

THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, SPORTS AND CUTURE

Samoa School Fee Grant Scheme

[First Annual Report 2010/11]

Acknowledgement

The Government of Samoa through the Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture would like to acknowledge the enormous contribution of the Governments of Australia and New Zealand with the school grants initiative.

The work of the Team of Consultants is to be commended in ensuring the effective roll-out of the scheme in its first year of implementation.

The efforts of school principals and school committee members to take on new learning is acknowledged and commended.

Abbreviations and Acronyms

ACEO	Assistant Chief Executive Officer
AMP's	Annual Management Plans
ATP	Alternative Teaching Program
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
EAC	Education Advisory Committee
ESPII	Education Sector Program II
GoS	Government of Samoa
MDG's	Millennium Development Goals
MESC	Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture
MOF	Ministry of Finance
MSS	Minimum Service Standards
NTDF	National Teacher Development Framework
SDS	Strategy for the Development of Samoa
SEN	Student Education Number
SIP's	School Improvement Plans
SNES	Special Needs Education Society
SPP	Strategic Policies and Plan
SRO's	School Review Officers
SSFGS	Samoa School Fee Grant Scheme
PREB	Prevention of Blindness, Rehabilitation and Education of Blind Persons
TOC	Team of Consultants

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1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The purpose of this report is to inform all key stakeholders on the Samoa School Fee Grant Scheme (SSFGS) for the first year of implementation from 1 July 2010 to 30 June 2011.

This report is compiled from various reports including quarterly and monthly reports by the Team of Consultants (TOC), joint reviews on the scheme, visits to schools and discussions with all key stakeholders.

This Annual Report covers the period from 1 July 2010 to 30 June 2011.

2. PREAMBLE

The Samoa School Fee Grant Scheme is a school fee grants program.

The scheme aligns well with the priority goals outlined in the Strategy for the Development of Samoa 2008-2012 (SDS), and the Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture Strategic Policies and Plan (SPP) 2006-2015 amongst other key guiding documents.

The school fee grants scheme will assist Samoa in achieving the education – related Millennium Development Goals (MDG's) of universal primary education by 2015 and a more equitable education for boys and girls. The scheme will also assist in the work conducted by the Ministry in ensuring provisions as stipulated in the Education Act 2009 are adhered to.

Strong focus of the scheme will be on improving access and quality of schooling by removing school fees for all primary school school-aged children (except private schools), support inclusive education and reduce drop outs. The scheme will also highly complement the new reforms under the Education Sector Program II (ESPII) by providing necessary teaching and learning materials for schools. The scheme will also empower principals to manage and prioritise school resources to meet Minimum Service Standards (MSS) requirements.

The scheme will be an important tool in improving the efficiency, quality, and equity of education at the primary level.

2.1 Background

The SSFGS came into effect on the 6 June 2009 when the Foreign Ministers of Australia and New Zealand jointly announced their support to the Government of Samoa (GoS) for a 'fee free' education scheme at the primary level of education.

The Design for the SSFGS was confirmed on the 5 May 2010. The Design Document for the scheme outlines the objectives, intended outcomes and specific targets of the scheme as well as its implementation, monitoring and reporting arrangements (Annex 1).

To complement the Design Document, an Operations Manual was also developed to assist School Principals and School Committee Members on the use of the grants scheme to achieve a quality education for Samoan students. Furthermore, the Operations Manual clearly stipulates the expenditure conditions for which the grants scheme can be utilized for (Annex 2).

A Monitoring and Evaluation Framework was also developed to monitor changes over time as a result of the scheme (Annex 3).

2.2 Management

The Management of the scheme is clearly stipulated in the Design Document of the SSFGS.

In brief, the Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture (MESC) is the Implementing Agency for the scheme. The Team Leader/Team of Consultants (TOC) is responsible for the daily management of the team and the scheme.

The TOC Team Leader is responsible to and reports to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) through the Assistant Chief Executive Officer School Operations Division (ACEO SOD) on a day to day basis. The Education Advisory Committee (EAC) oversees the SSFGS while MESC is responsible for the overall management of the scheme.

2.3 Reporting

The reporting mechanisms for the scheme are clearly outlined in the Design Document of the SSFGS.

In brief, there will be three levels of written reporting on the scheme. National Consultants will provide quarterly and six monthly reports in subsequent years from each school. TOC will provide through the Team Leader reports to the MESC CEO and Core Executive on a monthly basis. The Team Leader will prepare a quarterly report to the SSFGS. The MESC CEO will report on SSFGS to the Education Advisory Committee.

It is important that conflict resolution/operational matters are settled at the Core Executive Level with Strategic issues/challenges addressed at the EAC Level.

3. TEAM OF CONSULTANTS

A Team of National Consultants was recruited on the 1 July for a three year term through to 2013 to manage the implementation of the scheme.

The TOC consist of the following¹:

- i. Alaifea Lai'ititi Belford Su'a – Team Leader/ National Consultant
- ii. Ta'ala Komiti – National Consultant
- iii. Masoe Tovia Tufuga – National Consultant
- iv. Gaga'eolo Salā Manase Reupena – National Consultant
- v. Manutā Lavamaile Uesile – National Consultant
- vi. Faletui Vala'au Toma – National Consultant

Below is a table showing the scope of works each consultant is responsible for²:

Consultant	Number of Schools	Region	Districts	Number of Schools per Category
Alaifea Lai'ititi Belford Su'a – Consultant/Team Leader	24	Rest of Upolu Region (ROU)	Falealili District (9) Safata District (8) Lefaga District (4) Aleisa PS (NWUR) Aele PS (NWUR) Malifa PS (AUR)	Government (24)
Ta'ala Komiti - Consultant	30	North-West of Upolu Region (NWUR)	Sagaga District (11) Aana No.1 District (9) Aana No.2 District (10)	Government (25) Mission Schools (5)
Masoe Tovia Tufuga- Consultant	25	Savaii Region (SR)	Asau No. 1 District (5) Asau No. 2 District (4) Savaii Sisifo District (8) Palauli District (8)	Government (24) Special Schools (1)
Gaga'eolo Salā Manase Reupena - Consultant	28	Rest of Upolu Region (ROU)	Lepa/Lotofaga District (5) Aleipata District (8) Fagaloa District (4) Anoamaa No.1 (4) Anoamaa No.2 (7)	Government (27) Mission Schools (1)
Manutā Lavamaile Uesile - Consultant	29	Savaii Region (SR)	Fa'asaleleaga 1 District (8) Fa'asaleleaga 2 District (7) Itu o Tane No.1 District (6) Itu o Tane No.2 District	Government (24) Mission Schools (4) Special School (1)
Faletui Vala'au Toma - Consultant	24	Apia Urban Region (AUR)	Vaimauga District (14) Faleata District (10)	Government (18) Mission Schools (5) Special Schools (1)
TOTAL	160			142 Government 15 Mission Schools 3 Special Schools

¹ The TOC bring with them vast experiences in education which has provided a solid foundation for the implementation of the grants scheme.

² Extract from SSFGS Team of Consultants First Quarterly Report (July-September 2010)

The above table clearly shows the span and range of schools under each national consultant's scope of responsibility, which range from 24 to 30 in total.

Seventy percent (70%) of TOC's time during the First Quarter (July-September 2010) was spent on ensuring that schools fully complied with the Financial Requirements outlined in the SSFGS Operational Manual³.

TOC visited schools on a regular basis to provide professional support, guidance and advice to school principals and school committee members on the scheme. Consultations were also conducted at the District level on the scheme.

³ SSFGS Team of Consultants First Quarterly Report (July-September 2010), p.2

4. **SCHOOL FEE ALLOCATION**

The formula for the distribution of the grant to schools is stipulated in the Design Document for the scheme.

In brief, the overall amount of the grant received by a school is determined using a formula which is a combination of a base grant component for specific status plus a per capita component of the grant which is determined from time to time by the Ministry of Finance (MOF) and the Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture.

TYPES	SCHOOL ROLL	BASE GRANT
Government School	Less than 50 students	SAT\$1900
	Between 51-150 students	SAT\$1600
	Between 151-300 students	SAT\$1300
	More than 300 students	SAT1000
Mission Schools	Regardless of school roll	SAT\$2000
Special Needs School	Regardless of school roll	SAT\$3000

For the first year of the SSFGS, a total of SAT\$4,110,400 was distributed to 142 Government Primary Schools, 15 Mission Primary Schools and 3 Special Schools in July 2010.

The table below provides a breakdown of the fee allocation given to each Education Institution.

Education Institution	Number of Schools	Fee Allocation (SAT \$)
Government Schools	142	3,576,800.00
Catholic Schools	9	326,300.00
Methodist Schools	1	41,800.00
Manumalo Baptist	3	55,200.00
Seventh Day Adventist	2	55,300.00
Special Schools	3	55,000.00
TOTAL	160	4,110,400.00

One Mission School, Peace Chapel Primary and two Special Schools, Prevention of Blindness, Rehabilitation and Education of Blind Persons (PREB) and Special Needs Education Society (SNES) were not included in the SSFGS.

Peace Chapel Primary School according to the school management is a private school. The PREB and SNES at the time of disbursement of the funds had not yet signed the necessary documentations for the establishment of school accounts⁴

⁴SSFGS Team of Consultants First Quarterly Report (July-September 2010), p.5

5. MONITORING AND EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

This section of the report looks specifically at the performance of schools against the Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for the scheme.

5.1 Timeliness and Efficiency of the Scheme

- 5.1.1 80% of school principals have become reasonably competent in SSFGS processes
- 5.1.2 Majority of school committee members need more training on SSFGS processes and procedures. A slight improvement in school committee contribution to school planning and processes was recorded by TOC in the last quarter of 2011.
- 5.1.3 Membership of school committees should be reviewed based on their ability to understand conditions of the scheme. Only 30% of schools have active school committees⁵.
- 5.1.4 Majority of MESC Education Officers (School Operations Personnel and School Review Officers) need more capacity building on SSFGS procedures and processes. This is crucial for the sustainability of the scheme.
- 5.1.5 Given the shift in responsibility at the school level with principals managing the funds, school committees are yet to fully be involved in school planning and budgeting
- 5.1.6 By the end of the First Year of implementation of the scheme, 100% of schools have completed School Improvement Plans (SIP's) and Annual Management Plans (AMP's) although more support is needed for principals on ensuring effective implementation of priority areas.
- 5.1.7 60% of schools at the end of the first year of the scheme met the various Minimum Service Standards (MSS). Challenges remain for the resourcing of schools that were under-resourced prior to the scheme to ensure they meet standards stipulated in the MSS.
- 5.1.8 During the first year of the scheme, some schools (both Government and Mission) are still levying fees – building fees, registration fees, transfer fees etc. MESC to advice these schools on other funding mechanisms (fundraising activities) available to enable school committees to meet their responsibilities for ground and facilities development and maintenance not covered under the scheme.

5.2 Compliance with agreed SSFGS Processes

- 5.2.1 The following data was obtained from the SSFGS Team of Consultants Reports⁶:
 - 80% of schools showed a high degree of compliance with procedures in SSFGS operations manual (p.6)
 - 80% of schools submitted written acquittals to TOC for verification (p.7)
 - 80% of schools was assessed by TOC as having no major significant deviation from SSFGS processes (p.7)
- 5.2.2 The Second to Last Quarter (October-June 2011) of the scheme recorded 100% of schools were providing regular financial reporting on SSFGS procedures and processors (schools maintained financial records). Data was also available on the following:

⁵ SSFGS Team of Consultants Fourth Quarterly Report (April-June 2011)

⁶ SSFGS Team of Consultants First and Second Quarterly Report (July-September 2010/October-December 2010)

- 90% level of achievement recorded for audit purposes. 1 Audit was conducted from the 16 May 2011-16 September 2011 on all schools.
 - 100% level of compliance by schools on the maintenance of asset registration charts
 - 90% level of compliance by schools on the maintenance of Asset Registers
- 5.2.3 All cash books for the 160 schools under the scheme have been computerised by TOC and transactions were reconciled against Bank statements on a monthly basis. To ensure sustainability and good records/financial management, this skill needs to be transferred to School Review Officers (SRO's).
- 5.2.4 From June-December 2010, the following percentages on the use of the grant were obtained:
- 36% of the total grant went on Fixed Assets (FA)⁷
 - 34% of the grant was spent on Student Materials (SM)
 - 9% of the grant was spent on School Administration (SA)
 - 4% of the grant went on Repairs and Maintenance (R & M)
 - 4% of the grant was spent on Teaching Materials (TM)
 - 13% of the grant was spent on CT

The above figures show that schools are using over 70% of their grant for Fixed Assets, Student and Teacher Materials.

- 5.2.5 Frequent school visits by TOC and the Harmonisation Team have mitigated risks associated with non-compliance issues.

5.3 **Management of the Scheme**

- 5.3.1 Funds are disbursed to schools according to design timetable. For Year 1 funds were released in June 2010. It is crucial in subsequent years to ensure that funds are disbursed in a timely and efficient manner so schools do not experience delays in implementing their SIP's and AMP's and settling utility expenses.
- 5.3.2 TOC continue to play a very crucial role in implementing the scheme. The scope and span of schools (from 24-30) under each consultants responsibility warrants an assessment of the workload of TOC to ensure that effective implementation is not jeopardised due to the large number of schools and the support time required by each school. TOC visits to schools were scheduled according to level of compliance, type of assistance required, amount of procurement done and size of the school to mention a few.
- 5.3.3 Based on scope of schools covered by TOC, a review of transportation and communication costs need to be undertaken to reflect accurate expenses incurred. While it is still in its early stages, MESC needs to conduct an assessment on the viability of extension of TOC contracts to ensure transfer of skills to MESC personnel.
- 5.3.4 In the early stages of the scheme, issues' regarding the overlap of responsibilities with the role of SRO's were identified and addressed. It is expected that as principals and school committees become more confident in SSFGS procedures and processes, and with the SRO's, who are larger in numbers and have less schools, obtaining training on all SSFGS matters, this will be

⁷ Prior to the SSFGS, the only source of revenue for schools to obtain fixed assets such as photocopy machines and computers was from fees collected and given their high costs, schools were not able to purchase these items.

addressed. MESC to urgently consider succession planning for SRO's and MESC personnel to ensure sustainability of the scheme.

- 5.3.5 More awareness and advocacy on the scheme needs to take place. An awards system for high performing and/or 'excellent' schools should be considered and implemented.

5.4 Equity of the Scheme

- 5.4.1 Schools are using over 70% of their funds to implement their SIP's and AMP's. The rest of the funds are carried over to the next financial year to implement AMPs in the following year.
- 5.4.2 Some schools are under-resourced due in part to being poorly resourced prior to the scheme. Scheme needs to address this challenge to enable these schools to meet the minimum service standards. The funding formula should be reviewed as part of the Annual Review to be undertaken of the scheme to decide whether adjustments for equity is needed to enable the under-resourced schools to meet the MSS. Revised funding formula should address individual school needs based on an assessment of needs/gaps rather than on the present formula of school type and school size.
- 5.4.3 Schools need further support: to encourage more interaction and networking between principals, staff and school committee members; from planning to implementing; ongoing training for School Committee Members on all SSFGS matters; and assisting schools having difficulty with financial management of SSFGS (e.g. new principals).

6. KEY ACHIEVEMENTS AND BENEFITS OF THE SCHOOL FEE GRANT FEE

Since the implementation of the scheme in July 2010, numerous achievements and benefits at the school and district level have been identified.

- 6.1 One of the major achievements of the scheme has been the number of children attending school for the first time. Based on TOC records, 130 students attended school for the first time from July 2010-June 2011, all ranging from Year 1 to Year 8⁸. While this provides numerous challenges for teachers in addressing the specific learning needs of new students, the enrolment of the student at school is a positive move forward in addressing universal primary education. Of urgency is the need to conduct a research on those students who are still not attending school and who are attending school for the first time so effective intervention measures are identified and implemented.
- 6.2 Schools are able to purchase essential teaching and learning resources. Prior to the SSFGS, schools relied on the fees collected from students and managed by school committees to purchase essential teaching and learning materials. In most cases, priority was given to repairs and maintenance of the school. The shift in priority spending will have a positive impact on teaching strategies, planning and student outcomes.
- 6.3 School Based Management - Head teacher is empowered and able to make decisions on key learning related purchases. TOC continue to conduct training and one-on-one support for principals in budgeting and financial management. It is envisaged that with this training, principals are budgeting more wisely and planning use of grant with more foresight
- 6.4 Relationships between schools and communities are strengthened. While challenges remain, there is an increase participation in school decision making by School Committee members. Grievances voiced by school committee members over their loss of control over school fees became mitigated over time as they gradually came to understand the scheme.
- 6.5 Harmonisation Team formed to ensure ongoing knowledge transfer of SSFGS systems and procedures to MESC internal staff. Growing/Increased capacity building at all levels (principals, staff and school committee members) on short and long term planning, budget preparation, financial records, prioritising, making informed decisions, and improved working relationships between principal, staff and community. Training will contribute further to ensuring full compliance with SSGFS procedures and processes.
- 6.6 MESC relationship with Central Agencies particularly Ministry of Finance contributed to the effective management of the scheme.

⁸ SSFGS Team of Consultants Fourth Quarterly Report (April – June 2011)

7. KEY CHALLENGES AND POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

KEY CHALLENGES	POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS
At the School Level	
Non – Compliance of School Principals and School Committee members to SSFGS conditions and requirements	<p>Principals to be warned and taken through the Disciplinary Process to ensure recovery of funds in an efficient and effective manner</p> <p>Timeframes be developed for the recovery of funds and missing assets.</p> <p>Further training for all school principals and school committee members on SSFGS requirements</p> <p>Leadership and Management Training for all school principals with emphasis on financial management</p> <p>Ensure 'handover' procedures are clearly documented in schools for all outgoing principals. Capacity building and succession planning for all teaching staff by school principal on SSFGS procedures and processors.</p>
Fundraising at the school level to meet expenses not covered for under the scheme	<p>Strengthen parental and community involvement in all school development and projects.</p> <p>Fundraising to take place at the village level. This raises concerns around students from outside the district. Zoning can be enforced to address this.</p> <p>Annual Review to explore and focus on ways in which the school committees can meet their obligations within changed environment without resorting to collecting of fees from students/parents</p>
Schools levying of fees	<p>More community awareness programs to understand rationale and benefits of a fee free grant scheme</p> <p>Use multi-sectoral approach to ensure efficient and effective use of resources. Example: Continue to work in partnership with the Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development to inform all stakeholders on the scheme (pulenuu etc).</p>

	<p>MESC to prepare urgent recommendation/s to Cabinet on strategies to address this issue</p> <p>MESC to also look into 'type' of school to obtain grant. Some schools are identified as 'mission schools' but operate as 'private schools'.</p>
Missing Assets from the school	<p>School Principals with the assistance of TOC and SRO's to ensure continuous update of Assets Register</p> <p>Principals to understand process for recording of loss or damaged items/assets to ensure compliance with SSFGS auditing procedures and processes.</p>
Overcrowding in schools. Removing the fee barrier to school attendance in most instances lead to schools and classrooms becoming overcrowded, thus questioning the quality of education received by each student.	<p>MESC continue to work on the supply of teachers.</p> <p>The Alternative Teaching Program (ATP) under the Education Sector Program II (ESPII) can be a medium-term solution to ensuring schools meets the revised student-teacher ratio as stipulated in the MSS.</p> <p>Adequate in-service teacher training programs to continue to ensure continuous professional support for teachers in dealing with surges in enrolment, multi-grade teaching and appropriate learning strategies to address multiple learning needs in the classroom.</p>
Learning needs of students attending school for the first time	<p>Seek assistance from quality assured education providers (For Example: National University of Samoa, University of the South Pacific) to conduct professional development on specific areas of need.</p> <p>Strengthen monitoring and evaluation role of school principals and SRO's to identify and address learning needs of all students</p> <p>Research to be conducted to inform policy development for those students attending school for the first time.</p>
Variation in enrolment	<p>On the onset of the scheme, it was raised that there was a drop in enrolment. Issues were raised on the accuracy of enrolment figures submitted to the Ministry. With the implementation of the Student Education Number (SEN), student enrolment will be accurately reflected.</p> <p>Effective monitoring at the school, district and</p>

	national level to take place.
At the Ministry Level	
Timely response of MESC to issues raised on the scheme	<p>A timeline of 1 week for the Ministry to provide written responses to queries raised by TOC</p> <p>The Operations Manual clearly highlight the reporting mechanisms and this should be the same process used to ensure issues are addressed in an efficient and effective manner</p>
Capacity of SOD/MESC to manage SSFGS	<p>Harmonisation visits by TOC/SOD and CMAD to continue</p> <p>Review current HR arrangements to ensure that SRO's work closely with TOC for the transfer of skills of SSFGS procedures and processes.</p> <p>The revised Terms of Reference for SRO's will take into account the work conducted by TOC together with the new reforms.</p>
Awareness Programs/Advocacy	<p>For the first year (July 2010 –July 2011) of the scheme, 7 radio talk backs were conducted apart from other awareness programs at the district level. This is not sufficient given the magnitude and awareness that needs to occur on the scheme.</p> <p>Development and Implementation of an effective and realistic National Communication Strategy</p> <p>More awareness programs should be conducted using all forms of the media – TV, Radio, District programs etc</p>
Capped levels of funding for utilities not adequate for all schools	Review of Expenditures Category should be conducted based on current usage by schools. For example, for the water category, it is recommended that a percentage allocation would be more equitable as it will take into account the size of the school.
Expenditure Category to be reviewed	Review of Expenditure Category to be undertaken to ensure that other measures which contribute to student learning such as professional development for staff are included in the expenditure category.
Operational costs for TOC workloads	Operational costs for TOC are currently supplied for from SOD and ESPII. Review to be undertaken on the most efficient approach to be adopted to

	ensure no delays to the work conducted by TOC.
Workload of National Consultants	Annual Review to focus on scope of allocations and areas of coverage per consultant to ensure a more manageable workload.
Duplication of roles and responsibilities	MESC to ensure that the roles of SOD/SRO's are not duplicated by TOC. Strengthening of monitoring and evaluation at the school, district and national level.
At the National Level	
Public perception of the scheme (education is free)	More awareness programs using all forms of the media should be targeted
Timing of disbursement of funds into school accounts	MESC to ensure timely receipt by MOF of fee allocation for each year
Funding Sustainability of the Scheme	Concept paper by MESC on the sustainability of the scheme

8. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 The School Fee Grant Scheme is still in its early stages of implementation. Based on various reports and discussions conducted, systems and processes of the scheme are generally functioning well and this is attributed to the commendable work conducted by the national consultants in ensuring that principals and school committees fully understand and comply with procedures and processes of the scheme. TOC will continue to support schools to consolidate SSFGS processes and to support the SRO's/School Operations Division in developing readiness to take over the programme.
- 8.2 Currently, the impact of the scheme in measuring student learning outcomes cannot be measured at this early stage but generally 60% of schools show some improvement in meeting the minimum service standards. MESC Management to consider possibility of overseas capacity building opportunities for SRO's/SOD/CMAD and TOC on monitoring and evaluation skills.
- 8.3 It has been identified that the School Grant Formula needs to be reviewed in light of challenges experienced by under-resourced schools. The current grant formula will remain as is until further collection of data supports a change and MSS is implemented in schools.
- 8.4 The role, duties and responsibilities of school principals will need to be reviewed in light of the scheme and new reforms. Principals need to be relieved of their teaching responsibilities with a greater focus given to their leadership and management role in the school. Effective planning and forward projections by the Ministry on staffing needs need to continue with stronger emphasis on selecting suitable candidates for teaching. The National Teacher Development Framework (NTDF) should address this. Leadership and Management Training should become a prerequisite for all management positions in schools.
- 8.5 Principals as part of the proposed Leadership and Management Training will be trained on the importance and value of accurate record keeping and the documenting of evidence to measure SSFGS impacts.
- 8.6 Apart from the Leadership and Management Training required for school principals, other training needs were identified as crucial to the use of resources being purchased under the scheme. Training identified includes but are not limited to⁹:
- Effective use of laminating machines
 - Effective use of digital cameras/cameras
 - Effective use of computers/laptops
 - Effective use of SRA's
 - Use of the projector
 - Use of the piano and keyboards
- 8.7 Good PR and observance of best cultural practices to resolve conflicts by all parties concerned is vital for the successful implementation of the scheme.
- 8.8 The MSS is currently being trialled and used by all Government schools. Discussions need to take place with Directors of Mission and Special schools currently under the grant on the extension and implementation of the MSS to their respective schools.
- 8.9 MESC to be fully aware of its role and align processes with other development programs and projects in the Ministry.

⁹ SSFGS Team of Consultants Fourth Quarterly Report (April-June 2011)

- 8.10 Strong emphasis to be placed on the importance of Harmonisation visits. First Harmonisation visit provided the following recommendations, thus outlining the importance of such visits. Recommendations include¹⁰:
- Emphasis to be placed on procurement of more ‘concrete materials’ such as a variety of toys, flash cards and plasticines from the grant.
 - More professional development on teaching methodologies focusing on student-oriented approaches to teaching and learning
 - Principals to reinstate and apply Running Record Program and/or Progress Reading Program to enable progress of literacy levels and abilities to be identified and addressed
 - Encourage schools to allow reading books to be taken home
 - MESC to provide additional support to schools with multi-grade classes
 - Field-trips to be encouraged as another avenue for student learning
 - Schools encouraged to start compiling ‘student profiles’ starting at Year 1
 - All damaged resources/fixed assets to be written off and removed from schools
 - MESC to review partnership agreement with school committees
- 8.11 The efforts and contribution of all key players, MESC Strategic Advisor, Development Partners namely Australia and New Zealand, Directors of Mission and Special Schools, TOC, principals, and school committee members are to be commended for the effective implementation of the scheme in its first year. A lot of work remains to be done, but the Ministry is confident that challenges will be addressed through more analysis and review, of which the results/findings will be used to inform policy development and implementation.

¹⁰ SSFGS Team of Consultants Fourth Quarterly Report (April – June 2011)