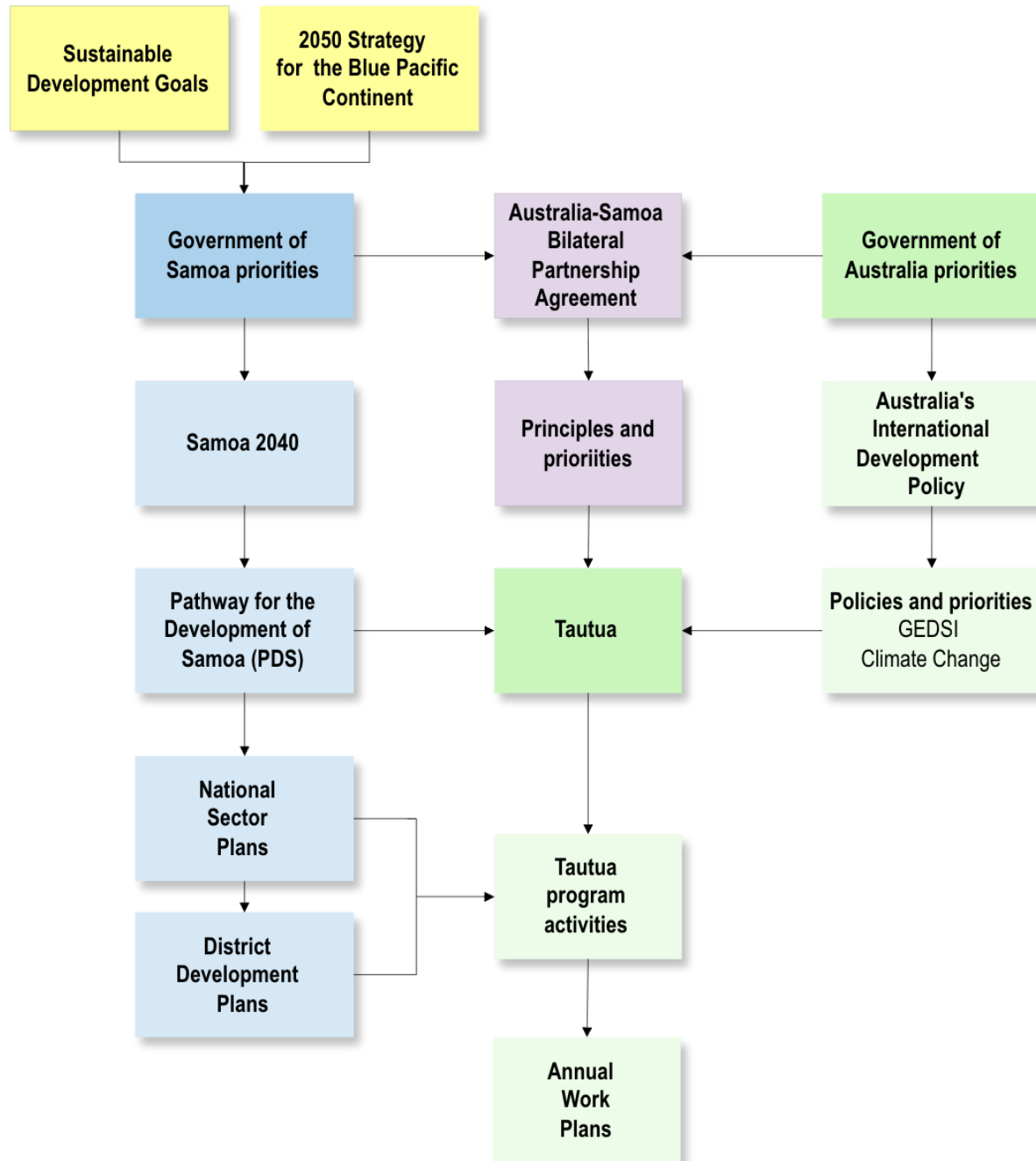
Tautua's approach to activity programming was guided by a clear development policy and planning architecture for both the Government of Samoa (GoS) and Government of Australia (GoA) which is illustrated in Figure 1. Samoa's long- and medium-term planning reflects development commitments at the international and regional level. Samoa's medium-term plan, Pathway for the Development of Samoa 2021–2026 (PDS), informs the articulation of priorities for sectoral and district plans. For GoA, Australia's International Development Policy provides the overarching framework for development programming, with its focus on building resilience and supporting a peaceful, stable and prosperous Pacific. The partnership agreement between Samoa and Australia establishes principles and 5 priorities (pillars) for GoA development programming in Samoa comprising:

1. Climate and disaster resilience
2. Security cooperation
3. Economic growth and partnerships
4. Human and social development (including in the areas of health, education, gender, disability and social protection)

5. People to people linkages (including through sport).

Tautua focused on Pillar 4 in particular, while Tautai has a primary focus on Pillar 3. Using this architecture, Tautua's approach to programming was closely aligned and relevant to Samoa's development needs and priorities.

**Figure 1: Policy and planning architecture guiding Tautua**



Source: Sustineo MTR team

### Tautua's planned outcomes and program logic

The Tautua EOPOs and CSIs are broadly aligned with the PDS and sector outcomes and focus on the PDS Key Strategic Outcome 1 (Improved social development) and each of its 5 key priority areas and their expected outcomes. The priority areas are:

- alleviating hardship
- improved public health
- quality education
- people empowerment
- skilled workforce.

EOPOs 1 and 2, which relate to access to and benefits from improvements in health, education and social development and protection, have a line of sight with the PDS Key Strategic Outcome 1 and its priority areas, although the line of sight between the EOPO social outcomes is less direct as they are covered by 2 priority areas – Key Priority Area 1 (alleviating hardship) and Key Priority Area 4 (people empowerment), and could also be covered by the PDS Key Strategic Outcome 2 (Diversified and stable economy) and its Key Priority Area 6 (community development). In addition, CSI 3 (reducing vulnerability) and CSI 4 (overcoming barriers to inclusive communities) are broadly related to all 4 outcomes in the Community Sector Plan, though not as directly or as explicitly as the education and health CSIs are to the relevant sector plans. Tautua's planned outcomes are articulated in its program logic (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Tautua program logic

|                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Goal                                                               | Improved health, education, gender equality and social inclusion outcomes, and social harmony for all Samoans                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The availability of sufficient funding (government and external) to meet service delivery needs, including asset maintenance and renewal (e.g., well maintained and equipped schools, family violence, safe houses, or village health centres)</li><li>A high retention level of leaders and workforce personnel, where Tautua has invested in HR management and workforce development.</li><li>That diverse leadership leads to more representative and inclusive and equitable service delivery.</li><li>That individuals' and societal behaviours and norms will change as a result of improved collective action, Tautua communications and other efforts.</li><li>The priority of elected governments in Samoa and Australia retains a focus on human development.</li><li>That GOS processes and regulations enable Ministries to work collaboratively and efficiently to deliver multi-sector initiatives.</li><li>The scope of Tautua initiatives is designed to factor in the current capacity and capability of stakeholders and partner organisations.</li><li>Civil society service providers in VAWG, SRHRs, DPOs, health</li><li>Tautua will closely coordinate with JPAM (Joint Policy Action Matrix), Budget Support, and joint development partner policy dialogue opportunities to maximise effectiveness</li></ul> |
| Objective                                                          | An enduring relationship between Samoa and Australia that supports Samoa to pursue its human development agenda in line with Samoa's national priorities and interests                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| EOIO<br>Sphere of influence<br>(4 + 4 years)                       | <b>End of Investment Outcome 1</b><br>Samoans, especially women and girls, youth, persons with disabilities, the vulnerable and those living in hardship, have more equitable access to health, education, disability and social protection services            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | <b>End of Investment Outcome 2</b><br>Samoans benefit from the delivery of more inclusive, gender responsive and higher-quality health, education community and social development, and social protection services in line with GOS priority areas |                    | <b>End of Investment Outcome 3</b><br>Tautua is an effective partnership between the Governments of Samoa and Australia that supports Samoa's human development priorities, contributes positively to the bilateral relationship, and delivers the specific EOIOs of each of the subprograms |                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Intermediate Outcomes or Pathways of Change<br>Sphere of influence | <b>Policy &amp; planning</b><br>Government and non- government providers have improved effectiveness of service delivery and social inclusion through effective development and implementation of gender responsive and inclusive policy, plans and regulations |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | <b>Resources</b><br>Government and non- government providers demonstrate improved and sustainable procurement and maintenance decisions and practices for assets that contribute to delivering inclusive and higher quality services               |                    | <b>Research &amp;Information</b><br>Government and non government providers demonstrate improved evidence-based decision making and accountability through increased access to timely and quality data                                                                                       |                                                      | <b>Workforce development &amp; HR management</b> Government and non government providers demonstrate improved quality of service delivery through better workforce planning and development and targeted support for HR management and emerging leaders |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|                                                                    | <b>Communications</b><br>Samoans have increased awareness and demand for access to service through relevant and timely information                                                                                                                              | <b>Participation and Inclusion</b><br>Government and non-government providers demonstrates improved participatory and inclusive decision-making process through stronger collaboration and cooperation between GoS and non-government providers, and alignment with local governance arrangements |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                    | <b>Readiness for collective action</b><br>Partners better able and motivated to engage, build alliances, and co-develop solutions to critical social issues                                                                                                                                  |                                                      | <b>Progress on critical issues</b><br>Government and non-government partners jointly progress agreed critical priority issues, which could include NCDs, literacy & numeracy, FGBV & SRH, and barriers to inclusion                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Delivery of Programs & Activities                                  | Novated Programs<br>ESSP-TAS and SGPP                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | New Programs                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                    | New Small-Value / Time Sensitive Activities                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Service Areas                                                      | Gender Equality<br>Disability, Youth and Social Inclusion support                                                                                                                                                                                               | Independent advice & technical assistance                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Piloting new initiatives and interventions                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Grants and funding | Research and knowledge sharing                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Fostering individual and organisational partnerships | Individual and organisational capacity development                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Program Principles                                                 | Locally-led                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Collective Action                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Promote gender equality, diversity and inclusion                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                    | Integrate climate change                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                      | Learning and Adapting                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |

**Assumptions**

- The availability of sufficient funding (government and external) to meet service delivery needs, including asset maintenance and renewal (e.g., well maintained and equipped schools, family violence, safe houses, or village health centres)
- A high retention level of leaders and workforce personnel, where Tautua has invested in HR management and workforce development.
- That diverse leadership leads to more representative and inclusive and equitable service delivery.
- That individuals' and societal behaviours and norms will change as a result of improved collective action, Tautua communications and other efforts.
- The priority of elected governments in Samoa and Australia retains a focus on human development.
- That GOS processes and regulations enable Ministries to work collaboratively and efficiently to deliver multi-sector initiatives.
- The scope of Tautua initiatives is designed to factor in the current capacity and capability of stakeholders and partner organisations.
- Civil society service providers in VAWG, SRHRs, DPOs, health
- Tautua will closely coordinate with JPAM (Joint Policy Action Matrix), Budget Support, and joint development partner policy dialogue opportunities to maximise effectiveness

The program logic supported programming that can be expected to contribute to the PDS and sector outcomes and Tautua's approach to programming ensured that AWP activities addressed the PDS outcomes that Tautua is aligned with. Table 4 illustrates the coverage provided by Tautua activities across the PDS social development outcomes in 2024. It should be noted that each activity may cover more than one PDS outcome.

**Table 4: Alignment of Tautua activities with PDS Key Strategic Outcome 1 – Improved Social Development**

| PDS Key priority area           | PDS expected outcome                                                      | AWP activities 2024 |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>1 Alleviating hardship</b>   | Hardship and poverty amongst families alleviated                          | 3                   |
| <b>1 Alleviating hardship</b>   | Resilience in managing social issues enhanced                             | 10                  |
| <b>2 Improved public health</b> | Healthcare services and facilities improved                               | 14                  |
| <b>2 Improved public health</b> | Prevalence of NCDs and infectious diseases reduced                        | 5                   |
| <b>2 Improved public health</b> | Life expectancy increased                                                 | 5                   |
| <b>3 Quality education</b>      | Affordable access to quality education at any level is available          | 7                   |
| <b>3 Quality education</b>      | High academic standards and results achieved at all levels                | 9                   |
| <b>3 Quality education</b>      | Education, training and programs relevance enhanced and diversified       | 6                   |
| <b>4 People empowerment</b>     | Improved access to opportunities for all especially women and youth       | 6                   |
| <b>4 People empowerment</b>     | Strengthened spiritual, cultural and leadership development for all       | 2                   |
| <b>5 Skilled workforce</b>      | Improved efficiency and high standards of service delivery in all sectors | 21                  |
| <b>5 Skilled workforce</b>      | A trusted, capable and skilled workforce in place                         | 16                  |

Source: Tautua Annual Report 2024

The program logic has been effective in guiding Tuatua's programming and focusing on Samoa's development needs and priorities. However, the program logic presents a number of challenges.

As the EOPOs seek to cover outcomes across three sectors (and 4 CSIs), they are necessarily **high level, broad and generalised**, and without specificity may be difficult to measure and achieve within the remaining 4 years of the program, particularly as they address outcomes that Tuatua will have limited capacity to influence beyond contributing to the outcomes. This challenge was identified by some staff at Post, and although this was not raised by stakeholders broadly, this limitation is also reflected in the focus of the MEL framework and is a significant challenge. Because of the broad focus of the EOPOs, the articulation of the link between the IOs is not as clear and direct as it could be. The CSIs provided a valuable focus for Tautua, particularly as they are aligned with the PDS and sector outcomes, although **CSIs' role in the program logic is not as elevated** as may be warranted – whereas the IOs are expressed in terms

of demonstrating outcomes, the CSIs are positioned in the IOs as areas to progress rather than outcomes to be achieved. Given that CSIs are a key focus, it may be better that the CSI outcomes are articulated in the program logic at either the IO or EOPO level, which could give Tautua more specific aspirations.

Tautua programming based on the program logic was complex and used a number of frames of reference:

- 4 CSIs
- 8 IOs which includes two IOs that reference the 4 CSIs
- activities grouped by either 10 interventions (2023-2024 AWP) or 10 projects (2024-2025 AWP).

AWPs used these frames of reference to ensure that activities adequately covered the EOPOs, IOs and CSIs, however it did result in some complexity.

The 2023–2024 AWP mapped activities by IOs, CSIs and **interventions**. The relationship between IOs (which are pathways to change) and interventions was not clear as the IOs and interventions both related to the program’s outputs, and a number of interventions restated the IO, for example Intervention 4 (Workforce development). There was also a level of unevenness in the specificity of interventions, with most generalised interventions (Strengthen policy development) and some very specific (Strengthen disaster preparedness).

The 2024–2025 AWP mapped activities by EOPOs, CSIs and **projects**. Activities that related to each other thematically were clustered. Mapping activities by EOPOs enabled the AWP to distinguish projects and activities that addressed either access (EOPO 1) or service quality (EOPO 2). The mapping approach in 2024–2025 was clearer and less complex than that used for the previous AWP.

To support programming, Tautua used nested logic models for each CSI. While they provided some clarity on the relationship of CSI activities (outputs) to the CSI outcomes, only 1 (health) showed the relationship between the CSI outputs and outcomes and the Tautua IOs and EOPOs. The complexity of the program logic and the role of CSIs was also identified by some staff at Post as a challenge for the program, although generally external stakeholders did not raise concerns, which may reflect their limited engagement with the Tautua program logic.

Areas for improvement of the program logic are discussed later in this section under ‘Future Directions’.

## Relevance in implementation

While the policy and planning architecture provided the framework for aligning Tautua to Samoa’s needs and priorities at the conceptual level, this was underpinned by research and baseline studies, context and needs analysis, donor activity mapping and consultation with stakeholders in the design and implementation of Tautua activities, and with IAs in the development of AWP and individual activities. Tautua used a clear screening workflow to guide the process of activity identification, selection and endorsement. These processes strengthened the relevance of the program. In addition,

activity monitoring and reviews, capturing lessons learned and reflection discussions with partners, supported adaptation and improvement which further strengthened relevance.

### Program and activity endorsement and oversight

Tautua used a strong governance mechanism that further strengthened the relevance of the program and activities. The GoS ACC, which reviews and approves all proposed donor investments in Samoa, approved the Tautua program in March 2023, and monitored the program through regular donor roundtables. The governance committee of each of the 3 sectors also reviewed and endorsed AWP and reviewed implementation (depending on the level of activity of committees). Working through these GoS governance mechanisms provided additional confirmation of the relevance of the program and activities.

### Relevance to stakeholders

GEDSI is a priority focus in the PDS and Tautua's EOPO 1 and EOPO 2 reflect this priority with GEDSI embedded in these long-term outcomes. While findings related to Tautua's approach to GEDSI are discussed separately in Section 4.6 (GEDSI), in relation to program relevance, Tautua's approach to planning and programming had a strong focus on GEDSI. This included close engagement with relevant stakeholder organisations to ensure that the needs and experiences of the GEDSI target group (described in Section 4.6) inform Tautua planning and decision-making. Some examples include partnerships with organisations representing GEDSI target groups based on shared GEDSI principles, involvement of stakeholders in the development and delivery of Tautua activities such as the National Youth Policy, provision of advice and training to Tautua staff and inclusion of GEDSI target group representatives in advisory and other committees.

Stakeholders across government and CSOs indicated that support provided through Tautua was highly relevant to their work. Stakeholders from GoS central agencies emphasised the relevance of Tautua because its work aligned with the national priorities for broad social development noting that Tautua was closely aligned to the PDS and sector plans and based on ongoing engagement in sector coordination mechanisms, and this ensured delivering for real needs.

*“Tautua is one of the two flagship programs introduced, consulted and discussed with central agencies when it was first developed” - Quote from GoS official.*

Government stakeholders across the 3 sectors also indicated that Tautua's support aligned very well with the priorities of individual divisions and strengthened their delivery in terms of timeliness and meeting needs. Several examples were identified that underscored the relevance of Tautua's support. Some participants defined **relevance as support that directly addressed critical funding gaps**. This was particularly in relation to activities earmarked for Samoan Government funding that were defunded over the past two years. For the education sector, Tautua-funded activities, such as teacher training in literacy and formative assessment, procurement of curriculum resources, inclusive education awareness, research and resilience studies and national education communication campaigns, directly addressed

pressing needs arising from declining education budgets, learning disruptions and increasing inclusion demands.

*“If Tautua weren't here during this period when the [Samoan Government] funds were not available, we wouldn't be able to continue the work that we do”.* Quote from GoS official.

In the health sector, the Tautua-funded training for pharmacy technicians and support for pathology services, including recruitment of a pathologist consultant, were identified as meeting critical needs of the Ministry of Health (MoH).

*“Some of the [pharmacy] trainees have never had any training; now they've got the proper understanding of the dispensing process, and aspects of the SOPs, like counselling for important drugs such as anti-hypertensive and anti-diabetic.”* Quote from MoH official.

CSOs and beneficiaries reported that Tautua support not only enabled the delivery of services that would otherwise not have been implemented, it was also flexible, demand-driven and tailored to context and locally identified needs. Beneficiaries consulted confirmed that the support provided by Tautua was directly relevant to their needs, such as:

- first aid capacity in a primary school
- rural community-led responses to literacy, numeracy and child wellbeing challenges
- practical formative assessment skills in early childhood education
- formalised pharmacy technician training in the private health sector
- organic farming practices linked to income-generation in rural areas.

For a number of CSOs, Tautua's support enabled them to carry out vital work in areas of critical need and that made a real difference to people's lives. Activities such as community hearing screenings were highlighted as addressing an unmet national need, particularly for children in remote and island communities where access to hearing services is otherwise extremely limited.

CSOs expressed sincere appreciation for Tautua's support and in some cases were deeply moved by it. The comments of separate CSO stakeholders exemplify this gratitude.

*“We're so blessed to have Tautua supporting us”* – Quote from CSO stakeholder.

*“Tautua is not just funding activities – it supports the real work we do every day”* – Quote from CSO stakeholder.

*“We would not be able to reach the people that are most invisible”* – Quote from CSO stakeholder.

## Flexibility and responsiveness

While Tautua's approach was based on pre-determined EOPOs, IOs and CSIs, annual programming enabled Tautua activities to adapt and respond to changing contexts and emerging needs and priorities, particularly as AWP had the capacity to design and implement new activities as previous-year activities were completed or deferred.

Deferring activities was in itself an adaptive response as program delivery was rescheduled to accommodate changes in delivery partners' capacity and priorities or other circumstances.

Adaptation was strengthened through Tautua arrangements and processes in place including:

- internal monitoring and review of program delivery
- ongoing engagement with delivery partners and consultation on sector priorities
- annual partner reflection discussions and feedback surveys.

In addition to the capacity to amend or develop new activities to respond to emerging or changing needs, Tautua has some flexibility through DFAT Tasking and Direct Aid Program (which supports a flexible small grants program) although these resources are small and have had limited use to date. With annual expenditure for both modalities representing around 1.5% of total program costs, these flexible funds can only play a minimal role in responding to emerging needs.

While there is room for adaptation within the Tautua structured and strategic decision-making approach to respond to requests, relevance is sometimes stretched by ad hoc requests that may be less aligned to Tautua's outcome though justified on public diplomacy or other considerations. Overall, Tautua's clear and structured planning and decision-making processes kept a strong focus on relevance, balanced by some responsiveness to ad hoc and emerging requests, and minimised strategic drift (which has been identified by some Post staff as an area of concern). As the program matures, the balance between strategically-aligned and ad hoc and emergent activities should reduce, and this is contemplated in the planning for Phase 2.

*"Relevance is a balance between the strategic, long-term priorities and the emerging and ad hoc requests - both of these contribute to meeting development needs"* – Quote from Tautua team member.

Managing ad hoc requests is a challenge for the program, particularly as it seeks to balance a responsive and adaptive approach with a strategic focus and made difficult by the perception that Tautua can be a source of supplemental funding to replace GoS funding that has been reduced or removed. However, the options to address this are multifaceted – identifying programming themes to guide the strategic focus, strengthening the strategic focus in program planning and design through clear criteria and budget targets for flexible funding and dialogue with stakeholders to support this strategic shift.

## Future directions

In strengthening the relevance of the program, there are a number of areas for Tautua to focus on for the future, which are discussed below.

### Long-term outcomes

Tautua's long-term outcomes (EOPOs) are high-level and broad, and this supports the program's general alignment with the PDS and sector outcomes and provides flexibility for Tautua programming to respond to specific priorities. However, the EOPOs would benefit from more specificity which would also improve the program's ability to measure its progress against the EOPOs. Given that Tautua is focused on addressing the CSIs, consideration could be given to reflecting the planned CSI outcomes more directly and explicitly in the EOPOs. EOPOs are intended to reflect the change or improvement experienced by beneficiaries, for example improved literacy or numeracy, whereas the current EOPOs focus on the means to achieve change (such as more equitable access to services). Reflecting the CSI outcomes in the EOPOs can strengthen the focus on the value of the program to the intended beneficiaries.

However, as the program is focused on 3 sectors and 4 CSIs, and programs should have no more than 3 EOPOs this will be a challenge. In addition, EOPO 3 (an effective partnership) is more of an enabler than an outcome in itself. Nevertheless, there is a need to sharpen the focus of the EOPOs on Tautua's outcomes.

### Recommendation 1

*Consider reframing the EOPOs to refer more directly to the CSIs and outcomes for intended beneficiaries.*

*This will involve review and redesign of the EOPOs to include a sharper and more specific focus on the CSI outcomes and relationship to the strategic priorities for each CSI. It is acknowledged that while this framing provides a clearer and more direct focus on outcomes for beneficiaries, and potential to link to GoS national statistics, it is a significant change to the EOPOs and will require some detailed consideration, discussion and consultation as well as delegate approval for any changes. A suggested reframing of the EOPOs is shown below.*

*Guiding principle - the EOPOs are intended to benefit all Samoans, especially women and girls, youth, persons with disabilities, the vulnerable and those living in hardship.*

- 1. Samoans have improved health outcomes, including a reduction in the rise of NCDs.*
- 2. Samoans have improved education outcomes, including a reversal in stagnated learning outcomes.*
- 3. Samoans have improved social outcomes, including reduced vulnerability and barriers to inclusion.*

### Achieving medium-term outcomes

Tautua's IOs describe the outcomes expected in the short-medium term resulting from outputs delivered along the IO change pathways. Tautua's outputs were delivered through 8 change pathways and 10 interventions (2023-2024) or 10 projects (2024-2025)

to address 3 EOPOs covering 3 sectors and 4 CSIs. For programming, this framework is complex, the relationship between IOs, interventions and projects is not as clear as it can be, nor is the line of sight between these outputs and the IOs and EOPOs. This in part results from the number of IOs and the broad focus of the EOPOs.

Phase 2 will benefit from less complexity in this area, and greater clarity in the relationships between outputs and outcomes in the program logic. The proposed Phase 2 program logic seeks to address this and has reduced the number of IOs to 4. This reduces the complexity of the program logic, although the IOs are high-level and a little uneven – two relate to improved service delivery (one for GoS agencies and one for CSOs) and duplicate each other and two could be regarded as enablers (collaboration and evidence).

It is noted that in the draft Phase 2 program logic, IOs and CSIs use the term NGOs (non-government organisations) while the program and activities (outputs) refer to CSOs. In this context, NGOs and CSOs are used interchangeably and for clarity and consistency, the term CSOs should be used.

The two service delivery IOs potentially overlap as these outcomes result from similar outputs delivered by the program, although there will be some differences. Ultimately the utility of the proposed Phase 2 IOs will stem from the guidance they provide in decisions about proposed investments.

The utility of these proposed IOs in programming will also depend on the approach adopted for clustering activities – the projects used in the 2024–2025 in general provide the framework for a more strategic approach to programming, although if used in the 2025–2026 AWP will need to ensure the relationship between projects and IOs is clear.

The use of separate IOs for the improved capability of GoS agencies and for CSOs could be reviewed as this may limit the more strategic approach that is required. These two IOs focus on the same outcome (improved capability to deliver services), and this may result from similar types of Tautua support such as institutional strengthening, training and technical advice. Using a single IO for improved capability across both GoS agencies and CSOs is used in the other two proposed IOs and can support a more strategic approach and the aggregation of results data. Challenges in the aggregation of data are discussed in Section 4.3 (Effectiveness).

The CSO capability IO also includes ‘advocating for rights, increasing accountability’ which is not reflected in the GoS agency IO, and it could be argued that these are equally applicable to GoS agencies.

With the suggested use of one IO for capability, the previous 8 IOs can be reduced to 3, and while this simplifies the program logic, there may be important short-medium term outcomes not covered by the proposed IOs. One area is policy and planning, which may be covered by institutional strengthening but may justify a dedicated IO that also covers workforce planning, which has been identified as a priority focus for Phase 2.

The IOs for collaboration and use of evidence could have a sharper focus on the outcomes expected in the short–medium term as the framing of the proposed IOs is more on the factors that can support change rather than the actual change that is expected. Ultimately, the final IOs will need to reflect the short–medium changes that

will result from Tautua activities delivered in Phase 2 and that will contribute to the EOPOs.

Based on these findings, there is an opportunity to refine the Phase 2 IOs to provide greater focus and clarity in Tautua programming and strengthen the measurement of results.

## Recommendation 2

*Review and refine the IOs for Phase 2 to ensure consistency in focus and a clearer strategic pathway between Tautua's outputs (activities) and EOPOs.*

*This will involve review and redesign of the IOs to remove duplication, sharpen the focus on short–medium term outcomes and provide coverage of the change pathways to achieving the EOPOs. A suggested reframing of the IOs is shown below.*

1. *Government of Samoa agencies and NGOs are more capable of advocating for rights, increasing accountability, delivering higher quality, inclusive and accessible health, education and community services to all Samoans*
2. *Government of Samoa agencies and NGOs have stronger policies, regulations and plans, including workforce plans and human resource development strategies*
3. *Government of Samoa agencies and NGOs increase participation and inclusion in decision-making and service design and delivery*
4. *Government of Samoa agencies and NGOs make better use of evidence, reflection and learning in service design and delivery*

## Strategic programming

Tautua AWP's have comprised a large number of activities spread across the CSIs, and this **breadth** of focus has been important in establishing the program, building relationships and laying foundations for change and improvement. However, for greater impact (and efficiency), **depth** of focus is also important. Tautua programming has been moving towards a more strategic or programmatic approach to programming, for example by clustering activities by intervention or projects, and the draft strategic plan for Phase 2 encompasses a more strategic approach by identifying strategic priorities for each CSI to guide programming. However strategic programming needs to be more than the grouping of similar interventions – it needs to reflect the strategic rationale and pathway to achieve the planned change (the CSI outcome). The nested logics include the elements for this, though are presented as a collection of activities without clear strategic pathways. While the proposed strategic priorities are a specific focus of the CSIs, the relationship between CSIs (and their strategic priorities) and IOs is not clear or direct and greater clarity around this can aid a more strategic approach to programming, and this has been addressed in Recommendation 1.

Strategic programming may also require focusing on fewer but more impactful activities and on activities that are more directly focused on the strategic priorities (and results) and necessitate a shift in the dialogue with partners about the preferred investments that will be supported.

The previous two recommendations addressed the need for increased clarity and focus in the EOPOs and IOs and to reflect the CSI outcomes in the EOPOs and this will assist in moving to a more strategic approach. This is addressed further in Section 4.3 (Effectiveness).

### **Balancing strategic and responsive decisions**

A strategic approach requires more discipline in responding to ad hoc and emerging requests, while the approach should continue to provide flexibility. Mechanisms for balancing these approaches include strengthening the focus on strategic programming across the program cycle including clear criteria and funding targets, as well as dialogue with stakeholders and these are addressed further in Section 4.3 (Effectiveness).

### **CSIs and big bets**

The draft strategic plan for Phase 2 identifies a specific strategic priority for each CSI which provides a sharper focus in the program logic. However, given the current complexity of the program logic, with multiple frames of reference, care should be exercised in the framing of these priorities within the program logic, which result in the program logic having an additional frame of reference.

CSIs are currently positioned at the side of the program logic to focus programming whereas they have specific outcomes which are highly relevant and could have a more elevated position in the IOs and EOPOs. Reflecting the CSIs in the EOPOs was discussed previously and is the focus of Recommendation 1.

The complexity of the program may be reduced by simply expressing the proposed Phase 2 strategic priorities within each CSI rather than presenting them separately. In addition, the use of the term ‘big bet’ for these priorities may not be an appropriate term for a DFAT investment, which should be about spending with a level of certainty, rather than a gamble.

### **Post’s strategic role**

Flowing from the above shift to more strategic programming, Post plays an important role in ensuring that the program reflects DFAT’s strategic and policy objectives and in shaping the dialogue with partners around strategic programming. Post is also responsible for the strategic relationship between GoA and GoS. There are opportunities for Post to be more involved in Tautua’s engagement with IAs and partners in the shaping and development of proposed support, where appropriate and where feasible in terms of Post’s capacity. While this issue was not raised by external stakeholders, it is a concern for Post and an important direction for the program.

### **Recommendation 3**

*Consider opportunities for Post to be more engaged, where it has the capacity, in discussions with IAs and partners to shape and influence the strategic programming broadly and at the level of individual activities.*

*To facilitate this, Post and Tautua could jointly identify the areas where Post’s participation in stakeholder engagement can be prioritised, and Post could consider the*

*areas and ways that it can contribute to and shape Tautua's strategic discussions with stakeholders.*

## 4.2 Coherence

### **Key review question**

*To what extent is Tautua contributing to cohesion in Australian programming in Samoa, including complementarity with Tautai and other bilateral and regional programs?*

At the planning and programming level, the review found that Tautua demonstrated strong coherence with Tautai and other bilateral and regional programs, and in the case of Tautai, this was the result of close coordination, collaboration and sharing of approaches and information. However, stakeholder understanding of the distinctive focus and roles of Tautua and Tautai was variable. For Phase 2, this suggests the need for clearer communication and care in programming decisions where both programs may support the same sectors or stakeholders or deliver similar support activities.

### **Coherence with Tautai**

Tautua had a structured process in place to collaborate with Tautai on programming and planning to deliver joint initiatives (such as a joint GEDSI training program), joint sector engagement and presentations and joint meetings with donor and development partners. Tautua and Tautai jointly reviewed the One Government Grants scheme, with Tautua focusing particularly on impact and Tautai focusing on efficiency. Other collaboration included:

- joint monthly coordination meetings with DFAT
- joint representation at ACWG meetings
- joint Ministry consultations
- joint attendance and presentations at specific sector and project / strategy and donor meetings
- coordination of joint support to shared partners such as NOLA, a disability advocacy organisation
- joint Ways of Working workshops, internally with DFAT and externally with GoS
- the joint Tautua / Tautai GEDSI advisory committee which supports coordination and coherence of GEDSI programming
- mutual sharing of AWP information.

While there were limits on the capacity of the two facilities to share corporate and other systems, they were able to share resources such as templates, operational insights, approaches and reports of relevant meetings.

Overall, this coordination and collaboration between Tautua and Tautai ensured that gaps, overlaps and duplication were minimised, synergies harnessed, and stakeholder requests were directed to the appropriate program.

However, a number of stakeholders beyond those in central agencies were not clear about the distinctive role and focus of each program. For example, some saw Tautai as a provider of training and Tautua not. One senior official saw Tautai as focused on the health sector, and another saw Tautai as offering short-term support, whereas Tautua offered longer-term support. The views of some stakeholders on the distinctive role and focus of the two programs were inconsistent and incorrect. The extent of feedback from stakeholders indicates that this is a significant issue for Tautua to address. While the source of these misunderstandings was not explored with stakeholders, it is likely due to impressions gained from communications, information and discussions about the roles of the two programs.

There are some areas of Tautua and Tautai support that may also seem to blur or confuse stakeholder understandings of their distinctive mandates, such as both programs providing support for:

- procurement training to MoH
- national surveys through the Samoan Bureau of Statistics
- the Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development (MWCSO).

While internally these may be appropriate programming decisions, they may work against a clear stakeholder understanding of the distinctive mandate of each program. The variability in understanding due to overlapping activities was also observed by a central agency stakeholder.

*“At the strategic level, Tautua’s mandate is very clear, but at the activity level, sometimes there is overlap”* – Quote from MoF official.

## Coherence with other bilateral and regional programs

Samoa has structured processes in place for the coordination of donor and development partner programs, with review and endorsement through the ACC, ongoing review by the ACWG and relevant sector committees and regular donor roundtable discussions. While Tautua’s programming benefitted from this structured arrangement, it also had structured processes in place to ensure coherence with other donor and development partner programs including:

- mapping of donor and development partner activities through environmental scanning, consultations and meetings
- sharing data on gender-related partner programming with DFAT’s Pacific Women Lead program
- planned and coordinated engagement with donor and development partners in accordance with the Communications and Public Diplomacy Plan annual engagement plans
- internal checking of requests for duplication with other donor and development partner activities as per the Screening Workflow and Investment Criteria Guidelines.

Stakeholders consulted for the review generally regarded Tautua as coherent with other donor and development partner activities, citing the strong GoS and sector donor

coordination mechanisms. However, despite the clear coordination arrangements, the number of supported activities has the potential for duplication. For stakeholders in the education sector this is a challenge with multiple funders of activities, such as school readiness, which is also being addressed through The Pacific Community's Education and Quality Assessment Programme with a standardised school readiness assessment tool. In this case, through discussions with Ministry staff, Tautua's proposed support for school readiness was redirected to avoid duplication of other donor and development partner programs.

While there are several bilateral and regional development programs in Samoa, funded by the Australian Government as well as other donor and development partners, stakeholders did not raise concerns or issues in relation to these activities or the complexity of the aid environment in Samoa. This could be attributed to factors such as the clear identification of Samoa's development priorities and strong aid coordination mechanisms, as well the partnership approach to program delivery.

Although donor and development partner programs are coordinated through strong ACWG and sector coordination mechanisms to ensure coherence and strategic alignment, there remains a practice within GoS agencies that is less strategic and coordinated, as openly acknowledged by one ministry official.

*"It's whoever responds faster is where we would then go for support"* – Quote from GoS official.

## Future directions

The program's coherence can be strengthened in a few areas, as discussed below.

### The distinctive role and focus of Tautua and Tautai

Stakeholder understanding of the distinctive role and focus of Tautua and Tautai was mixed, with stakeholders, even at senior levels of GoS, unclear of each program's mandate and this can be clarified through clearer communication.

#### Recommendation 4

*Continue and strengthen communication about the distinctive role and focus of the Tautua and Tautai programs.*

*Addressing this primarily relates to engagement and communication, and Tautua could use opportunities to clarify and reinforce Tautua's distinctive role and focus. This could be through its regular engagement with IAs and partners and through other communication activities and products delivered under its Communication and Public Diplomacy Plan.*

Clear communication also needs to be complemented by clarity and consistency in the activities supported by each program, so that the support for particular activities communicates and reinforces their mandates.

#### Recommendation 5

*Ensure that Tautai and Tautua support for specific activities clearly communicates and reinforces their distinctive mandates.*

*This relates to activity decision-making and design, and while the Tautua activity screening workflow includes consideration of complementarity with Tautai, the application of the tool can be strengthened to avoid investment in activities that have the potential to blur the mandate of each program. This can also be addressed in programming coordination discussions with Tautai to avoid activity decisions that may blur the mandate of each.*

### Access to donor funding

There is an active ‘market’ for donor support in Samoa, and this results in approaches to multiple donors. While Tautua had effective processes in place to manage this, such as donor mapping and engagement and Investment Criteria to support decision-making, it needs to remain vigilant and continue its coordination with Tautai and other donors and development partners.

## 4.3 Effectiveness

### Key review question

*To what extent is Tautua progressing towards achieving its End of Program Outcomes?*

The review findings indicate that Tautua activities can be expected to make positive contributions to its EOPOs across the activities delivered in each of the 3 sectors, with the majority of planned activities completed or in progress. As the approach to activity design explicitly focused on contributing to the EOPOs and were delivered in partnership with GoS agencies and CSOs, the results show many instances where Tautua activities can be expected to make a direct contribution to these outcomes, although quantitative measurement of progress is challenging due the broad focus of the EOPOs and program activities. For Phase 2, Tautua is well-positioned to continue and build on these achievements.

### Progress in delivering the program

Overall, the progress in implementation was positive, with the majority of activities commenced or completed in each AWP – 62.5%, 83.1%, and 92.5% respectively and this is discussed in more detail in Section 4.4 Efficiency.

### Measuring outcomes

As broad outcomes, Tautua’s EOPOs are not easily assessed by measurable indicators such as GoS national statistics. Where national-level indicators are available that are relevant to the EOPOs, progress in these indicators cannot be **attributed** to the Tautua program alone, and measuring Tautua’s **contribution** can only be qualitative. Relevant national statistics are collected for learning outcomes (including literacy and numeracy), NCDs and social protection, although the latter two are collected through periodic national surveys and results covering Phase 1 are not yet available.

Tautua’s MEL framework is largely qualitative, although it includes some statistical data in relation to beneficiary participation, which is discussed in Section 4.6 (GEDSI). Qualitative indicators used in the MEL framework focus on measuring instances or example of progress to achieving the EOPOs based on a range of data sources, including activity reports, stories of significant change, partner surveys and internal and

partner reflections. While this data is rich, it is difficult to aggregate into a single result that clearly demonstrates Tautua's achievements, which is due in part to the broad focus of the EOPOs across 3 sectors and 4 CSIs and the breadth and diversity of outcomes that the activities are intended to achieve.

The reporting of results does have a large focus on activity reporting, which is not surprising as a large number of activities have been delivered and this was not raised as an issue by stakeholders. This focus also reflects the stage of activities in the activity cycle as there will be a lag between participating in training, for example, and application of learnings from the training and the changes that flow from this. The program uses a variety of methods to collect information on these results, including tracer studies, and these provide information on results such as increased income through expanded market opportunities, for example, although quantified results were not available for the review and these results are not easily aggregated as an indicator. As the program matures, the focus on reporting can shift from activities to outcomes, particularly as activity programming develops a more strategic focus.

The directions discussed in Section 4.1 (Relevance) also address this issue – a clearer focus on the CSI outcomes in the EOPOs, stronger pathways between outputs outcomes, a more strategic approach to programming and rebalancing the focus between the breadth and depth of activities.

## Achieving EOPOs

Through its IOs and CSIs, Tautua activities were directly focused on its EOPOs, which broadly relate to access and service quality across the health, education and community sectors as well as its partnership with GoS. However, these outcomes, particularly access and service quality, related to the PDS outcomes and these will be the result of actions by a number of donors and development partners as well as GoS and the focus of Tautua's EOPOs is on its **contribution to these outcomes**.

Tautua programming, guided by the program logic and processes and tools such as the screening workflow and Investment Criteria Guidelines, ensured that activities were supported that had the **intention of contributing** to the program's outcomes. It is clear from Tautua reporting that the program can be expected to contribute to the outcomes, reflected in the improved access to service quality across the three sectors and reported instances of improvements or changes that directly flowed from this access. These instances are specific and too numerous to list in this report and are well documented in Tautua's reporting.

In relation to EOPO 1 (more equitable access to services), some examples of Tautua's contribution to this outcome are listed below.

### Contributions to EOPO 1 (more equitable access to services)

- Development of the Samoa National Youth Policy 2025-2030, which provided the foundation for mainstreaming youth issues in national planning, development of economic opportunities for youth and improving access to essential youth services, particularly health services

- Support to CSOs to improve access to services, such as sexual and reproductive health community awareness programs (Samoa Family Health Association) and training of village representatives to support women experiencing violence (Samoa Victim Support Group)
- Inclusive education training for teacher aides and resources for hearing screening in schools and communities (Senese Inclusive Education)

Examples of Tautua's contribution to EOPO 2 (delivery of quality services) are listed below.

#### **Contributions to EOPO 2 (delivery of quality services)**

- Support for provision of in-country pathology services through recruitment of an international pathologist to fill a critical gap (reducing turnaround times for test results) and creating a training pathway for Samoan pathologists (to sustain future services)
- Development of healthy menus for the hospital which can improve patient recovery and health outcomes
- Development of the National Cancer Control Policy and Action Plan and Development of Tobacco Control Enforcement Standard Operating Procedures to strengthen enforcement, which can increase prevention and improve NCD outcomes
- Strengthening workforce planning and development in the education sector which can address critical workforce gaps and improve career development and retention
- Development of teacher literacy education skills, which can improve student literacy outcomes
- Strengthening CSO institutional capacity through due diligence support (for governance, financial management and compliance), which can better position CSOs to deliver quality services

CSOs regarded institutional strengthening support as valuable and critical to their organisational effectiveness, confidence and credibility, particularly as it enables small and under-resourced organisations to deliver significant work that would otherwise be unachievable.

*“Tautua support pushed us to strengthen our systems in ways we had delayed for years”* – Quote from CSO stakeholder.

*“We are now more confident in our processes – with donors, with government and within ourselves”* – Quote from CSO stakeholder.

Some stakeholders commented that while Tautua made contributions to the EOPOs, the focus was on the foundations for outcomes that will be achieved over the longer term and acknowledged that the early-stage and capacity-focused phase of Tautua support made it difficult to demonstrate measurable outcome-level change halfway through the program's term.

*“We’re basically starting from step zero . . . building the capacity of our teachers before we even get to the end point” – Quote from GoS official.*

However, collectively, activities delivered by Tautua can be expected to contribute to its intended EOPOs and to PDS and sector plan outcomes.

### Contributions to EOPO 3 (the bilateral relationship)

The delivery of activities addressing EOPO 1 and EOPO 2 can directly and indirectly contribute to this EOPO through both its approach (respectful, locally-led and aligned with GoS priorities), as well as the results achieved by Tautua activities. Tautua also used a comprehensive Communications and Diplomacy Plan and annual engagement plan that underpinned its approach to engagement and strengthening the relationship and partnership with GoS.

### Support to partners to deliver

Integral to Tautua’s approach was a focus on providing partners with the **enablers to deliver** more inclusive, gender-responsive and higher quality services, complemented by Tautua’s locally-led, and supportive and flexible approach, which has been discussed elsewhere. There were numerous examples that illustrate these enablers, including support to:

- the health sector to tackle NCDs through the development of the National Cancer Control Policy
- the health sector to protect data and ensure continuity through the development of the ICT Disaster Recovery plan
- the education sector to address learning outcomes with improved workforce planning
- selected schools to better prepare for disasters through the development of Disaster Response Plans
- the community sector to deliver actions that address the needs of youth by developing the National Youth Policy
- the community sector to address child safeguarding through policy development and the provision of training to ministry and CSO staff.

*“Safeguarding is no longer a policy on the shelf – it’s how we work now” – Quote from CSO stakeholder.*

GEDSI is a regular agenda item in bilateral discussions, enabling qualitative evidence and learning from marginalised groups to inform dialogue with GoS counterparts. This represents a significant structural shift in how equity considerations influence program-level and sector-level decision-making.

### Multi-sector approaches

Initiatives in health, education and social development will necessarily have cross-sectoral interactions, both in terms of causes and solutions. Cross-sectoral considerations were embedded in Tautua’s approach to programming – for example in

its activity screening workflow and in its Communications and Public Diplomacy Plan and annual engagement plan. Tautua's structured approach to engagement, for example through ACWG and sectoral meetings, meetings with DFAT and Tautai and partner reflection discussions, created opportunities for Tautua to strengthen its cross-sectoral approach

AWPs included activities that have a cross-sectoral focus, with 19 cross-sectoral activities in the 2024–2025 AWP out of 54 planned activities (35.2%), which highlights the focus placed on cross-sectoral action. This was a significant increase on the 4 cross-sectoral activities out of 52 planned activities in the 2023-2024 AWP. This increased focus reflected key learnings regarding the value of cross-sectoral approaches, particularly in building a more strategic focus, and built on the relationships and partnerships developed during the prior years of the program.

Activities with a cross-sectoral approach included:

- development of the National Cancer Policy and Plan of Action and strengthening Tobacco Control and E-Cigarette Regulation, developed in consultation with MOH, MEC, MOF and other agencies as well as health and medical organisations and CSOs
- a national Inclusive Awareness event that brought together schools, communities, the Ministry of Education and Culture (MEC) and Ministry for Women, Communities and Social Development (MWCSD) and OPDs.

Some stakeholders commented that Tautua's approach prompted them to consider cross-sectoral approaches in implementing activities, which they would not have otherwise considered. In addition, some Tautua activities initiated cross-sectoral collaborations beyond the scope of the activity. For example, Tautua's support for the development of Disaster and Emergency Response Plans for schools initiated the implementation of the national Education Sector Climate Change and Disaster Resilience Strategy 2021-2024. The committee that developed this strategy was inactive after the completion of the strategy, and collaboration between MEC and the Disaster Management Office with the Ministry for Natural Resources and Environment on developing school plans prompted closer collaboration with plans to include Samoa Fire and Emergency Services and Red Cross in the next phase.

In addition, Tautua's Health and Physical Education curriculum-strengthening activity led to the revival of the Health Promoting Schools Committee, which had not been active for the past 5 years. The committee consists of 8 GoS agencies, 3 donor partners and 2 CSOs.

Tautua's approach to cross-sectoral programming also supported the inclusion of GEDSI stakeholder representatives in activities which strengthened the GEDSI focus across sectors and encouraged a systemic focus on GEDSI principles. It also resulted in tangible outcomes such as integration of disability priorities into district disaster plans and increased participation of persons with disabilities in local governance structures.

## The bilateral relationship

Tautua's cross-sectoral approach provided opportunities to strengthen the bilateral relationship by extending the program's reach and visibility beyond the central agencies and 3 sectors, through consultation and engagement and delivery of support that 'joined-up' key players related to activities, and in some cases initiated collaboration between agencies and sectors that was not contemplated by agencies themselves. In addition, Tautua can demonstrate an integrated approach across agencies and CSOs that can enhance impact.

## Enabling factors

Factors that have supported Tautua's effectiveness include:

- a strong focus, particularly in the initial stages, on building relationships and partnerships as well as trust in the program
- clear alignment with PDS and sector development priorities and outcomes
- consolidation of programming, delivery and support resources under one program (and facility)
- the ability to leverage the local knowledge and networks of local staff
- GoS engagement, endorsement and ownership of the program and AWP
- a disciplined approach to programming decisions and processes using a structured screening workflow, Investment Criteria Guidelines and relevant Australian Government policies relating to processes such as procurement
- flexibility and adaptation in the implementation of activities by partners
- close engagement with delivery partners and ongoing review, monitoring and reflection on progress.

However, there are factors that have presented challenges for the delivery of the Tautua program, including:

- variability in sector planning and governance, for example use of sector governance committees to plan and agree activities and which can be regular quarterly meetings or irregular meetings, or bypassed and agreed with the ministry CEO
- the need to balance ad hoc requests with a planned and strategic approach to programming
- expectations for Tautua to supplement or replace GoS budgets for programs
- limited local capacity of delivery partners, advisers and other resources
- unexpected delays or changing circumstances that required deferral or redesign of activities.

## Future directions

The effectiveness of delivery is a strength for Tautua, supported by clear planning and programming and implementation policies and procedures, as well as adaptation and

learning. Challenges to effective implementation are largely outside Tautua's control, such as changing GoS priorities, unforeseen circumstances and limited capacities of partners. Of these, capacity constraints present an opportunity for Tautua to influence, and this is considered in its decision-making, design and implementation and should continue to be a priority consideration.

Tautua has developed plans to strengthen future effectiveness including:

- developing strategic partnerships with CSO umbrella groups such as Nuanua O Le Alofa (NOLA) and a proposed strategic partnership with Samoa Umbrella for Non-government Organisations
- developing a Disability sub program
- a program level Workforce Development and Capacity Building Strategy.

The planned program level Workforce Development and Capacity Building Strategy is intended to coordinate and streamline support across sectors and integrate delivery where there are common themes or needs.

The development of the workforce strategy can also build on new and emerging opportunities such as Pacific Skills Australia and the Public Services Commission's new national skills strategy that is currently under development.

These planned strategies can improve the efficiency and effectiveness of delivery, strategic focus and impact and support a more programmatic approach to delivery.

The future directions discussed in Section 4.1 (Relevance), particularly those in relation to a more programmatic approach based on strategic themes, will also be important for effective delivery of the Tautua program in the future. Tautua has made progress in using a more strategic approach to programming, and this provides opportunities to enhance program effectiveness, and could be strengthened in Phase 2.

#### **Recommendation 6**

*Continue and strengthen the focus on using a strategic approach to activity programming, building on the development of clearer strategic pathways to achieve planned EOPOs, IOs and CSI outcomes.*

*Tautua is adopting a more strategic approach to programming which can be further strengthened as the program refines the program logic, clarifies strategic pathways to guide themes, embeds the approach across the program cycle and engages with ministries and partners on this strategic shift in programming.*

This dialogue on the strategic shift will also assist in better management of ad hoc requests, as will budget allocations for flexible funding (with clear criteria and guidelines), as proposed in the draft Phase 2 strategic plan.

## **4.4 Efficiency**

### **Key review question**

*How efficiently is Tautua operating?*

The review found that Tautua had a strong focus on efficiency and value for money (VFM), which was achieved through systems and processes for planning, coordination and reporting to support efficient delivery of the program. An adaptive approach to the delivery of the program also supported efficiency. The program delivered a relatively large number of diverse activities, and for Phase 2, it may be more efficient (and impactful) to reduce the breadth of activities with a more strategic focus. There are also opportunities in Phase 2 to replace some manual corporate processes which will improve efficiency.

The efficiency of the program is multifaceted, relating to costs and the timeliness of output delivery, as well as strategy and process.

## Cost efficiency

The total cost of the delivery of the Tautua AWP in 2024–2025 was slightly reduced compared to 2023–2024 (AUD6.1 million compared to AUD6.7 million) and the breakdown of these costs is shown in Table 5 (the breakdown is not available for 2022–2023).

**Table 5: AWP annual expenditure (AUD)**

| Budget Items                 | 2022-2023*<br>(actual) | 2023-2024<br>(budgeted) | 2024-2025<br>(budgeted) |
|------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Management fee               | -                      | 802,043                 | 714,208                 |
| Personnel costs              | -                      | 2,108,550               | 1,798,260               |
| Operational costs            | -                      | 471,917                 | 422,593                 |
| Adviser support costs        | -                      | 76,050                  | 34,808                  |
| Program activity costs       | -                      | 3,256,281               | 3,107,570               |
| <b>Total</b>                 | <b>1,350,970</b>       | <b>6,714,841</b>        | <b>6,077,439</b>        |
| % program activity costs     | -                      | 48.5                    | 51.1                    |
| Number of planned activities | 24                     | 59                      | 54                      |
| Average activity cost        | -                      | 55,191                  | 57,548                  |

*\* for the six-month period January–June*

Comparing the cost efficiency of delivery between AWP's can be challenging, as each AWP has a different activity profile, in terms of the number and type of activities and stage of implementation. However, Table 4 shows that program activity costs as a percentage of total costs have increased from 48.5% to 51.1%, which may suggest more efficient use of resources. It may also be due to other factors, such as the slightly smaller number of activities with a higher activity value, as reflected in the higher average activity value for 2024–2025.

The presentation of the Tautai budget does not enable comparison with Tautua's costs and DFAT does not collate and benchmark facility cost information, so it is not possible to assess the efficiency of Tautua compared with other facilities. Australia Awards facilities, for example, have program activity cost ratios of around 75%, however these facilities deliver standardised activities and are supported by DFAT global systems and

resources, and this cost ratio is not comparable with Tautua's context. The Kiribati Facility, which was a AUD20 million investment over 3.5 years focused on skills and employment, reported a program activity cost ratio of 54% in 2018.<sup>1</sup> Tautua's cost ratio is in line with this facility, and it could be assumed that Tautua is in line with other similar facilities.

## Delivery of outputs

Tautua's planned outputs are set out in each AWP and include a range of program activities that support IAs and CSOs, as well as internal activities that underpin the delivery of program activities.

The first AWP covered a six-month period, and the number of activities delivered is less than that of the subsequent AWPs. In addition, the first year of the program needed to focus on 'standing up' a new program and facility and work included developing systems and processes, building relationships and securing commitment – in order to build the momentum required for delivery in subsequent years.

For each AWP, program activities were at different stages of implementation as shown in Table 6.

**Table 6: Program activity implementation status**

| Year             | Completed | In progress | Not yet started | Delayed, deferred or deleted | Total     |
|------------------|-----------|-------------|-----------------|------------------------------|-----------|
| <b>2022–2023</b> | 4         | 11          | 2               | 7                            | <b>24</b> |
| <b>2023–2024</b> | 18        | 31          | 6               | 4                            | <b>59</b> |
| <b>2024–2025</b> | 26        | 11          | 3               | -                            | <b>40</b> |

The fact that activities were not started, delayed or deferred was not an indicator of efficiency, rather it reflected factors in Tautua's implementation context, including the dependence on partner capacity for implementation, Australian Government procurement requirements and processes and unforeseen changes in the program context.

Overall, the progress in implementation was positive, with the majority of activities commenced or completed in each AWP – 62.5%, 83.1%, and 92.5% respectively.

## Efficient processes

Phase 1 of Tautua was focused on efficiency and pursued this in a number of ways, including:

- recruiting team members with strong knowledge of the Samoan and sectoral context and with existing networks and relationships
- undertaking activities for foundational studies and research to build the evidence base to inform programming

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.dfat.gov.au/sites/default/files/kiribati-facility-mtr.pdf>

- mapping the donor and development partner landscape to minimise duplication and build synergies in activity planning
- embedding accessibility considerations into internal systems and processes to support early identification of needs in activity planning, such as venue requirements and braille and sign language translation, which reduces delays and additional costs
- using a rigorous decision-making framework and criteria for activity selection and prioritisation
- leveraging relevant GoS and sectoral committees for engagement, consultation, endorsement and ownership of AWP
- building on the existing capabilities, programs and advice of local organisations to extend reach and impact, such as disability and equity rights training and first aid training, rather than replicating existing capabilities and resources
- integration of Family Safety Study indicators into the Demographic Health Survey-Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey to avoid duplication of data collection activities to build a national evidence base for gender-based violence prevention
- providing ongoing support and assistance to delivery partners to support implementation
- establishing a preferred supplier list as well as MOUs for providers of braille and sign language interpretation
- using an adaptive approach to programming and delivery, including the use of partner reflection discussions
- collaborating with Tautai to ensure a coordinated approach, where appropriate, to supporting activities (and avoiding duplication), undertaking joint activities and sharing resources.

The establishment of the preferred supplier list was a response to challenges in the local market – lack of depth, the limited cash reserves of local vendors to support longer contracts and the need to reconcile DFAT procurement and compliance with partner practices.

Tautua's policies and system also supported efficient delivery of the program by ensuring that activities were well-targeted. This included complementary strategies for GEDSI and Climate Change to guide programming and the use of annual risk assessments. The decision-making framework referred to above includes a well-documented activity identification, prioritisation and classification process, as well as investment guidelines. Monitoring, learning and improvement in the delivery of Tautua activities was supported by established practices such as partner surveys, reflection discussions and the maturing MEL system, all of which provided important feedback on programming. The MIS has recently been developed and implemented, and it is too early for an assessment of its utility. Tautua staff are in the early stages of adoption and feedback suggests that use of the MIS has required some adjustment. In this context, effective use of the maturing MEL system and associated MIS will require further

support and guidance for staff and partners in the course of implementing the MEL system and MIS.

The approach to MEL, articulated through the Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Framework (MELF), is based on the Tautua program logic and its EOPOs and IOs. As discussed in previous sections, the EOPOs are broad and difficult to measure quantitatively, and the IOs do not readily lend themselves to quantitative measurement as well, and as a result a number of the MEL indicators are necessarily qualitative, and measure examples and instances of change, which are difficult to aggregate. As the MEL system reflects the EOPOs and IOs, greater focus and clarity in these can improve the measurement of results and this has been addressed in previous sections.

Tautua works within DFAT's procurement and contracting framework and needs to balance compliance with these requirements with the expectations and needs of IAs and CSOs. While some stakeholders expressed frustration with the timeframes for these processes, generally stakeholders understood and accepted this.

*"Tautua was firm on accountability but practical about how things work on the ground"*  
– Quote from CSO stakeholder.

Stakeholders appreciated the support and guidance Tautua provided in working with partners to meet these requirements and demonstrating flexibility in developing adaptive solutions to challenges faced by partners.

*"...procurement rules can be difficult in villages, but Tautua is willing to talk through solutions"* – Quote from CSO stakeholder.

Although a few stakeholders commented on the time required for decisions, Tautua was generally perceived as efficient and responsive, particularly in proposal processing and engagement with government counterparts. Delays were primarily attributed to government processes and external factors, such as elections, Cabinet re-submissions, and legal bottlenecks, rather than to Tautua systems.

*"...the inefficiencies happen more at our end . . . the internal processes in our ministry. Internal approvals are like climbing a ladder of hierarchies; by the time you get there, the time frame for the activities has passed and gone"* – Quote from GoS official.

The flexibility of Tautua was repeatedly noted, particularly when timelines shifted or consultations had to be rescheduled or staged. Some stakeholders noted that the Tautua team was flexible in the disbursement of funds. An example was the change of venue for a campaign team travelling to Savaii, which had to go to villages rather than just Salelologa, and Tautua approved and paid for alternative accommodation.

## Breadth of activities

Tautua's limited investment is spread across a relatively large number of activities (59 in 2024–2025) covering 4 CSIs and 3 sectors. While the program has now grouped these activities under 10 projects, the breadth of activity can impact both strategic focus and coherence as well as efficiency, particularly when the program is delivering a diversity of activities each requiring a diversity of tasks – design, planning, proposal development, procurement, contracting, monitoring and reporting. Recognising the potential for fragmentation and the spread of effort required, the draft strategic plan for

Phase 2 proposes a more strategic and programmatic approach to activity programming, and this is needed and appropriate.

## Efficiency of the facility modality

DFAT's use of the facility modality is being pioneered in Samoa. In principle, it could be assumed that the facility modality can provide greater efficiencies compared to previous approaches to programming by aggregating separate programs and activities under one program managed by one contractor. In this way, economies of scale could be achieved through:

- consolidating governance process (for engagement, consultation and endorsement of AWP's through DFAT and through GoS and sector committees)
- consolidating resourcing requirements under corporate systems and processes such as recruitment, procurement, contracting, payroll, payments and human resources and financial management, and where possible, leveraging the managing contractors' global systems and processes
- using whole-of-program systems, policies and processes for programming, such as activity selection and planning, MEL, risk and reporting, as well as templates and other resources.

In relation to corporate systems and processes, the potential efficiencies are not as significant as they could be due to the need to customise approaches to the Samoan context and regulations, for example, payroll. As a result, a number of Tautua systems are manual, particularly for timesheets, payroll and procurement tracking. Manual processes increase workload, create risks around accuracy and divert staff time away from higher-value functions. The team identified digitisation of these processes as a priority improvement area for Phase 2.

Most stakeholders consulted during the review regarded Tautua's delivery model as efficient and fit-for-purpose, particularly in comparison with offshore-managed donor arrangements. The in-country presence of the Tautua team was cited as a key driver of efficiency gains, with stakeholders noting that this makes a significant difference as decisions are faster and grounded in contextual understanding.

Some stakeholders suggested that the Tautua facility model allows faster mobilisation of expertise and resources, although it was also noted by some that Tautua activities created additional work, such as with regular meetings and reporting.

*"If those procurements are done through the government systems, they will take 3 to 4 months. But Tautua can do that within one month"* – Quote from GoS official.

As data is not available regarding the costs of previous programming approaches, it is not possible to provide a comparative assessment of the efficiency of these previous approaches compared to the facility modality. It is also not possible to provide a comparative assessment of the facility's efficiency compared to other DFAT facilities based on measurable indicators, as this data is not available.

An additional factor to consider regarding the efficiency of the facility modality is the use of two facilities in Samoa. While there is collaboration and sharing between the

facilities, this does not extend to sharing of corporate policies and systems, which is appropriate. A single facility covering both programs could afford greater economies of scale and potential cost efficiencies through shared corporate systems, staff and programming and support a more strategic focus and impact. However, data on measurable indicators that would enable an assessment of the efficiency of the two facilities compared with the expected efficiency of a single facility is not available.

The use of a single facility may be a matter for consideration in the future, particularly given the challenges in delineating the distinctive role and focus of each of the current facilities, which is discussed in Section 4.3 (Coherence).

## Value for money

Using DFAT's principles<sup>2</sup>, Table 7 provides an assessment of Tautua's VFM, which is a high-level assessment with a rating based on a 5-point scale (Very good, Good, Fair, Poor and Very poor). It should be noted that this is a broad, qualitative assessment only. Based on this assessment, the investment in Tautua represents very good value for money.

**Table 7: Tautua VFM Assessment**

| Principle                        | Criteria                                                                                                                                                      | Assessment                                                                                                                                                                           | Rating    |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| 1 Cost consciousness             | The program manages costs and seeks opportunities to reduce costs<br>Program costs are scrutinised and more cost-effective options are pursued                | AWP costs are budgeted and monitored and delivered with budget<br>Budget underspends are monitored and managed<br>Cost-consciousness is embedded in the activity selection framework | Very good |
| 2 Encouraging competition        | The program encourages contestability and competition in the selection of contractors and partners and in the consideration of ideas and alternative solution | The program adheres to Commonwealth Procurement Principles and uses open recruitment and procurement processes                                                                       | Very good |
| 3 Evidence-based decision-making | The program uses information, evidence and analysis to inform decision-making as well as learning from past experience                                        | The program conducts studies and research to gather evidence, analyses the donor environment and captures lessons learned                                                            | Very good |
| 4 Proportionality                | Systems and processes should be proportional to the program's capacity and needs and focus on reducing inefficiencies and duplication                         | Tautua systems and processes are fit for purpose and scale<br>Tautua collaborates with Tautai and maps the donor environment to harness synergies and reduce duplication             | Very good |

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.dfat.gov.au/aid/who-we-work-with/value-for-money-principles/Pages/value-for-money-principles>

| Principle                         | Criteria                                                                                                                                                                 | Assessment                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Rating    |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| 5 Performance and risk management | <p>Program activities are monitored and reviewed for quality and impact</p> <p>Risks are identified and managed, including fraud and corruption prevention</p>           | <p>Activities are monitored through MEL and reported six-monthly and annually</p> <p>AWPs include annual risk management plans, which are reviewed quarterly and discussed monthly</p> <p>Systems are in place that have effectively monitored and managed fraud and corruption</p> <p>CSOs are supported with the assessment and development of due diligence policies and processes</p> | Very good |
| 6 Results focus                   | <p>The program focuses on results and impact, guided by clear objectives and performance targets</p> <p>The program is flexible and adaptable to changing priorities</p> | <p>The program is underpinned by a structured (though complex) program logic and a comprehensive MEL system</p> <p>Activity implementation is monitored and activity design and scheduling are adapted to respond the changing contexts and priorities</p>                                                                                                                                | Very good |
| 7 Experimentation and innovation  | <p>The program uses creative and flexible approaches, including through piloting experimental and innovative mechanisms</p>                                              | <p>Activities are designed to be flexible to the needs, capacities and priorities of partners and recipients</p> <p>New approaches are trialled through pilot activities</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Very good |

## Future directions

While Tautua broadly represents value for money and has a strong focus on efficiency, there are opportunities to further improve efficiency, as discussed below.

### Maturation and utilisation of corporate systems

There has been a strong focus on developing the MEL system, and as part of this development, support has been provided to partners and staff on data collection and reporting requirements and stakeholders have indicated the need for continued support. Staff have also been supported on the use of the MIS, however as it has been recently implemented, staff have identified the need for further support on its use.

### Recommendation 7

*Continue support to partners and Tautua staff on using the Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning MEL system and support to Tautua staff on using the Management Information System (MIS).*

*This will involve continuation of the support through provision of advice, guidance material and additional training where required.*

Other Tautua systems for supporting the program require development, including timesheets, payroll and procurement, which are currently manual processes.

#### **Recommendation 8**

*Prioritise the development of corporate systems to replace current manual processes.*

*Tautua has indicated development of these systems is planned and this will be part of the ongoing corporate system improvement process.*

#### **A single facility**

As there may be efficiencies to be leveraged through the use of a single facility for the Tautua and Tautai programs, consideration of this could be included in the planning of any investments beyond the current term.

#### **Strategic programming**

In addition, there are opportunities to improve efficiencies by consolidating the breadth of activities supported by Tautua using a more strategic approach to programming, which is discussed in Section 4.1 (Relevance).

## **4.5 Sustainability**

#### **Key review question**

*To what extent is Tautua setting Samoa up for sustainability of outcomes in health, education, gender equality, disability equity and social inclusion beyond the life of the program?*

The review found that consideration of the sustainability of Tautua outcomes was integrated throughout a number of elements of the Tautua programming, particularly the focus on a locally-led approach and on foundational activities, such as those that build an evidence base to support decision-making and strengthening institutions to deliver accessible and quality services. This is an appropriate approach that Tautua can leverage for Phase 2 of the program, although attention will be needed to ensure partners follow-through with changes and improvements supported by the program.

#### **A locally-led approach**

Tautua programming was firmly based in a locally-led approach, and its Investment Criteria Guidelines (for decision-making) explicitly focused on local engagement, ownership and political commitment. In practice, Tautua's EOPOs and CSIs directly addressed Samoa's national and sector outcomes, AWP were developed in consultation with GoS agencies and endorsed through ACWG and sector governance arrangements and activities were implemented locally through IAs and CSOs. In addition, one of Tautua's change pathways (participation and inclusion) is explicitly focused on local decision-making and governance. Implementation expectations were respectful of local contexts and capacities, and Tautua provided IAs and CSOs with the support and flexibility to implement activities within their means.

#### **Sustainability of outcomes**

While there is considerable variability in the potential for sustainability of outcomes, which is not surprising given the diversity of activities, sectors and delivery partners, in

general, Tautua pursued activities that focused on sustainable outcomes. Sustainability underpinned a number of Tautua's change pathways, which guide programming, such research and evidence, policy and planning, resource sustainability and workforce development. These pathways guided activities that were foundational to strengthening institutions and capabilities that can continue to address PDS and sector outcomes and CSIs beyond the funding support provided by Tautua.

Tautua is seen to have focused on support that will contribute to sustainable activities, and this is seen to have matured throughout Phase 1.

*"That particular focus and that lens became more heightened near the end of the phase"* – Quote from Tautua team member.

Some ministry stakeholders consulted for this review highlighted that limitations in GoS funding may impact sustainability, particularly in institutionalisation and implementation of policies, maintaining and updating skill levels, retaining trained staff and broadening capabilities beyond those individuals supported by Tautua activities. However, stakeholders cited examples where follow-up supported sustainability, particularly in teacher training, through train-the-trainer models, integration into routine curriculum support and alignment with pre-service teacher education at the National University of Samoa (NUS). Low-cost strategies supported by Tautua were also seen to be relatively sustainable, such as digital and social media communication and education initiatives, given their low ongoing costs, although higher-cost components, such as access to television broadcasting, remain funding-dependent.

Areas for further attention included the need for pharmacy technician training to progress to the next stage for completion of qualifications and for ongoing refresher training and legal support for public health enforcement officials – in the latter case Tautua's support for legislative reform and development of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) was seen to be critical but needed follow-up to be sustainable.

A key sustainability risk identified was related to inclusive education, where reductions in government funding have undermined long-term service provision and workforce stability. While Tautua's support has mitigated these risks in the short to medium term, stakeholders acknowledged that donor-funded programs cannot fully substitute for stable domestic financing in the long run.

Support for CSOs focused in particular on building the organisations for future sustainability, for example through due diligence assessments and support to develop policies and practices.

*'This kind of funding builds organisations, not just activities'* quote from CSO stakeholder.

For CSOs, this support provided space to strengthen governance, plan and seek diversified funding for continued or enhanced service delivery, although it was acknowledged that with limits to GoS funding, additional funding will be reliant on donors and development partners, with some expectation of continued Tautua support.

Stakeholder views on Tautua's focus on sustainability have been confirmed through the partner satisfaction survey – 97% of respondents rated the sustainability of the program's outcomes as high (60% strongly agreed and 37% agreed).

## **Government of Samoa and CSO relationships**

Generally, stakeholders consulted for the review did not directly comment on the program's role in supporting stronger relationships between the Government of Samoa and CSOs and the reasons for this may include stakeholders' lack of visibility of explicit Tautua activities or strategies that may support this. However, Tautua's inclusive approach to engagement, including reflection workshops and other opportunities to bring GoS and CSO stakeholders together will have contributed to supporting stronger relationships between GoS agencies and CSOs. In addition, as discussed in Section 4.3 (Effectiveness), Tautua has been instrumental in encouraging a cross-sectoral approach, and as part of this has supported the strengthening of relationships between GoS agencies and CSOs in relation to specific Tautua activities.

## **Key enablers of sustainability**

The following factors support Tautua's focus on sustainability.

### **Sustainability objectives**

The focus on sustainability was embedded in Tautua's programming approach and decision-making, with clear criteria in its decision-making framework for selecting investments.

### **Ownership**

The clear alignment of the Tautua program and AWP with the PDS and sector outcomes and endorsement through the ACWG and sector governance arrangements elicited the required political commitment and local ownership by GoS and implementing partners, which supported sustainability.

### **Local determination**

Implementation of the AWP activities optimised local decision-making and implementation, through consultation on needs and context, selection of activities and a flexible approach that reflects local contexts and capabilities and responds to changing circumstances and priorities. Tautua sought to balance its programming expectations and process with the capabilities of local partners through support and adaptation.

### **Foundations for stronger institutions**

Tautua's programming included activities that laid the foundation for future sustainability – governance, systems and frameworks (regulations, policies and strategies) that positioned and strengthened organisations to improve service quality and better respond to emerging needs. This included institutionalisation of policies and practices to ensure that changes supported by the program continue. For example, in relation to GEDSI principles, these were embedded in systems, policies and processes through advocating the participation of OPDs in national and sectoral committees, integrating disability-disaggregated data into national surveys and information systems and supporting CSOs to operationalise safeguarding and inclusion policies within their

core governance and service delivery practices. This approach increased the likelihood that inclusive outcomes will be sustained beyond the life of individual program activities.

### **Capability to deliver**

Tautua's programming also included the development of key capabilities in areas of need – for example improved practices in literacy education, procurement, pharmacy services and pathology services. These not only improve the capability of individuals to deliver improved services, they can also strengthen the capabilities of others through train-the-trainer activities, knowledge sharing, innovation and improvement, and in the case of pathology services increase system self-reliance.

### **Implementation and follow-through**

Sustainability requires a commitment to ownership, implementation and follow-through by partners and beneficiaries and Tautua had less influence on this. For example, take-up of SOPs and applying new skills and practices in the workplace are downstream actions that will be influenced by factors such as organisational context and incentives. While some stakeholders raised this in the context of using bonds and agreements with training participants, these are outside the direct control of Tautua, although can be a focus for planning discussions with IAs and CSOs. Broadly, Tautua has focused on implementation considerations in its programming.

### **Stronger relationships**

The relationship and partnership with GoS are the focus of EOPO 3 and is key to the delivery of EOPO 1 and EOPO 2. Senior-level stakeholders affirmed that the relationship between GoS and GoA is strong – Tautua's support directly addressed critical needs, aligned with the PDS and sector outcomes, and its delivery respected local processes and requirements, particularly as it is delivered through local partners. Tautua worked in partnership with GoS, which contributed to the strong bilateral relationship. In establishing the program, Tautua focused on building relationships at all levels and prioritised engagement with GoS and local partners, and its communication and consultation were well-planned and regular.

### **Future directions**

In general, Tautua ensured its activities were underpinned by sustainability considerations, though there are a few opportunities to improve sustainability as discussed below.

### **Sustainable funding**

Tautua is often seen by partners to be a source of funding to address GoS budget gaps, providing supplementation for core resources (rather than development funding) or for ad hoc requests. In this context, stakeholders view sustainability in terms of the continuation of Tautua support, and this is a challenge for Tautua's decision-making and should remain a focus in its dialogue with GoS. The directions identified in the previous sections in relation to strategic programming and the need to engage GoS agencies on this shift is a key part of this dialogue.

## Follow-up

In some cases, for Tautua support to address sustainability follow-up is needed, and this is often outside the direct influence of the program, such as in relation to implementation and take-up or knowledge sharing or where staff turnover is high. While strategies are built into activity design or expected, such as train-the-trainer activities, these are the responsibility of partners. This can be a risk to the sustainability of the changes and improvements resulting from Tautua activities and is an area of focus that Tautua can continue and strengthen.

### Recommendation 9

*Ensure that expectations of partner follow-up to Tautua activities are clear in activity design and implementation to strengthen sustainability of outcomes.*

*This could include clarifying follow-up expectations in decision-making (for example in the activity screening workflow and investment guidelines) and in activity design (for example concept note and proposal templates). However, as partners have responsibility for follow-up, where this is expected, follow-up strategies can be made explicit in activity planning and implementation.*

## 4.6 Gender equality, disability and social inclusion

### Key review question

*What evidence is there that Tautua is contributing to improved gender equality, disability and social inclusion for Samoa?*

It is the review team's assessment that Tautua's planning, resourcing and implementation placed a priority on improving GEDSI outcomes. Tautua's GEDSI focus is clear in its EOPOs, and its programming is supported by a GEDSI strategy and tools to guide the GEDSI focus for both mainstream and targeted GEDSI activities. Activities addressing the needs of the GEDSI target group have achieved positive results in terms of awareness and access to services. Tautua's approach to GEDSI is maturing, and Phase 2 can build on the approach and resources developed in Phase 1 to further develop and strengthen its GEDSI focus and outcomes.

### GEDSI focus

GEDSI is an important focus for GoS and is embedded in the PDS, underpins sector plans and is explicitly addressed in the Community Sector Plan. Samoa also has several relevant national policies, including the National Policy on Gender Equality and Rights of Women and Girls 2021-2031 and the National Policy for Persons with Disabilities 2021-2031.

Tautua's focus on GEDSI was clearly linked to national priorities around ending violence, reducing vulnerability and human development, particularly for women, children, youth and persons with disabilities. Tautua's close alignment with the GEDSI priorities in the PDS and sector plans is reflected in Tautua's EOPO 1 and EOPO 2, which address inclusivity, with EOPO 1 explicitly referencing women and girls, youth and persons with disabilities, and GEDSI is also an explicit focus of CSI 3 and CSI 4. Consideration of GEDSI was also reflected in the Tautua decision-making framework

(screening workflow and Investment Criteria Guidelines (D Technical Viability and quality of design).

Tautua's focus on GEDSI in programming was also supported by Tautua's Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion Strategy and Implementation Plan 2023–2025. Tautua's approach to GEDSI focused on the needs of a GEDSI target group comprising women, girls, youth, persons with disabilities, the vulnerable and those living in hardship (marginalised groups) and also supported the rights of fa'afafine and fa'atama<sup>3</sup>.

Tautua programming used a gender mainstreaming checklist to ensure that GEDSI considerations were reflected in activity design and implementation, including:

- direct engagement and consultation with CSOs representing the GEDSI target group
- inclusion of GEDSI considerations in Tautua operational policies and practices
- inclusion of a GEDSI analysis in most concept notes
- inclusion of a GEDSI component in TORS
- inclusion of GEDSI indicators in activity data collection
- collation and reporting of relevant GEDSI activity data through the MEL system
- use of accessible venues, facilities and communication methods for engagement and training activities and inclusion of participants with disabilities and from marginalised groups
- encouragement of GoS to include representatives of the GEDSI target group in decision-making.

GEDSI is a priority for Tautua, and the program has a strong focus on GEDSI outcomes, and while it is also prioritised in the PDS and is a GoS requirement, there are differences between Tautua and partners in the level of focus and priority given to GEDSI. While GoS implementation of GEDSI priorities is outside Tautua's control, Tautua is playing an important role in encouraging and supporting partners in pursuing GEDSI outcomes.

## Targeted GEDSI activities

Tautua addressed GEDSI outcomes through both mainstreaming GEDSI objectives and principles across the program and through targeted GEDSI activities. These targeted activities included the development of the National Youth Policy and support for associated activities such as training and engagement activities (National Youth Week and Youth Development Day) as well as support for commemoration of International Women's Day.

For the period 2024–2025, Tautua delivered 11 targeted GEDSI activities with a total value of AUD622,848. This represents 22.2% of the total number of activities and 17.4% of the total activity expenditure. As GEDSI is mainstreamed across the program, it is not

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<sup>3</sup> Diverse individual Sexual Orientation and Gender Identification Expression (SOGIE)

possible to assess whether the focus between targeted and mainstream activities is an appropriate balance, as the targeted activities had positive results (see below) and GEDSI outcomes are also being achieved through mainstream activities, for example representation of the GEDSI target group in education sector training programs.

## Support to CSOs

Support to CSOs included institutional strengthening as well support to address the needs of the GEDSI target group – in both advocacy and delivery of specific services. CSOs addressing the needs of the GEDSI target group that were supported by Tautua are listed below, which includes CSOs in the disability sector as well as support for CSOs through the SGPP.

### Tautua-supported CSOs

- Nuanua o le Alofa Advocacy Group (NOLA) - for disability rights advocacy and awareness
- Samoa Spinal Network – to improve service provision such as home care visits
- Senese Inclusive Education – for inclusive education training for staff and outreach screening services
- Samoa Fa’afine Association – for advocacy and awareness
- Samoa Family Health Association – for sexual reproductive health awareness and services
- Samoa Victim Support Group – for training and counselling for victims of violence and offenders
- Samoa Women in Business Development Incorporated – for training and technical assistance for farmers
- Samoa Women’s Association of Growers – for training and services on product and market development

## CSO activity results

Activity and annual reports provide GEDSI-disaggregated data for Tautua-supported activities, indicating that implementation provides coverage of the GEDSI target group. In addition, through its support to CSOs representing the GEDSI target group and targeted GEDSI initiatives, Tautua’s activities directly addressed the needs of the GEDSI target group and can be expected to contribute to the EOPOs.

Support to CSOs facilitated improved access to services for beneficiaries in the GEDSI target group and the 2024 results included:

- sexual and reproductive health community awareness events – 1,368 people (1,072 female)
- sexual and reproductive health clinics and counselling – 5,292 women
- training on women’s economic empowerment – 118 people (104 female)

- training for village representatives on supporting women experiencing violence – 152 people (114 female and 11 people with disabilities)
- support to women experiencing violence – 2,442 helpline calls, 74 survivors assisted, 300 people referred by village representatives
- counselling and rehabilitation support for violent offenders – 219 perpetrators counselled
- agricultural business and economic development support – 759 vendors (397 female and 7 persons with disability)
- technical advice on improving agricultural production – 1,769 farmers
- agricultural marketing and microfinance training - 263 farmers

These results show a very positive improvement in the results for these activities compared to previous years. In relation to women accessing these services, in 2024, 7,540 women accessed services provided by the Tautua-supported CSOs (excluding training) compared to 3,989 women during the period October 2022 to September 2023, although a comprehensive analysis of the trend over Phase 1 is not possible due to differences and gaps in the reporting periods in the data available to the review.

In a tracer study of participants in training programs delivered by CSOs, 91% of participants indicated that the training resulted in changes in knowledge, attitudes or skills as well as reported changes in behavior (such as confidence and communication) and expanded businesses and increased sales. The latter are positive outcomes of these activities, though quantified data on these changes was not available.

While GEDSI disaggregated data is available for individual activities, consolidated program data across Phase 1 for both GEDSI target activities and mainstream activities was not available in order to assess the total coverage of the GEDSI target group.

## System and cross-sectoral results

Targeted GEDSI activities addressed critical system gaps in Samoa, for example in gender-based violence prevention and response and the provision of inclusive education services and strengthened aspects of the system's capability in areas such as safeguarding.

The mainstreaming of GEDSI principles across Tautua programming has also facilitated the promotion of a GEDSI focus during sectoral and cross-sectoral discussions. This can contribute to a more systemic and integrated approach across GoS agencies and to changes such as participation of representatives of the GEDSI target group in local governance arrangements and increased awareness of the practical needs of the GEDSI target group.

Tautua support to CSOs has also strengthened the capacity of these organisations to effect system change. For example, Tautua's support for OPDs has resulted in activities such as access audits for facilities which can result in changes that can benefit persons with disabilities more broadly.

*“Even the Lava Hotel . . . they’d never had disability parking lots . . . they’ve now put in disability parking lots because of recommendations that have come out of the access audits” – Quote from Tautua team member.*

Tautua support is important as OPDs have limited capacity and rely on volunteer resources due to limited and unpredictable funding. Despite this however, OPDs play a significant role in influencing system-level change, particularly through their formal recognition as representative bodies, technical expertise and representation in regional and national forums and governance arrangements.

## GEDSI resourcing

Tautua’s resourcing of GEDSI was significant, and appropriate given the priority placed on it by GoS and its centrality to Samoa’s expected outcomes.

Of the planned activities in the 2023–2024 AWP, 24 out of 52 activities (43.6%) were categorised as GEDSI sector activities, and the remaining activities were categorised as either health or education sector activities. The AWP does not discuss the basis of the GEDSI categorisation; however, it is assumed it relates to CSI 3 and CSI 4. The 2024–2025 AWP count of activities by sectors does not use the GEDSI sector for categorisation; however, of the 49 planned activities (including 8 parked activities), 18 (36.7%) related to CSI 3 and CSI 4.

The expenditure on GEDSI program activities is also significant (Table 8), with 49.8% of program activity funds allocated to GEDSI activities in 2023–2024. The allocation in 2024–2025 is lower, as the allocation to SGPP is shown separately, and it is assumed these can be combined with the GEDSI allocation, although the combined figure (41.5%) was lower than in 2023–2025. Tautua has also invested in specialist resources for the development of its GEDSI strategy and for GEDSI advice (which are not included in Table 8).

**Table 8: AWP GEDSI Resourcing**

| GEDSI Resourcing           | 2023–2024        | 2023–2024    | 2024–2025        | 2024–2025    |
|----------------------------|------------------|--------------|------------------|--------------|
| Sector                     | AUD              | %            | AUD              | %            |
| Health                     | 874,063          | 25.2         | 847,073          | 27.3         |
| Education                  | 866,661          | 25.0         | 878,710          | 28.3         |
| <b>GEDSI</b>               | <b>1,728,019</b> | <b>49.8</b>  | <b>946,124</b>   | <b>30.4</b>  |
| <b>SGPP</b>                | <b>-</b>         | <b>-</b>     | <b>344,724</b>   | <b>11.1</b>  |
| <b>Cross-cutting</b>       | <b>-</b>         | <b>-</b>     | <b>48,500</b>    | <b>1.6</b>   |
| <b>DFAT Direct Tasking</b> | <b>-</b>         | <b>-</b>     | <b>42,439</b>    | <b>1.4</b>   |
| <b>Total</b>               | <b>3,468,743</b> | <b>100.0</b> | <b>3,107,570</b> | <b>100.0</b> |

## Future directions

GEDSI is a priority in Tautua programming and the focus of a number of activities and has recently been enhanced through the development of the GEDSI strategy and use of specialist GEDSI advisers. Tautua’s focus on GEDSI is maturing, as it is embedded and

integrated through programming decision-making and implementation with a shift from a focus on participation to a stronger focus on impact.

*“We’ve got a GEDSI checklist that we use with every activity . . . It’s not just a tick in the box. It’s like very clear outcomes that are GEDSI focused – Tautua team member*

*Activity design and processes must include the needs and interests of all genders . . . at the pilot, monitor and evaluate phases, the inclusion and outcomes for different genders are important” – Quote from Tautua team member*

Tautua’s established and developing partnerships with CSOs have built a solid foundation for change and improvement for the GEDSI target group through strengthening CSOs to deliver, improving services for beneficiaries and influencing system level change. Tautua is now well-positioned to continue and strengthen its GEDSI focus in Phase 2.

#### **Recommendation 10**

*Continue to strengthen Tautua’s integration of GEDSI across programming, including in planning, resourcing and monitoring.*

*This can be progressed through maintaining the strong GEDSI focus in programming, continuing to encourage GoS agencies’ focus on and prioritisation of GEDSI and building on the expertise and learnings of CSO partners.*

## Appendix A List of documents

Table 9: List of documents

| Document Category                          | Document                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|--------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>GoS strategic documents</b>             | Pathway for the Development of Samoa 2021–2026<br>Community Sector Plan 2024–2028<br>Education Sector Plan 2019–2024<br>Health Sector Plan 2019–2023                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Tautua strategic documents</b>          | Tautua Investment Design Document<br>Annex A – Program logic and proposed update<br>Annex D – Tautua Governance Structure                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Annual plans</b>                        | Annual Work Plan 2023–2024<br>Annual Work Plan 2024–2025<br>Summary of Sectors 2024–2025                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Annual and six-monthly reports</b>      | Annual Report 2023<br>Annual Report 2024<br>6 Month Progress Report January–June 2023<br>6 Month Progress Report January–June 2024<br>6 Month Progress Report January–June 2025                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Investment Monitoring Reports</b>       | Tautua Investment Monitoring Report Nov 2021 – Jul 2024<br>Tautua Investment Monitoring Report Jan 2024 – March 2025                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Evaluation reports</b>                  | SDPP End of Investment Report 2024–2025, plus Annex<br>SGPP Evaluation Report, 2024                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Other evaluation and review reports</b> | School Staffing Management System, 2023<br>Primary Language Literacy Training Project, 2023<br>Secondary Language Literacy Training Project 2024<br>Secondary Language Literacy Training Workshop 2024<br>Secondary Language Literacy Training Post Visits 2024<br>Independent Validation of ESSP Self-Assessment 2021–2022<br>Exit Report for the Independent Validation of ESSP Self-Assessment 2021–2022<br>Nested Logic for CSIs Workshop 2023<br>SGPP 6 Month Progress Report April–September 2022<br>Cost Benefit Utility Comparison Analysis of Angiogram and Stenting Services<br>Tautua Child Protection Specialist Exit Report 2023<br>Tautua Reflections Workshop Report, April 2025 |
| <b>MEL plans and reports / data</b>        | Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Plan – Phase 1 and reports / data<br>Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Plan – Phase 2                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Strategy documents</b>                  | Climate Change and Disaster Resilience Study<br>Tautua GEDSI Strategy and Implementation Plan<br>GEDSI Situation Analysis, October 2023<br>Phase 2 Draft Strategic Plan and revised program logic and narrative                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |

## Appendix B List of Stakeholders

Table 10: List of stakeholders

| Stakeholder group          | Name and position                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|----------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Australian High Commission | <p>HE Will Robinson, High Commissioner</p> <p>Claire McGeechan, Deputy High Commissioner</p> <p>Greg Furness, First Secretary Development</p> <p>Soraya McGinley, Second Secretary Development</p> <p>Shirley Vaafusuaga, Senior Program Manager, Human Development and Health</p> <p>Ariane Stevenson, Senior Program Manager (formerly PM Education)</p> <p>Alexandra Iakopo, Program Manager Education (formerly PM GEDSI)</p> <p>Jasmine Joerimann, Program Manager GEDSI</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Tautua facility            | <p>Kovi Aiolutepotea, Team Leader</p> <p>Willem Pretorius, Performance, Quality and Learning Manager</p> <p>Rosemary Tone, Community Technical Lead</p> <p>Fagalua Smith, Community Program Activity Coordinator</p> <p>Mandria Sua, Education Program Activity Coordinator</p> <p>Kim Jun Ho, Health Program Activity Coordinator</p> <p>Rosemary Tone, Communications Manager</p> <p>Bureieta Leauga, Operations Manager</p> <p>Taeaone Mua-Tamaseu, Finance Manager</p> <p>Jelinhea Tangatauli, Finance Officer</p> <p>Linda Vasey, Contractor Representative, Palladium (remote)</p> <p>Kirby Smith, Program Manager, Palladium (remote)</p> <p>Sophie Pinwill, MEL Advisor, Clear Horizon (remote)</p> <p>Taii Cheri Robinson, former Team Leader</p> |
| KVA Consult                | <p>Kolone Vaai, Co-Managing Director</p> <p>Nadia Meredith-Hunt, Chief Executive Officer</p> <p>Sosefina Tualalelei, Senior Consultant</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Tautai facility            | <p>Peter Tierney, Team Leader</p> <p>Soli Wilson, MEL Manager</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| MFAT                       | <p>Peseta Noumea Simi, CEO</p> <p>Tagaloa Sharon Potoi-Aiafi, ACEO, Bilateral</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| MOF                        | <p>Auta Peresitene Kirifi, ACEO, Aid Coordination</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| MWCSD                      | <p>Loau Donina Vaa, CEO</p> <p>Ana Leau Vaasa, ACEO, Economic Empowerment</p> <p>Tuilimu Misikupa Kupa, ACEO ICT</p> <p>Meritiana Tanuvasa, former ACEO Research, Policy and Planning</p> <p>Polataivao Manutagi Tiotio, ACEO Corporate Services</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| MEC                        | <p>Hon Aiono Dr Alec Ekeroma, Minister for Education</p> <p>A'eau Chris Hazelman, CEO</p> <p>Aida Savea, ACEO Education Sector Coordination</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |

| Stakeholder group                               | Name and position                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|-------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                 | <p>Tinnisantalia Pamata, PEO MEL</p> <p>Tauti Jenny Lauano, ACEO Performance and Development</p> <p>Tuiloma Inipene Simanu, ACEO Curriculum Design and Materials</p> <p>Jennifer Pemila, PEO Inclusive Education</p> <p>Nora Warren, ACEO Policy, Planning and Research</p> <p>Michelle Arasi-Mulitalo, PEO Research</p> <p>Matagi Nehru Mauala, ACEO ICT &amp; Media</p> |
| MOH                                             | <p>Fusi Tietie, ACEO Health Sector Coordinator</p> <p>Christina Ulberg, ACEO Health Protection and Enforcement</p> <p>Leatigaga Siufaga Simi, ACEO Health Promotion</p> <p>Lilomaiaava Ahroni Viliamu, Manager Pharmacy Services</p> <p>Faleola Eliu, Principal Procurement Officer</p>                                                                                   |
| <b>National University of Samoa</b>             | <p>Tuifuisa'a Dr Patila Amosa, Vice Chancellor and President</p> <p>Peseta Dr Desmond Lee Hang, Deputy Vice Chancellor</p> <p>Leota Sarai Tevita, Chief Operating Officer</p> <p>Leasiolagi Tapu Iemaima Gabriel, Dean Faculty of Business and Entrepreneurship</p> <p>Fauatea Lydal Visan, Director of Finance</p> <p>Kassandra Betham, SGPP research</p>                |
| Samoa Family Health Association                 | <p>Lealaiauloto Liai Siitia, Executive Director</p> <p>Asomualemalama Leiloa Asaasa, Program Coordinator</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Samoa Victim Support Group                      | <p>Siliniu Lina Chang, President</p> <p>Tafatoa Sam Fruean, Finance Controller</p> <p>Sr Jacinta Fidow, Safeguarding Officer</p> <p>Theresa Malaki, Head, Projects Division</p>                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Senese Inclusive Education Support Services Inc | <p>Olofetu'utu'ulelupeataua Sagato Vaoliko, Manager</p> <p>Naomi Asi, Coordinator</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Samoa Fa'afafine Association                    | <p>Alex Su'a, President</p> <p>Gustav Sua, Project Coordinator</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Nuanua O Le Alofa                               | Mataáfa Faatino Utumapu, General Manager                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Samoa Blind Person Association                  | Hillier Pouesi, Manager                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Samoa Spinal Network                            | <p>Asomua Epenesa Pouesi Young, Manager</p> <p>Leo Iosefo, Executive Member</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Samoa Women's Association of Growers            | <p>Ofusina Epa-Laulala, Program Manager</p> <p>Seutaatia Vaai, Project Coordinator, Economic Empowerment</p> <p>Papali'i Mele Mauala, Executive Member</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Women in Business Development Inc.              | <p>Carmel Moore, Director</p> <p>Taaloga Apa, Senior Program Manager</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Piu Scholars                                    | <p>Eseta Leau, Coordinator, Piu, Upolu</p> <p>Rev. Reupena Leau, EFKS Piu, Upolu</p> <p>Italia Leau, EFKS Piu, Upolu</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Formative Assessment Training                   | Aliki Muliaga, Principal, Faatolotologatama Pre School, Savaii                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |

| Stakeholder group                                  | Name and position                                                                                                                                                                         |
|----------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| First Aid training                                 | Vitale Tavui, Teacher, Marist Brothers Primary School, Mulivai                                                                                                                            |
| Micro Credential Training for Pharmacy Technicians | Patisoni Faalogo, Pharmacy Technician, Multipharm Laboratories and Pharmacy, Upolu<br>Stella Tapu, Pharmacy Technician, MOH, Upolu<br>Sisavaii Talalelei, Pharmacy Technician, MOH, Upolu |
| Organic farming                                    | Taualii Fiso, Tafua Village                                                                                                                                                               |
| Pathology training                                 | Dr Seventeen Toumoua, Consultant Pathologist, MOH                                                                                                                                         |

# Appendix C Policy and Planning Architecture

## Guiding Tautua

### 1. What This Framework Shows

This diagram explains how different global, regional, and national priorities connect to guide the Australia–Samoa partnership (Tautua program) and its activities.

### 2. Global and Regional Priorities

These are the highest-level guides:

- Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
- 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent

These set long-term development directions for Samoa and the Pacific region.

### 3. Samoa's National Priorities

Samoa's plans and strategies guide national development:

- Government of Samoa priorities
- Samoa 2040 (long-term vision)
- Pathway for the Development of Samoa (PDS)
- National sector plans (e.g. health, education)
- District development plans

### 4. Australia's Priorities

Australia brings its own policies to guide support:

- Government of Australia priorities
- Australia's International Development Policy
- Cross-cutting priorities such as:
  - o Gender equality, disability, and social inclusion (GEDSI)
  - o Climate change

### 5. Shared Partnership Framework

At the centre is the Australia–Samoa Bilateral Partnership Agreement, which:

- Brings both countries' priorities together
- Sets shared principles and priorities
- Provides the foundation for cooperation

### 6. The Tautua Program

The partnership is delivered through the Tautua program, which:

- Translates priorities into action
- Supports Samoa's development goals

### 7. Planning and Implementation

The Tautua program is carried out through:

- Program activities (what is implemented on the ground)
- Annual Work Plans (detailed yearly plans)

### 8. Key Message

This framework shows how:

- Global, regional, and national priorities are aligned
- Samoa and Australia work together through a shared agreement
- Plans are turned into practical activities through the Tautua program

## Appendix D Tautua Program Logic (*Written Version*)

### 1. Overall Goal

- Improve health, education, gender equality, and inclusion
- Support peaceful and strong communities in Samoa

### 2. Objective

- Australia and Samoa work together in a long-term partnership
- Support Samoa's development goals and priorities

### 3. Key Outcomes

- Stronger and more inclusive communities
- Better systems and service delivery
- Strong partnerships and leadership

### 4. How We Achieve This

- Improve policies and planning
- Use resources effectively
- Use research and data for decisions
- Build workforce and leadership skills
- Communicate clearly with communities
- Promote participation and inclusion
- Encourage collective action
- Address key issues such as NCDs and GBV

### 5. Programs and Activities

- Long-term and new development programs
- Quick-response activities
- Focus on gender equality, disability inclusion, and social inclusion
- Support research, partnerships, and learning

### 6. Assumptions

- Sufficient funding and resources are available
- Skilled leaders and workforce are in place
- Data is used to guide decisions
- Government policies are aligned and supportive
- Strong partner coordination exists

### 7. Key Message

- Together, Samoa and Australia aim to strengthen services, support communities, and build an inclusive and resilient future