

Evaluation Report – Final Draft

Independent Review of the Solomon Islands Skills for Economic Growth (S4EG) Program

January 2019

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## Acronyms

<b>AAS</b>	Australia Awards Scholarships
<b>AAPS</b>	Australia Awards Pacific Scholarships
<b>APTC</b>	Australia Pacific Technical College
<b>CBT</b>	Competency Based training
<b>DFAT</b>	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
<b>ITAC</b>	International Trainer and Assessment Course
<b>MCIL</b>	Ministry of Commerce, Industries Labour and Immigration
<b>MEHRD</b>	Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development
<b>MFAT</b>	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
<b>MCI</b>	Morrissey Consulting International
<b>MTR</b>	Mid Term Review
<b>NSP</b>	National Skills Packages
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Government Organisation
<b>NTTT</b>	National Training and Trade Testing
<b>NZ</b>	New Zealand
<b>PESDA</b>	Australia Partnership for Development Agreement and Australia's Pacific Education and Skills
<b>PLS</b>	Pacific Labour Scheme
<b>RTC</b>	Rural Training Centre
<b>S4EG</b>	Skills for Economic Growth
<b>SI</b>	Solomon Islands
<b>SIBEPA</b>	Solomon Islands Built Environment Professional Association
<b>SICHI</b>	Solomon Islands College of Higher Education
<b>SIG</b>	Solomon Islands Government
<b>SINU</b>	Solomon Islands National University
<b>SME</b>	Small and Medium Enterprises
<b>STMS</b>	School of Technology and Maritime Studies
<b>SITESA</b>	Solomon Islands Tertiary Education and Skills Authority
<b>SWP</b>	Seasonal Worker Program
<b>START</b>	Strengthening Technical and Agricultural Rural Training
<b>TVET</b>	Technical Vocational Education and Training
<b>UPNG</b>	University of Papua New Guinea
<b>VfM</b>	Value for Money
<b>WASH</b>	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

## Executive Summary

The Independent Review (IR) of the Skills for Economic Growth (S4EG) program in Solomon Islands is an independent assessment of the program's progress towards defined objectives and outcomes. The evaluation also seeks to provide relevant guidance and recommendations based upon available evidence to inform future strategic implementation and management.

A key impediment to economic growth in the Solomon Islands is weak human resource capacity and a persistent shortage of skilled labour. The S4EG program aims to address this by increasing the quality and relevance of technical and vocational training in the Solomon Islands. Underlying the S4EG is the notion of changing training delivery from a supply based model to one driven by demonstrated labour market demand.

The lack of a structured Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) system and lack of legislation related to a Post-School Education and Training (PSET) system pose a risk to future development and quality assurance of the post-secondary education and training system.

The strategic objective of the program is: *"To strengthen the capacity of the nation's post-school education and training system to produce quality graduates who are in demand in the labour market and who have the skills and knowledge needed to increase national productivity and competitiveness."*

### **Approach and Methodology**

The main purpose of the evaluation was to determine whether the program is on track to achieve its end of program outcomes (Summative). The evaluation also sought to inform future Australian support to the TVET sector in the Solomon Islands following proposed program completion date of December 2019 (Formative). The recommendations from the evaluation are provided to improve program performance in the final year of implementation.

The IR's methodology or "investigatory framework" (i.e. the methods that will answer the research questions) was qualitative in nature and promoted an approach to analysis that relied on analytical rather than statistical inference. The analysis also drew on triangulation methods to maximise the reliability of research findings. The IR also applied a system of coded findings, identifying the frequency and consequent extent/intensity of findings. The IR maintained a strong focus on the utilisation of evaluation findings through identification of key decisions and key associated decision-makers and focusing the evaluation around these.

The evaluation focused on a series of key evaluation questions and sub-questions. The key primary questions addressed by the evaluation included:

- *To what extent has the program improved the capacity of technical training institutes to deliver quality training courses?*
- *Has the support for skills training through the program resulted in the training courses offered at national and provincial level better matching industry needs?*
- *To what extent has the program increased the capacity of the Solomon Islands Government to administer the skills training system in Solomon Islands?*
- *What social and economic impact has the program had on program beneficiaries including students, trainers, school leaders and employers?*
- *How has the structure of the program and the way it's been implemented played a role in the achievement or otherwise of program outcomes?*
- *What lessons can be learned to inform the next stage of Australia's support to the TVET sector?*  
(Formative Questions)

### **Key Findings**

The following section provides a brief summary of key findings by thematic areas. The main report addresses findings against key evaluation questions however for the executive summary it is simpler to highlight key thematic findings.

### ***Capacity Building and Training***

The ***S4EG program team has taken a comprehensive approach to capacity building for training institutes*** including provision of support for quality management and systems, provider registration, quality improvement plans, and quality audits. S4EG has supported SIG to develop five new National Skills Packages (NSP), including Cert III and IV level courses that fit together in automotive engineering, business services industry, plumbing services industry, construction and industry and electrical technology industry. In addition, three stand-alone Cert III courses were developed including Vocational Pathways for Young Women and Girls (replacing the Life Skills course), agribusiness and tourism and hospitality. As of July 2018, a total of 251 students were enrolled at Solomon Islands National University (SINU) in these courses.

To equip them to teach the new curriculum, ***the program team have provided extensive capacity building for trainers*** who had not been trained for many years previously. Training support includes: the SINU Trainer Development Program 2017; the ITAC International Trainer and Assessment Course (8 weeks); TAFE QLD and the Futura Learning Resource Program; as well as on-going mentoring and support from advisers. Trainers have reported that they appreciated working with the new curriculum and had learned a great deal and thought that it improved their teaching. However, they indicated also that they struggled with managing time, particularly around lesson planning as there was a lot of extra work involved in the new approach. At the School of Technology and Maritime Studies (STMS), contextual factors including ageing trainers; a lack of succession planning; governance issues; and trainers taking on management duties, heavy workloads and low salaries as well as lack of career management affected the ability of trainers to effectively teach and manage the new curriculum.

The S4EG approach at Rural Training Centres (RTCs) involves ***supporting the introduction of Cert IIIs in the NSPs in automotive mechanics and construction as well as non-NSP courses including agribusiness, and tourism and hospitality***. At the six RTCs partnering with S4EG, certificate courses at RTCs (e.g. Cert III) qualified to enter Certificate IV level courses at SINU (e.g. Cert IV). Until now RTC certificates have not been recognised at SINU. A total of 200 students participating in the accredited courses supported by S4EG will in 2019 also receive scholarships of approximately SBD 40,000 from the SIG which are provided to the institution to fund the students study. Table 4 shows TVET Scholarships for RTCs in 2019.

### ***Curriculum Development***

***Students were responding well to the new curriculum which encouraged them to think for themselves and actively learn and demonstrate their skills***. However, a proportion are struggling to cope with the amount of content. The curriculum was developed specifically to respond to industry needs through a consultation process in line with the program design. However, there is still the possibility that the curriculum could be improved through language and concepts that are more easily digestible in the local context without compromising standards. The new curriculum could have been peer reviewed by other operators in the space such as Don Bosco, Australia Pacific Technical College (now Australia Pacific Training Coalition) (APTC), Caritas and Wintec.

***It is still early to assess the likelihood of achievement as not all RTCs had commenced teaching the new courses***. Some RTC respondents (principals and trainers) stated that they liked the curriculum because it included more specificity on the competency that students needed to learn and train in. However, others stated that they were struggling to understand the new curriculum as it did not include teachers' guides/specific instructions on how to apply the curriculum and they did not have the necessary infrastructure to meet the standards in the curriculum.

Some RTC trainers stated that ***some students do not have the necessary literacy and numeracy skills to learn the curriculum and meet the competency standards.*** At SINU, the S4EG program team are introducing a 10-week literacy and numeracy introduction to all NSP qualifications commencing in February 2019. There is also an employability component in all the NSP packages. It will be important to assess whether these courses will be sufficient to address literacy and numeracy challenges among students. Also, there is a question around whether the focus of the design on the formal sector is appropriate for supporting RTCs and whether the accredited courses are suitable for students who will return home to their rural communities.

While there may be still issues with the curriculum, the inclusion of RTCs in the S4EG program has other benefits for the RTCs. In addition to linking the scholarships to labour market needs, the directing of 200 TVET scholarships to the RTCs, for the courses being provided with support from S4EG, for the first time is raising the profile and attractiveness of the RTCs.<sup>12</sup> The provision of new equipment to the RTCs is having a similar effect.

### ***RTC Equipment and Facilities***

The ***provision of equipment and facilities to STMS at SINU provides a significant boost to the quality of the courses that SINU is able to offer and their applicability to industry.*** The financial sustainability of the school in terms of maintaining the equipment is a concern. In the future SINU will need to make a commitment to invest in resources and capacity development to support the school. At the current time there are not strong signs that this is likely to happen. This points to an important part of the establishment of SITESA which is to advocate for funding for the TVET sector. The provision of equipment should markedly improve the quality of the courses that the RTCs are able to offer and the appeal of the institutions. Notwithstanding that the program team provided support for preparation of maintenance schedules, managers flagged potential issues with recurrent budgets and overall maintenance of new equipment at SINU and RTCs. As with SINU, the sustainability of the equipment beyond the life of the program is a risk for sustainable program outcomes at the RTCs.

### ***RTC Governance Arrangements***

In regard to the changes that have been made to the governance of training institutes as a result of the program, ***S4EG has provided support for governance at SINU through the introduction of quality management systems, provider registration and quality improvement plans.*** Although it is early days the introduction of these systems should markedly improve management at STMS at SINU. S4EG has tried to collaborate with university senior management in capacity building for university governance but they have not been open to such a partnership. There is a lack of career and performance management for trainers and limited budget for STMS investment and recurrent costs as described above. Hopefully the programs relationship with SINU senior management can improve as lack of support for STMS from them could be a risk to program outcomes.

***RTCs have variable governance and leadership, depending on the capacity of their leaders.*** There is generally little formal structure around their governance systems. S4EG is involved in supporting improved governance at RTCs as part of the SITESA accreditation process. As this process is still ongoing it is not yet clear if the results have been established. However, given the basic operational standard of the RTCs it may be challenging for them to meet the standards.

In regard to the question of whether support for skills training on the program resulted in the training courses offered at national and provincial level better matching industry needs, the review team found that ***S4EG has taken major steps in bringing courses offered at SINU closer to industry needs.*** There have not yet been any graduates from the new CBT courses so there hasn't been an opportunity for industry perceptions of SINU and RTC graduates to change. Improving the suitability of graduates for

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<sup>1</sup> In the Solomon Islands one major cause of inadequacy of education services is that over 65% of the education budget annually is directed to scholarships which benefit 1% of the population.

<sup>2</sup> S4EGs advocacy at the policy level can be seen to have been instrumental in directing the scholarships to TVET

employment in industry will be an ongoing process: trainers will need to spend time in and with industry to ensure that the course content remains current. Bringing labour arrangements into alignment with educational arrangements are challenging in many countries. S4EG has made an excellent start in bringing SINU and industry closer together but there is still much more to do and work in this area needs to be ongoing and consistent.

### **Local Institutional Support**

Concerning to what extent the program has ***increased the capacity of the Solomon Islands Government (SIG) to administer the skills training system in the Solomon Islands, S4EG has made some considerable achievements to date.*** Some examples include increasing the capacity of the SIG to administer the skills system such as the passing of the SITESA Act; ***strong engagement with MEHRD on the establishment of SITESA*** by MERHD and other stakeholders; and the increased prioritisation of TVET among the SIG evidenced by the direction of 200 scholarships towards TVET for the first time. Nevertheless, the new system is still in infancy and will need intensive support and on-going advocacy for TVET to be a policy priority so it can produce employable graduates. Lessons learned show that there is the possibility that accreditation institutes in the Pacific remain donor driven initiatives that never gain 100% local buy-in. DFAT will need to monitor the progression of SITESA closely and be prepared to change strategy if the evidence suggests this is necessary. Under such circumstances a regional approach to TVET accreditation would be an alternative strategy.

### **Socio-Economic Impacts**

In regard to the social and economic impacts derived from the program, results are tentative. Students have not yet graduated so it is not clear if the new courses have led to increased employability of graduates. The S4EG program M&E system should prepare steps to commence a form of tracer study to collect relevant and appropriate data to assess long-term socio-economic impacts. The program has already taken extensive steps to promote gender equality and increase services for people with disabilities through the Gender Equity and Social Inclusion (GESI) strategy which has improved living quarters for female students at RTCs and teachers at the Bethdesda Disability School, more course content for women and advocating for the RTC scholarships to be directed at least 50% to women.

### **S4EG Program Structure**

In regard to how the structure of the program and the way it's been implemented has played a role in the achievement or otherwise of program outcomes: the results framework and program structure has facilitated a clear work program. The program team has focused on this methodically and efficiently to produce a substantial number of outputs that fit together coherently as well as strong support from some counterparts. It is notable that almost all the advisers have been Australians with backgrounds in the TAFE sector which may have resulted in an increased tendency to view content lifted from the Australian context as suitable. Also, unlike some other Pacific TVET programs, the design of the program doesn't allow for the provision of resources for local entities to make decisions and innovate. This may affect ownership and sustainability of program outcomes. In thinking about the design of the program it is worthwhile considering the advantages and disadvantages of different entry points. The number of beneficiaries is limited (251 students at SINU and 200 in 2019 at RTCs) given the large number of short and long term advisers and this affects value for money. It may be challenging to scale out the program without external assistance due to the high cost of the equipment incurred with the CBT approach to training.

During the evaluation, several lessons learned pertaining to the project were identified as follows:

- There is a need to ensure that literacy, numeracy and general foundations skills are addressed among students.
- Improving the receptiveness of industry to graduates from national TVET institutions will take considerable time and having catalysed change around this issue DFAT should be prepared for long term engagement.

- The issue of recurrent funding for equipment should be addressed at project outset.
- At poor and remote institutions such as RTCs basic needs must be met before higher level needs can be addressed.
- Implementing agencies require strong leadership from donors to manage coordination.

### ***Key Recommendations***

Key recommendations for the program are that DFAT extend the current phase for 12-months to allow time to assess the best model moving forward. This would allow for one more year of implementation to consolidate outcomes and obtain more clarity on APTC's work program and the corresponding SI budget before commencing on a design and tendering process in early 2020.

DFAT should also consolidate support for SITESA but retain careful oversight of risks relating to institutionalisation of the authority. If SITESA fails to be gazetted or lack of institutionalisation transpires for other reasons SIG should consider shifting the focus to regional accreditation for TVET courses.

DFAT should also consider supporting SIG to consolidate the training packages and institutional support at SINU and RTCs but retain oversight of the risks relating to Governance at the institutions. In addition, DFAT should also support SIG to consolidate and continue to support links between SINU/RTCs and industry and conduct further analysis of opportunities for industry to fund training. DFAT also needs to consider supporting SIG to draw on the extensive needs analysis of skills demand in local provincial economies that has been conducted by WB, ADB and S4EG to develop courses aimed at meeting labour demand in local provincial economies. The SIG needs to consider how scaling up can occur keeping in mind that TVET courses are expensive and local institutions may not be able to afford scaling up on their own. SIG also needs to take a leadership role in coordination of development assistance in the TVET Sector. DFAT should consider providing secretariat assistance to support this coordination.



## 1. Introduction

The Independent Review (IR) of the S4EG in Solomon Islands is an independent assessment of the program's progress towards defined objectives and outcomes. The evaluation also seeks to provide relevant guidance and recommendations based upon available evidence to inform future strategic implementation and management.

Key findings are detailed in the following section and a specific reference is provided, based on the findings to inform a proposed third phase of implementation. This guidance is then supported by a series of key conclusions and recommendations

## 2. Project Background and Context

The Solomon Islands labour market is characterised by a shortage of adequately skilled workers. Unemployment is high, particularly in rural areas; at the same time, firms struggle to fill skilled positions due to a lack of suitably qualified candidates. A 2014 labour market analysis confirmed that the current pool of skilled workers is not meeting industry demand, and that more local jobs would be created if the quality of labour supply improves. The S4EG program aims to address this by increasing the quality and relevance of technical and vocational training in the Solomon Islands. Underlying the Skills for Economic Growth Program (the Program) is the notion of changing training delivery from a supply based model to one driven by demonstrated labour market demand.

The S4EG is DFAT's major skills development program for the Solomon Islands. It has strategic links to other DFAT funded skills programs across the Pacific, including in Fiji, Kiribati, Vanuatu, PNG, Samoa and Tonga and the APTC.

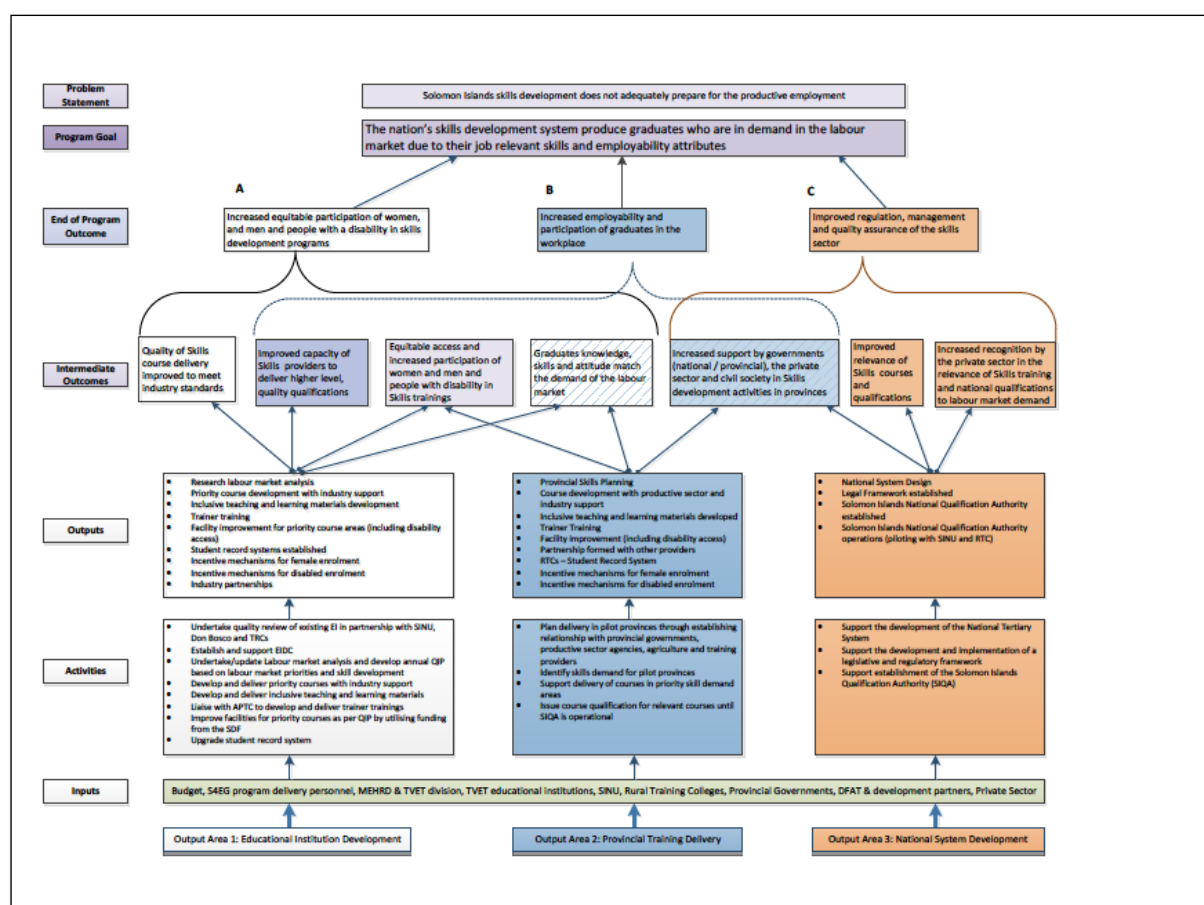
The strategic objective of the program is: *"To strengthen the capacity of the nation's post-school education and training system to produce quality graduates who are in demand in the labour market and who have the skills and knowledge needed to increase national productivity and competitiveness."*

Originally the program was structured around three Key Result Areas:

- Solomon Islands National University STMS specifically targeting quality improvements in trades and technology skills training in priority skill demand areas.
- Provincial Training Delivery (pilots) based in Malaita and Western provinces with a focus on quality improvements in delivery of high priority courses aligned to provincial economic development priorities.
- National Systems Development supporting SIG including post school education and training systems design, enabling legislation and national qualifications authority.

However, under Contract Amendment #3 a revised schedule of services (Clause 5 of Schedule 1) collapsed the three previous Output Areas into two new areas: (i) Output Area 1: Tertiary Education and Skills Training Provider Development, and (ii) Output Area 2: National Systems Development. The program logic can be seen at Figure 1.

Figure 1: S4EG Program Logic



## Policy alignment

The S4EG program is consistent with, and complementary to, the strategic intentions of the SIG. Within its Medium-Term Development Plan 2014–2018<sup>3</sup> the SIG responds to a range of national development strategy objectives including a number that are specifically relevant to the S4EG Program, including:

- Objective 1** to alleviate poverty and provide greater benefits and opportunities to improve the lives of Solomon Islanders in a peaceful and stable society
- Objective 2** to provide support to the vulnerable
- Objective 4** to ensure that all Solomon Islanders have access to quality education and for the Country to adequately and sustainably meet its manpower needs
- Objective 5** to increase the rate of economic growth and equitably distribute the benefits of employment and higher incomes amongst all the Provinces and people of the Solomon Islands

The SIG Budget Strategy and Outlook Paper (2014) in its summary of budget consultations cites TVET as a *vital sub-sector in education that needs support and improvement*. Most provinces lack TVET and it is important that TVET is established in all provinces<sup>4</sup>. Of further relevance is a commitment to project investments to *develop the rural economic base*<sup>5</sup> in agriculture, forestry, tourism, commerce

<sup>3</sup> Medium Term Development Plan 2014 – 2018 (Solomon Islands Government, 2013)

<sup>4</sup> Solomon Islands Budget 2014 Budget Strategy and Outlook Paper, p28

<sup>5</sup> ibid p33

and industries, fisheries, lands, mines and energy, and finance and banking.

The National Human Resource Development and Training Plan 2012–2014 (NHRDP)<sup>6</sup> aims to:

- Define the skills that are in demand domestically and internationally
- Establish mechanisms that assist the education and training system to meet current and future demands
- Improve social equity in participation and outcomes
- Support the development of a workforce with the skills to take advantage of international labour opportunities

The S4EG is nested within the strategic objectives and results frameworks of the Education Sector Program 2 of the Solomon Islands-Australia Partnership for Development Agreement and Australia's Pacific Education and Skills Development Agenda (PESDA). In response to SIG priorities, the Australian Government's Solomon Islands Education Delivery Strategy<sup>7</sup> includes objectives which focus on:

- ensuring young Solomon Islanders are prepared for Tertiary and TVET study particularly for trades skills
- quality assurance mechanisms to support tertiary and TVET institutions to deliver an increasing number of international standard qualifications in in-demand sectors
- improved access for disadvantaged young people, especially those with a disability and gender equality

The program is consistent with and complementary to a range of Australian and New Zealand Government regional initiatives supporting improved graduate outcomes for Solomon Islanders in the post-school education and training sector such as:

- *Skilling Youth in the Pacific* – a 10-year regional program using a competitive funding approach to foster quality improvements in the delivery of internationally recognised qualifications by Pacific providers predominantly at diploma and degree level.
- *Australia Pacific Training Coalition (APTC)* – over the past seven years has provided Solomon Islanders with opportunity to complete Australian Certificate III, IV and Diploma courses across two schools (trades and technology and hospitality and community services).
- *Australia Awards* - includes Australia Awards Scholarships (AAS) and Australia Awards Pacific Scholarships (AAPS). In the Solomon Islands Australia provides approximately 40 scholarships at a cost of AUD 4million per year.
- *University of the South Pacific* – which has been provided with more than AUD 49 million over four years from 2013-2017 for core funding and projects.
- The New Zealand Government funds the Strengthening Technical and Agricultural Rural Training (START) program, which is implemented by Caritas and Wintec.<sup>8</sup>

### ***Economic environment***

The SIG remains committed to structural reform that should generate skills demand and employment opportunities and generally support economic development. This includes areas such as business regulation and financial systems, infrastructure and state-owned enterprises.

The expansion of financial services, particularly in rural areas, for individuals and Small to Medium Enterprises (SMEs) is intended to expand access to credit, promote savings and foster improvements in living standards. With priority given to the implementation of the National Transport Plan, improvements in roads, wharves and airports will offer employment opportunities and associated skill demand, as well as improve access to market and concomitant incentives to investment in tourism,

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<sup>6</sup> National Human Resource Development and Training Plan 2012 2014 (Ministry of Development Planning and Aid Coordination, 2011)

<sup>7</sup> Solomon Islands Strategy Annex to PESDA (Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2013)

<sup>8</sup> Several other donors are active in the TVET space in the Solomon Islands. Taiwan and Japan are very active although little information was available to the Evaluation Team about their activities.

agriculture, fisheries and post-harvest processing.

The SIG is also investing in state-owned enterprises to expand access to electricity, water, transportation and communications in provincial areas.

### **Labour Market**

Solomon Islands Census (2009)<sup>9</sup> reports a total population of almost 516,000 with an annual growth rate of 2.3%. At the time of the census, only twenty per cent of the population resided in urban areas but the level of urbanisation was increasing at twice the rate of population growth indicating a significant 'drift' to urban areas possibly in search of employment.

The combination of population growth, urban drift and substantial youth bulge continues to put significant pressure on the labour market in the formal economy. However, the formal economy consisting of wage employees and employers is relatively small, employing only one-in-five of the employed population aged 15 years and above. Moreover, with population increases it is likely that an additional 22,000 jobs will be required by 2020 (from 2009) just to maintain the same non-farm employment-to-population ratio as in 2009<sup>10</sup>.

**Table 1: Labour Market Employment Breakdown**

Formal Economy	Informal Economy	Subsistence Economy	Total
43,505	77,763	86,850	208,118
20.9%	37.4%	41.7%	100%

Of those working in the formal economy, 62% are employees in the private sector, 4% are employers and the remaining 35% are in the public sector. From more recent National Provident Fund data, the two largest sectors in terms of numbers of contributors in the formal economy are education services (predominantly teachers) and public administration – 20% and 16% respectively. Other significant sectors include logging (14%), retail trade (8%), other social services (4%), agriculture services (4%), food manufacturing (4%), wholesale trade (3%), religion (3%), mining (3%), domestic personal services (3%), hotels (2%), and health services (2%)<sup>11</sup>.

A survey by the Solomon Islands Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SICCI)<sup>12</sup> showed that the principal areas of skill shortages in the formal economy were at the managerial, professional, associate professional and technician levels. The Solomon Islands Built Environment Professional Association (SIBEPA) also reported skill shortages at trade levels<sup>13</sup>.

Skill gaps in the existing workforce are significant. This provides an opportunity within the emerging TVET sector in the Solomon Islands for providers to begin to deliver accredited short-courses, up-skilling the existing workforce and enabling workers to build a full qualification over time.

With regard to international labour markets, it appears that few Solomon Islanders, other than those on seasonal worker programs, have availed themselves of international employment opportunities. Recent Australian census data points to less than 1,000 Solomon Islanders resident and employed across a broad range of occupations in Australia. In New Zealand, the number of skilled Solomon Island migrants between 2008 and 2012 was just 70.<sup>14</sup>

### **Current Developments in Post-secondary education and training**

Currently formal tertiary education provision includes:

- Higher education (Solomon Islands National University [SINU], Open College of University of Papua New Guinea [UPNG], University of the South Pacific [USP])

<sup>9</sup> Solomon Islands 2009 Population and Housing Census (Solomon Islands National Statistics Office, 2011)

<sup>10</sup> Ibid p11

<sup>11</sup> Curtin, P13

<sup>12</sup> Ibid p38

<sup>13</sup> Ibid p37

<sup>14</sup> Ibid pp66-71

- Vocational education (Pacific TAFE, SINU, Open College of UPNG, vocational and rural training centres [N=40 registered], APTC, private providers [N=4]).

Overall enrolments in 2012 were as follows<sup>15</sup>:

**Table 2: Overall Enrolments (2012)**

Tertiary Provider	Total	Male	Female
SINU	2,228	1,257	971
Rural Training Centres	1,903	1,243	660
Don Bosco	289	228	61
USP	3,346	2,093	1,253
APTC	176	81	95
<b>Totals</b>	<b>7,942</b>	<b>4,902</b>	<b>3,040</b>

Excluding USP and the SINU Schools of Education and Humanities, and Nursing and Allied Health, the overall enrolment in TVET in 2012 amounted to 3,430 with 30% of those enrolled at SINU<sup>16</sup>. SINU, USP and UPNG as universities are responsible for their own accreditation and quality assurance of programs. External to the universities there is no agreed competency standards, curriculum or TVET qualifications (national or provider based). SIG takes minimal responsibility for the quality of TVET provision; involvement is mainly through funding of TVET provision via grants and teacher wages.

The Solomon Islands has in place an apprenticeship scheme. The Ministry of Commerce, Industry, Labour and Immigration (MCILI) is responsible for the implementation of the requirements related to apprentices.<sup>17</sup> Since the start of the tensions the apprenticeship scheme has faced difficulties with closure of businesses and there is a disjunct between what industry needs and the provision of trade programs<sup>18</sup>.

The National Training and Trade Testing (NTTT) unit is part of the MCILI. The NTTT unit's role includes training support for those in the workforce (related to trade areas), undertaking proficiency assessments of apprentices as well as undertaking assessments of exiting students from vocational and rural training centres and of those employed in the workforce (related to trade areas).<sup>19</sup>

There are very little links between the MEHRD and MCILI in relation to TVET provision which is especially concerning given that the SIG is aiming to establish a strong TVET sector as part of its workforce development. The interrelationship between MEHRD and MCILI is not clear or established.

The lack of design of a structured TVET system and the fact that legislation related to a Post-School Education and Training (PSET) system has not yet been implemented poses a risk to future development and quality assurance of the post-secondary education and training system.

### 3. Evaluation Design

#### 3.1 Evaluation Design Overview

The evaluation contained both summative and formative elements. The summative component assessed achievements and shortfalls to date in both implementation and progress. The formative

<sup>15</sup> Peddle, B. Review and Analysis of Participation in the Solomon Islands Tertiary Sector (2013)

<sup>16</sup> Bateman, Cassity & Fangalusuu, Financing TVET in the Pacific – Solomon Islands Country Report, *unpublished draft*, Australian Council for Education Research (2014)

<sup>17</sup> Ibid

<sup>18</sup> Ibid

<sup>19</sup> Bateman, Cassity & Fangalusuu 2014 draft.

component, based on the assessment of results to date, provided guidance and direction on possible considerations to guide the program into the future, including broader strategic considerations.

Regarding the methodology or “investigatory framework” (i.e. the methods which will answer the research questions) the design implemented a qualitative approach to analysis and used analytical rather than statistical inference, which drew on triangulation methods to maximise the reliability of research findings.

For data analysis, the evaluation applied a system of coded findings, identifying the frequency and consequent extent/intensity of a finding across different research methods. However, the frequency of findings was not to be represented statistically. The evaluation maintained a strong focus on the utilisation of evaluation findings. This was achieved through identification of key decisions and key associated decision-makers and focusing the evaluation around these.

### 3.2. Scope of the Evaluation

The main purpose of the evaluation was to determine whether the program is on track to achieve its end of program outcomes (Summative). The evaluation also sought to inform future Australian support to the TVET sector in the Solomon Islands following proposed program completion date of December 2019 (Formative). The recommendations from the evaluation are provided to improve program performance in the final year of implementation.

### 3.3. Evaluation Questions

The evaluation focused on a series of key evaluation questions and sub-questions as outlined in the Terms of Reference (ToR). In reviewing the questions, the evaluation team held discussions on the best approach to consolidate questions without running the risk of overlooking or removing key aspects that need to be considered. The following table grouped questions into primary and secondary levels with secondary questions feeding into and helping to answer the primary questions. An effort has been made to place questions into relevant sections to ensure these are targeted and focused to specific stakeholder groups. It also assisted with data collection and shaped the structure of the report by providing a clear structure and focus.

The primary questions form key headings into which secondary questions are utilised to support the findings and overall analysis.

Primary Question	Secondary Questions
To what extent has the program improved the capacity of technical training institutes to deliver quality training courses?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What factors (e.g. design, implementation and contextual factors) have affected whether or not improved quality of training courses has been achieved?</li> <li>• To what extent have trainers at SINU adopted competency based approaches to training and has this led to improved quality of training courses?</li> <li>• To what extent have trainers at the RTCs the program supports adopted competency based approaches to training and has this led to improved quality of training courses?</li> <li>• Have the new facilities contributed to an increase in the quality of courses? Are the facilities being used appropriately?</li> <li>• What changes have been made to the governance of training institutes as a result of the program, including in relation to their policies on women and people with disabilities?</li> <li>• What contextual factors have affected whether or not improved quality of training courses has been achieved?</li> </ul>
Has the support for skills training on the program resulted in the training courses offered at national and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To what extent has industry been actively engaged in providing labour market information/data and content for developing courses?</li> </ul>

provincial level better matching industry needs?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are employers in the Solomon Islands satisfied with the changes that have been made to technical training, including the alignment of courses with labour market needs?</li> <li>• Does the private sector feel that the Skills program is delivering it tangible benefits?</li> <li>• Have improvements in skills training delivery improved employment prospects for graduates?</li> <li>• What factors (e.g. design, implementation and contextual factors) have affected the extent to which the support for skills training is matching industry needs?</li> </ul>
To what extent has the program increased the capacity of the Solomon Islands Government to administer the skills training system in the Solomon Islands?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To what extent has the Solomon Islands Government demonstrated increased commitment to vocational education and training systems, including planning, budgeting and resourcing?</li> <li>• To what extent has the program influenced national skills development through its advice and support to the Solomon Islands Government?</li> <li>• To what extent does the program align with and respond to Solomon Islands Government priorities as identified in the MEHRD National Education Action Plan?</li> <li>• Has the program led to increased engagement between the Ministry of Education, industry and training providers?</li> <li>• What factors (e.g. design, implementation and contextual factors) have affected the extent to which the Solomon Islands' Government capacity to administer the skills training system has increased?</li> </ul>
What social and economic impact has the program had on program beneficiaries including students, trainers, school leaders and employers?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At this stage of the program what beneficiary impacts can be identified and how might these develop in the future? Are there any unexpected or negative impacts that can be identified?</li> <li>• Because of S4EG program activities, do partners increasingly treat gender equality and inclusion of people with a disability as a priority through their own policies and processes? Has this led to increased participation and equitable access in the program for women and people with disabilities?</li> </ul>
How has the structure of the program and the way it's been implemented played a role in the achievement or otherwise of program outcomes?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How has the program design, implementation arrangements, M&amp;E framework and structure of the budget affected achievement of program outcomes?</li> </ul>
What lessons can be learned to inform the next stage of Australia's support to the TVET sector? (Formative Questions)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As an initial phase of a proposed 10-year investment, how has the program positioned the GoA to play an ongoing role in the sector?</li> <li>• Is there a need for another phase of the bilateral program?</li> <li>• If there was another phase, what modifications could be made to the program design and implementation arrangements to improve the likelihood of successfully achieving outcomes?</li> <li>• If there is another phase of the program, how can the GoA ensure that it complements the work of other programs, in particular the regional Australia-Pacific Technical College (APTC) program, USP and Pacific TAFE, the New Zealand funded START program implemented by Caritas and Wintec, the Seasonal Workers program and the Pacific Labour Mobility Scheme?</li> <li>• Does the current design and modality offer value for money?</li> <li>• Is the current modality (a managing contractor) the best model for Australia's intervention in the TVET sector? Why or why not?</li> </ul>



## 4. Evaluation Approach and Methodology

The **investigatory framework** applied for the review implemented a qualitative approach for analysis and utilised analytical rather than statistical inference, drawing on triangulation to maximise the reliability of research findings.

The overall approach involved a review of project documents, Key Informant Interviews (KII) and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with project stakeholders. Given the short time frame of the review, it was challenging to employ a wide range of methods. To deal with this, the evaluation discussed similar questions across a range of different respondents within and across different project stakeholders including DFAT, project implementers, senior policy makers, service delivery providers, industry representatives and beneficiaries.

For data analysis, the evaluation applied a system of coding findings, identifying the frequency and consequent extent/intensity of a finding across different research methods, but the frequency of findings will not be represented statistically. The evaluation also focused on gender and social inclusion analysis to identify how implementation and management had influenced different social groups.

The team interviewed 58 men and 29 women including 6 DFAT representatives, 2 MEHRD staff members, 3 SINU staff members, 10 SINU students, 25 RTC staff, 25 RTC students, 2 other donor representatives, 7 S4EG staff members, 7 staff members from other DFAT programs and 6 industry representatives.

### 4.1 Limitations and constraints of the Evaluation

There were several limitations and constraints on the evaluation. Other key limitations for the evaluation include:

- **Time and Resources:** the rigour of the data gathering analysis was constrained to some degree by the time available. The evaluation team was unable to meet with all key stakeholders, particularly for follow-up meetings and discussions.
- **Availability of data:** There was a lack of data to support decision making. This was largely due to the early stage in program implementation. At the time of the evaluation the first cohort of students were studying the new curriculum thus while data was available on number of students enrolled but there was not yet data available on student performance, graduation or employment. In the future this data will be collected but was not available at the time of the evaluation. S4EG undertook quality audits of training institutions but were reluctant to share these with the evaluation team due to concerns around confidentiality. This was unfortunate as these reports would have been useful, particularly given the lack of timely impact data.
- **Access to Sites and people:** Although well planned there was a risk and limitation in that key people were not always available on the day for interviews and consultations.
- **Judgements:** the time limitations mean that professional judgements were employed to interpret stakeholder perspectives.

## 5. Key Findings and Analysis

The following sections detail and outline the key findings derived from the review against the Evaluation Questions (EQs) detailed in the ToR.

The EQ's focus on the ability of the technical training institutes to delivery CBT and the effects of support for governance and infrastructure, the extent to which improved courses could match industry needs and the capacity of the SIG to administer the skills system. However, it is important also to consider the overarching goal of the program is to create a quality industry-led and demand-driven training system that results in the nation's tertiary education and skills system producing quality graduates who are in demand in the labour market. This will require synergies between the



different output areas and must necessarily be part of a long-term program as it will involve extensive systemic and behaviour change.

## Evaluation Question 1

### **Has the program improved the capacity of technical training institutes to deliver quality training courses?**

The program team took a comprehensive approach to capacity building for training institutes including providing support for quality management and systems, provider registration, quality improvement plans and quality audits. The program supported training providers to develop new courses and new ways of supporting students. Figure 2 shows the new National Skills Packages (NSPs), accredited courses and qualification structures offered at SINU and RTCs with support of S4EG. There was also a unit on Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) included in all the courses as “cross-cutting” content to impart knowledge that would encourage healthy hygiene practices.

**Figure 2: National Skills Packages (NSPs), accredited courses and qualifications structure offered at SINU and RTCs**

SI Automotive Engineering Industry National Skills Package (Cert III and IV in Automotive Engineering)
SI Business Services Industry (Cert IV in Office Administration)
SI Plumbing Water Services Industry (Cert III and IV in Plumbing Water Services)
SI Construction and Industry (Cert III and IV in Construction and Carpentry and Joinery)
SI Electrical Technology Industry (Cert III and IV in Electrical Services and Electrical Technology)
Accredited courses not contained in NSP
Cert II in New Directions for Young Women and Girls
Cert III in Agribusiness
Cert III in Tourism and Hospitality

### **Secondary question 1: To what extent have trainers at SINU adopted competency based training (CBT) approaches to training and has this led to improved quality of training courses?**

#### **Curriculum**

The program team has developed a counterpart and trainer provider partnership agreement with SINU. STMS trainers at SINU have been implementing the new courses since July 2017. Half the teaching teams are working on new courses. It is planned that existing non-CBT programs will conclude by September 2019. As Table 3 shows by July 2018 251 students had been enrolled in the courses.

**Table 3: Student enrolments of accredited courses at SINU (July 2018)**

Course/Qualification	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Total
Construction	15	15	22	52
Electrical	17	20	20	57
Plumbing	18	15	22	55
Automotive Heavy	17	11	17	45
Automotive Light	12	11	19	42
Total	79	72	100	251

Trainers explained to the review team that with the old system the courses were not adequately structured. The previous teaching style involved standing in front of a board without equipment. For more than 20-years trade

*“If the students only see they will forget, if the student only hear they will forget so they need to practice” STMS Trainer*

courses were not reviewed or updated. Equipment, machines, building and associated infrastructure was deteriorating in terms of quality and functionality. Ultimately the assets and associated training materials were not keeping up with the changing nature of the trades and the level of quality required to maintain and improve skills.

STMS trainers explained the main differences between the old and new courses being that there is more content and the students must demonstrate their skills and knowledge to pass the course. Also, assessments are on-going. Class sizes were reduced (from 30-40 to 20) and due to S4EG purchasing equipment, students could practice individually or in small groups on the equipment whereas before they might have 5 equipment sets between 30-40 students.

Trainers and advisers said that students were responding well to the new curriculum which encouraged them to think for themselves, actively learn and demonstrate their skills. One trainer said that out of his class of twenty only three had not achieved adequate competency to pass the course.

However, trainers said some students were struggling to cope with the amount of content. Students

*"I am very proud of my students. Before they started the CBT course they knew nothing and they have learned so much" STMS Trainer*

also felt that with the large amount of content there was a limited time to cover a lot of new material. A proportion of students are secondary school drop outs, who struggled with the general literacy and

numeracy required to complete the courses. Trainers have recommended that English Language training should be included as part of the studies. The adviser team are aware of these challenges and are introducing a foundations course which is being developed in partnership with SINU to provide a 10-week literacy and numeracy introduction to all NSP qualifications commencing in February 2019. There is also an employability component in the NSPs. It will be interesting to see whether participation in this course will be sufficient to address literacy, numeracy and English language challenges.

Some development partner representatives expressed concern about the fact that because the course was adopted from an Australian context it lacked local relevance and context. The curriculum was developed specifically to respond to industry needs through a consultation process in line with the design. However, there is still the possibility that the curriculum could be improved through language and concepts that are more easily digestible in the local context without compromising standards. The new curriculum could have been peer reviewed by other operators in the space such as Don Bosco, APTC, Caritas and Wintec.

Although facilities and equipment in the business studies and tourism and hospitality schools had been provided, instruction in the new courses had not yet commenced.

### **Trainer quality**

Most STMS trainers had not been trained for many years. The last training received was through training at Victoria and South Australia TAFE supported by AusAID (prior to DFAT). To equip them to teach the new curriculum, the program team have provided extensive capacity building for trainers. This includes the SINU Trainer Development Program 2017, the ITAC International Trainer and Assessment Course (8 weeks), TAFE QLD and the Futura Learning Resource Program. The program team also provided professional development for the trainers with mentoring from advisers.

Advisers reported that some trainers were responsive to the new curriculum appreciating the quality standards and the opportunities for students to learn by doing and others resisted, feeling a sense of ownership for the previous curriculum. Nevertheless, the program team managed to bring most of the trainers on-board. Of the 30 trainers available to undertake CBT workforce development activities, 22 have graduated from the program with credit.

Many trainers rose to the challenge and performed very strongly in training and managing students in the new approach but they also struggled with the workload. The Dean of STMS noted a marked

improvement in the confidence of the staff in the change from a curriculum to a competency based approach. Trainers reported that they appreciated working with the new curriculum and had learned a great deal and thought that it improved their teaching. However, they indicated also that they struggled with managing time, particularly around lesson planning as there was a lot of extra work involved in the new approach. Also for some trainers it was hard to absorb the new material in a short space of time. The trainers also said it was challenging to teach classes of students at different levels and with different learning styles and they would like more support for this.

At STMS, contextual factors including: ageing trainers; a lack of succession planning; governance issues at SINU; and trainers taking on management duties: heavy workloads and low salaries as well as lack of career management at SINU affected the ability of trainers to effectively teach and manage the new curriculum. Attracting quality staff at the school is a challenge. Many of the staff are close to retirement, in their 50s and 60s but it is hard to recruit for new staff as salaries are lower than in industry and individuals lose their recognition as practitioners when they take on a job as a trainer. Also, SINU provides minimal support for developing performance management systems that would incentivise stronger performance. As a result, the team relies on the aspirations of local trainers to be better in the absence of institutional reward.

Overall the introduction of National Skills Packages Accredited Courses and Qualifications Structures and capacity building at SINU appears to be making a marked difference to the quality of the trade courses but there are issues with overloading, underlying learning capacity of students, localisation, and performance management of trainers which affect the capacity of trainers to fully deliver the courses to the maximum benefit of the students. It is early days for the roll out of the new courses and over time these issues can be improved on.

**Secondary Question 2: To what extent have trainers at the RTCs the program supports adopted competency based approaches to training and has this led to improved quality of training courses?**

The S4EG approach at RTCs involves supporting the introduction of Cert IIIs in the National Skills Packages (NSPs) in Automotive mechanics and construction as well as non- NSP courses including Agribusiness, and Tourism and Hospitality. At the six RTCs partnering with S4EG, certificate courses at RTCs (e.g. Cert III) are qualified to enter Certificate IV level courses at SINU (e.g. Cert IV). Until now RTC certificates have not been recognised at SINU. The vision of working with a selected number of RTCs is that some of them will become Provincial Training Centres and provide a bridge between RTCs and SINU. In 2019, a total of 200 students participating in the accredited courses supported by S4EG will also receive scholarships of approximately SBD 40,000 from the SIG which are provided to the institution to fund the students study. Table 4 shows TVET Scholarships for accredited courses in RTCs in 2019.

**Table 4: Scholarship places for accredited courses at RTCs in 2019**

RTC	Vocational Pathways	Automotive Mechanics	Construction	Agribusiness/ Agriculture	Tourism/ Hospitality	Total Places
DIVT	30					30
Don Bosco				30		30
Tabaka					40	40
APSD		20	20			40
Afutara			15	15		30
Batuna			15	15		30
<b>Total Places</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>200</b>

Recognition of RTC certificates within an accreditation pathway will immediately increase their value and encourage other possible students to participate in a variety of courses.

It is still early to assess this sub-question as at the time of the review the RTCs had not commenced teaching the new courses. Some RTC respondents (principals and trainers) stated that they liked the

curriculum because it included more specificity on the competency that students needed to learn and train in. However, others stated that they were struggling to understand the new curriculum, it didn't include teachers' guides/specific instructions on how to use it and they didn't have the necessary infrastructure to meet the standards in the curriculum. They also indicated that they did not feel comfortable teaching the WASH modules as they were not WASH specialists.

S4EG provided support with accreditation, facilities and scholarships for selected accredited courses offering TVET scholarships whereas there were several other courses taught at the colleges. However, the RTCs still received the curriculum for the several other courses offered at the RTCs with the option that they could teach the new curriculum although without the accreditation support. This was creating some apprehension for the trainers who didn't feel that they were equipped to instruct in the new curriculum. Notably, representatives at Don Bosco (the most advanced RTC in SI) stated that they preferred using and applying the courses that they had used up until this time rather than the NSPs.

Reservations about the new curriculum among trainers may in part be due to apprehension before they started teaching. It would be possible to obtain a better idea of trainers' views about the curriculum after they had been teaching it for some time. In identifying this issue, it would be very useful for the program team to consider approaches and methods to collect data on a longitudinal basis to provide an evidence-base of how the curriculum is being applied and how teachers and trainers are improving in capacity as a result.

Some RTC trainers stated that the students did not have the necessary literacy and numeracy skills to learn the curriculum and meet the competency standards. It was noted by several respondents that the literacy, English language, numeracy and general learning capability of RTC students could not be expected to be too high as many of them were high school drop outs.<sup>20</sup> As at SINU the S4EG team are considering introducing a 10-week literacy and numeracy introduction to all NSP qualifications commencing in February 2019 and there is an employability component in all the NSP packages. It will be important to assess whether these support courses will be sufficient to address literacy and numeracy challenges among students.

*"I have run out of words to express my gratitude for the hard work which Barry and his team of experts have done to bring Tabaka to the standard we would like to stand by. The institution has been raised to another level. To ensure its sustainability is ours." Veronica Toben, Education Secretary, UCSI EA*

Regarding the curriculum content at the RTCs, there is a question of whether the consultations, focused on formal sector employers in line with the design, led to curriculum that will provide students with skills that will be useful in their future lives. The design of S4EG is focused around linking top tier RTCs into an articulation pathway towards further study at SINU or formal sector employment in Honiara or in the

provinces (e.g. in the tourism sector in Western Province). However, some students will return home to the village to paid work or small business that is not formal employment in areas such as carpentry (e.g. building houses in the community), automotive (boats), tourism and electrical work. The program team did conduct extensive regional consultations with provincial based companies, education and provincial governments which all have highlighted skills shortages in mechanics, construction, plumbing and electrical. It is notable that the SINU trainers interviewed, who were the only respondents who had taught the new curriculum, stated that they thought the CBT courses would be useful for the RTCs but only at the lower "blocks"<sup>21</sup>. For example, in the electrical course some skills would be very useful in a rural environment but only up to Block 3 (e.g. knowing how to terminate cables, run cables, determine the maximum demand required and select the suitable size of cables and do maintenance on electrical equipment). For carpentry, the SINU trainer stated that while the

<sup>20</sup> The secondary school system in the Solomon Islands includes exams at Forms 4,5 and 6 (year 10, 11 and 12) following which students who don't reach a certain grade are excluded from the school. Many of these students who don't pass the exams go to RTCs.

<sup>21</sup> Each course is made up of 15 units or "blocks"

course included manual and electronic components the lower levels of the course, which focused on manual tools, would be more appropriate in the local context.

The Vanuatu Skills Partnership has focused consultation on the provinces and the informal sector which resulted in the program providing support for non-accredited Certificate I and II courses. A similar direction is being discussed among S4EG advisers in terms of an option of providing “skills sets” or “micro-qualifications” which are short courses that provide training skills such as fixing outboard motors, solar power or air-conditioning.

In addition to an improved curriculum, the directing of 200 TVET scholarships to the RTCs, for the courses being supported by S4EG is raising the profile and attractiveness of the RTCs.<sup>2223</sup> The provision of new equipment to the RTCs is having a similar effect.

One argument for developing the accreditation and formalisation pathways of the RTCs could be that the labour mobility schemes from Australia and other countries such as New Zealand (NZ), Canada, Taiwan, Korea and Japan plan to draw on the labour pool of students who have been trained through accredited RTCs. In Australia, these programs include the Seasonal Worker Program (SWP) which sources un-skilled agricultural labour and the Pacific Labour Scheme (PLS) which sources semi-skilled labour in a range of sectors. The numbers going on these programs are currently low and there are some logistical issues to iron out such as funding and procuring passports for candidates but in the longer-term there might be demand for up to 10,000 workers. Certainly, increasing the quality at the RTCs will be beneficial for these programs but, according to DFAT, employers are not uniform in what they are looking for and it is more likely to be a case of certain employers developing relationships with certain RTCs. Skills in employability, numeracy and literacy will be priorities to get students job ready for overseas work opportunities.

Overall, the approach of the program team to RTCs is raising their profile and the quality of teaching although it's early days. It remains to be seen whether the new curriculum is comprehensible to students or too challenging. Also, there is a question around whether the focus of the design on the formal sector is appropriate for supporting RTCs and whether the accredited courses are suitable for students who will return home to their rural communities.

Another issue regarding whether the support for the development of training providers is likely to result in improved quality of the courses relates to the capacity of the RTC trainers. The capacity of RTC trainers is highly variable; some are strong but others have literacy and numeracy challenges and are not much more educated than the students they are teaching and supervising. To date RTC trainers have only received short-course training on the curriculum but it is evident they need more intensive on-going mentoring and support. In the forward workplan S4EG is investigating the possibility of AVIs in RTCs to provide mentoring support which should be beneficial in this regard. It may also be beneficial for SINU trainers to spend some time mentoring at the RTCs as well. This would be a very useful partnership and “twinning” arrangement that would foster closer collaboration and support the transition of students who complete certified courses under the new curriculum and wish to further their studies at SINU.

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<sup>22</sup> In the Solomon Islands one major cause of inadequacy of education services is that over 65% of the education budget annually is directed to scholarships which benefit 1% of the population.

<sup>23</sup> S4EGs advocacy at the policy level can be seen to have been instrumental in directing the scholarships to TVET



**Secondary question 3: Have the new facilities contributed to an increase in the quality of courses and are the facilities being used appropriately?**

***Facilities at SINU***

The provision of facilities and equipment was not initially part of the program design. However, equipment is necessary for students to demonstrate competency and funding from SINU has been too low to support and maintain the equipment necessary to facilitate learning. Moreover, the lack of equipment was one of the main reasons why STMS was not well regarded by industry. For example, in the carpentry course there were up to 40 students and five sets of equipment and in the automotive school there was not one running vehicle for students to work on. At SINU S4EG provided two new workshops for heavy and light automotive work. They also provided electrical and carpentry tool-sets. The provision of equipment was done in such a way as to match industry needs after consultation with them. The provision of equipment and facilities to STMS at SINU provides a significant boost to the quality of the courses that SINU is able to offer and their applicability to industry.

*"If we didn't engage with S4EG, we wouldn't have been able to develop for the next 20 years. The University's financial capacity to date simply cannot support an expensive school like ours"* Solomon Pita, Dean of STMS

The financial sustainability of the school in terms of maintaining the equipment is a concern. This includes costs for maintenance and parts replacements. Also there needs to be enough equipment for each student to work on individually under the CBT approach, which affects the ability of the school to expand student intakes. Currently school fees are SBD 12,000 per year which is not enough to cover the costs of up-keep of existing and necessary new equipment. In the future SINU will need to make a commitment to invest in resources and capacity development to support the school. At the current time there are not strong signs that this is likely to happen. This points to an important part of the establishment of SITESA which is to manage funding for the TVET sector.



***Photo 1: Automotive Workshop at SINU STMS***

***Facilities at the RTCs***

RTCs operate on minimal budgets. The Government pays for teacher salaries and students also pay school fees (e.g. at Tabaka the school fees are SBD 4000 per year). Some RTCs also do limited income

generating activities. The majority also lack access to grid power and can be accessed only by boat. In order to support development of the RTC training providers it was necessary for S4EG to provide support for both some basic infrastructure (e.g. dormitories and solar power) and facilities such as kitchens, classrooms, carpentry equipment, scaffolding and electrical equipment. Plant tools and equipment were provided to the RTCs to the value of AUD 600,000. One of the flagship contributions of S4EG was a new training kitchen for the Cert III in tourism at Tabaka RTC complete with solar power. This is a relatively popular tourist area for diving so there is strong potential for students to train in the facilities at Tabaka and be absorbed into the nearby tourist industry. Notwithstanding that the program team provided support for preparation of maintenance schedules, managers flagged potential issues with recurrent budgets and overall maintenance of new equipment at SINU and RTCs. As with SINU, the sustainability of the equipment beyond the life of the program is a risk for sustainable program outcomes at the RTCs.

*"Tabaka RTC doesn't have grid power so we provided a solar energy system with batteries – It's great to see now that the students are studying at night" –Adviser, S4EG*



**Photo 2: Tourism and Hospitality Centre at Tabaka RTC built with support of S4EG**

**Secondary question 4: What changes have been made to the governance of training institutes as a result of the program?**

### **SINU**

S4EG has provided support for governance at SINU through the introduction of quality management systems, provider registration, and quality improvement plans. Although it is early days the introduction of these systems should markedly improve management at STMS at SINU. S4EG has tried to collaborate with university senior management in capacity building for university governance but they have not been open to such a partnership. For example, the program team conducted an audit to pave the way for SITESA accreditation of the SINU courses but for reasons not known to the review team management did not accept the findings or recommendations of the audit.

There is a lack of career and performance management for trainers and limited budget for STMS investment and recurrent costs. Moreover, some senior management at the university would prefer the university to be a purely academic institution, a position which has the support of the Minister for Education who recently stated that TVET should be taken over by the RTCs and SINU should retain academic courses only.

The university management have also expressed reluctance to submit the regulation of their courses to the Solomon Islands Tertiary Education Skills Authority (SITESA) the establishment of which has been supported by S4EG. Hopefully the program's relationship with SINU senior management can improve as lack of support for STMS from them could be a risk to program outcomes. It will be important to observe whether this affects the roll out and operational functionality of SITESA. An unwillingness by SINU to cooperate with SITESA through the registration, rating and auditing of courses could be a risk to the effectiveness of the Authority, once it is established.

### **RTCs**

RTCs have variable governance and leadership, depending on the capacity of their leaders. There is generally little formal structure around their governance systems. S4EG is involved in supporting improved governance at RTCs as part of the SITESA accreditation process. The team supported participating RTCs to implement 13 quality standards pertaining to governance, social inclusion, child protection, financial management and other matters. Most RTCs were not compliant and so needed support from the program. S4EG has introduced QMSs to the RTCs including laptops for training providers, institution school profile, evidence of 13 standards, national accreditation courses, evidence for compliance to different standards and information about current courses and new skills packages.

To develop these systems, the program team conducted consultation with management to obtain feedback on how to develop a system that's sustainable: not make them do away with their current management system but help them build on that system. The accreditation focused approach to supporting governance at the RTCs is in line with the design which seeks to increase the employability of youth and students. As this process is still on-going the results have not yet been established. However, given the basic operational standard of the RTCs it may be challenging for them to meet the standards. NZ Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) supported programs have also provided support in governance and leadership in RTCs and it would be useful to compare results from their programs in terms of building governance of the RTCs.

### **Evaluation Question 2**

#### **Has support for skills training on the program resulted in the training courses offered at national and provincial level better matching industry needs?**

Industry in the Solomon Islands has a strong interest in skills development due to skills shortages being a significant constraint to growth. To address this, S4EG conducted: (i) labour market analyses, (ii) undertook consultation with industry representatives and (iii) supported the development of training packages that included competency standards to meet industry's need for skilled labour. S4EG partnered with SICCI, MEHRD and MDPAC to produce 3 Labour Market Studies and Analysis in 2016, 2017 and 2018. These studies were initial steps in the establishment of a Labour Market Information System (LMIS) that would provide the SIG with regular information on major employers, employment trends and labour needs.

The program team also facilitated consultation between skills providers (SINU) and industry. Meetings with industry revealed that from their perspective, big constraints pertaining to labour employment and engagement are basic literacy, numeracy and employability skills such as communication skills, problem solving and logic, computer skills and customer service. Technical skills are also in short supply which affects growth. For example, one stakeholder mentioned that they were restricted in



the range of specialised services (e.g. auto-electrician and air conditioning specialists) they could offer because of lack of skilled labour.

Prior to the conflict between ethnic groups in Guadalcanal and Malaita that resulted in a period of unrest from 1996 – 2003 (referred to in SI has “the tension”), the Solomon Islands College of Higher Education (SICHI) as SINU was then known had more links to industry. Students who studied in the trade school were all apprentices of industry (e.g. from the Solomon Islands Plantation Limited). However, due to the tension, links between the college and industry were severed and the college began recruiting directly from Form 5 at secondary schools. After this time, students from SINU, tended to fail key competencies when they were assessed by an industry assessment group for their key proficiencies and industry would not accept the standard of trade graduates from SINU.

S4EG has taken major steps in bringing courses offered at SINU closer to industry needs. During the years after the tension and prior to S4EG, few SINU trainers had recent contact with industry. Attempts were not made to update course content in line with industry needs and SINU lacked the necessary equipment to train students to industry standards. S4EG has supported SINU to provide training to better match industry needs by conducting consultations with industry to develop curriculum and modified courses based on industry consultation. During these consultations, the STMS in collaboration with S4EG invited as many stakeholders as possible to consultation meetings and then streamed off into five areas and established industry groups to provide ongoing feedback as the courses were developed. One notable development was that courses ended up being larger because of multi-skilling that industry wanted. With the support of S4EG, STMS also revitalised the six-month work placement scheme for trainees. Previously, under the scheme, many students spent the time out of the university but didn’t actually find work placements. However, since commencement of the program the School has coordinated with industry to find as many placements as possible for students.

There have not yet been any graduates from the new CBT courses so there hasn’t been an opportunity for industry perceptions of SINU and RTC graduates to change. Improving the suitability of graduates for employment in industry will be an ongoing process: trainers will need to spend time in and with industry to ensure that the course content remains current. Given industry’s concern with literacy, numeracy and basic employability skills it is worth considering whether SINU/RTC students are graduating with enough of these skills and whether more training needs to be provided in this area. The introduction of foundations courses in literacy and numeracy and employability units in the NSPs should be useful in this regard.

Given the high cost of training equipment and given industry’s need for trained graduates, several stakeholders during the evaluation raised the question of whether and how industry can finance training. Not only could this subsidise the university but it can help ensure that training matches to industry needs. There were different perceptions between industry stakeholders and trainer stakeholders expressed during the review. Industry stakeholders said that they did provide, and would be happy to provide more, on the job training whereas training stakeholders perceived some reticence from industry.

The work placement scheme is a way for industry to support training (although its free labour industry still need to provide equipment for students) but some industry stakeholders found that it was disruptive to have placements for only six months. They suggested that the placements were staggered to provide more continuity. The work-placement scheme is known as a pre-apprenticeship scheme.

The apprenticeship scheme which was severed from SICHI by the tension (see above) continued managed by the Ministry of Labour and Commerce, but without links to SINU. It would be worthwhile for S4EG to investigate whether the university could reconnect with the apprenticeship scheme. The S4EG team has helped to draft the Solomon Islands Apprenticeship and Traineeship Policy (2017).

Apprenticeship schemes tend to be run at a high cost to the Government and therefore have less applicability in the Pacific. There are other forms of learning on the job such as work done in Australia with indigenous communities where student groups are tasked with the job of building houses and the training is almost all on the job. At the very least some learning activities incurring high equipment costs that are beyond the financial capacity of the university should take place in industry e.g. training on the heavy brake system for heavy automotive.

Another point is that, in line with the program design, the consultation on curriculum development with industry was focused on the formal sector, largely in Honiara. The focus of the program design is on providing employment ready graduates for national, regional and international jobs although the informal sector makes up 85% of the economy. The other Pacific TVET programs (e.g. Vanuatu) focus on support for the provincial and informal based industry through provincial skills plans and development of non-accredited Cert 1 and 2 courses in RTCs. Moving forward the program could broaden to focus on equipping RTC graduates with skills needed for local economies.

It is worth noting that efforts to bring labour arrangements into alignment with educational arrangements are challenging in many countries. S4EG has made an excellent start in bringing SINU and industry closer together but there is still much more to do and work in this area needs to be ongoing and consistent. Facilitating continual contact between industry and government and training institutes, S4EG facilitates Strategic Advisory Group meetings twice a year which involved participation from the three sets of stakeholders.

### Evaluation Question 3

#### **To what extent has the program increased the capacity of the Solomon Islands Government to administer the skills training system in the Solomon Islands.**

The program has worked extensively on policy development and supported SIG to produce a considerable number of useful outputs including:

- National Legislation and Policy Development
- Solomon Islands Tertiary Education and Skills Authority Act 2017
- Solomon Islands Apprenticeship and Traineeship Policy 2017
- Solomon Islands Tertiary Education and Skills Policy 2017
- Solomon Islands Scholarships Policy and Procedures 2017
- Solomon Islands National Tertiary Education and Skills Plan
- Solomon Islands Scholarships Policy and Procedures 2017
- Solomon Islands National Education and Skills Plan 2018

The flagship activity of the program focused on increasing the capacity of the Solomon Islands Government to administer the skills training system has focused on establishing SITESA. S4EG has been a driving force behind the SITESA Act which removes management of the higher education sector from the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development (MEHRD) into a separate agency. The National Tertiary Education and Skills Policy 2016 – 2020 was first approved by the Solomon Islands Government in August 2016 as an Annex to the draft Solomon Islands Tertiary Education and Skills Authority Bill. The Policy, along with the Solomon Islands Scholarship Policy and Procedures 2016, laid the foundation for tabling legislation to establish the Solomon Islands Tertiary Education and Skills Authority (SITESA). In late 2018 the SITESA Act had been passed by parliament but was waiting to be gazetted. SITESA will have a role in managing higher education, scholarships, training, quality assurance, and labour market demand for technical and vocational skills. SITESA will create a new system of registration, accreditation, quality assurance and management of TVET (SINU and RTCs).

*“TVET is now becoming a priority. We want to improve the kinds of programs we have on offer so we can meet the needs of the market” Dr. Franco Rodie, Permanent Secretary for Education, SIG*

The idea is that requiring TVET courses to meet quality standards will raise the quality of the courses and their matching to market needs and thus the employability of graduates.

The establishment of SITESA is also intended to advocate for TVET as a priority to the Solomon Islands Government (SIG). An elevation of TVET as a priority for the SIG has already been observed in 2018 with the redirection of 200 out of 700 scholarships to RTCs.<sup>24</sup> The heightened focus on TVET also comes at a time when labour mobility schemes from Australia, NZ, Asian and other countries are expanding and looking to RTCs for their labour pool.

The Ministry of Education (MEHRD) has been enthusiastic in bringing about the establishment of SITESA. Stakeholders from the MEHRD indicated that TVET was becoming a higher priority among the Government and they were keen to have a proper qualifications system in the Solomon Islands and improve the quality of TVET so that they could better meet the needs of the market through their training system.

However, there are potential risks pertaining to the establishment of SITESA. SITESA has not yet been gazetted. While waiting for approval SIG are using the Fiji Higher Education Commission as an accreditation authority. The MEHRD are moving ahead with recruiting for director positions.

Secondly, there is a risk that SITESA will not obtain full buy in from stakeholders. In Samoa, a qualifications authority was established but it was rejected by the university and never achieved full operational functionality. Stakeholders informed the review team that SINU senior management is not supportive of SITESA as they do not think there should be a separate authority overseeing their courses. One stakeholder described SITESA as a “resource intensive central overlay which would not provide any concrete benefits for trainers in the provinces”. A question was raised by stakeholders as to whether it would not be more efficient in the Pacific to focus on regional accreditation, given the small size of many of the countries rather than set up numerous accreditation authorities which use up resources and may not fully function effectively.

S4EG has made some great achievements to date in terms of increasing the capacity of the SIG to administer the skills system in the Solomon Islands such as supporting the passing of the SITESA Act and the increased prioritisation of TVET among the SIG evidenced by the direction of 200 scholarships towards TVET for the first time. Nevertheless, the new system is still in infancy and will need intensive support and ongoing advocacy for TVET to be a policy priority so it can produce employable graduates. Lessons learned show that there is the possibility that accreditation institutes in the Pacific remain donor driven initiatives that never gain 100% local buy in so DFAT should monitor the progression of SITESA closely and be prepared to change strategy if the evidence suggests this is necessary. Under such circumstances a regional approach to TVET accreditation would be an alternative strategy.

#### Evaluation Question 4

**What social and economic impact has the program had on program beneficiaries including students, trainers, school leaders and employers.**

Students have not yet graduated so it is not clear if the new courses have led to increased employability of graduates. SINU and RTCs have not been collecting data on graduates so it will be hard to systematically identify the change. S4EG has been collecting student data but information on graduate employment will only start becoming available after the first cohort of graduates. The new SITESA QMS will be the main business system to achieve this and it is currently being rolled out to 10 partners.

**Secondary question 1: As a result of S4EG program activities, do partners increasingly treat gender equality and inclusion of people with a disability as a priority through their own policies and**

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<sup>24</sup> The challenge with funding for education in SI has been that over 65% of the education budget has been directed toward scholarships for less than 1% of the population and not linked to market needs.

**processes? Further, has this led to increased participation and equitable access in the program for women and people with disabilities?**

The program has taken steps to promote gender equality and increase services for people with disabilities through the Gender Equity and Social Inclusion (GESI) strategy including:

- Works projects to improve the living quarters for young women and girls undertaking the New Directions – Vocational Pathways for Young Women and Girls at Tabaka APSD and DIVIT (Visale) and of teachers at the Bethdesda Training College for disabled people. The argument of the S4EG team in providing this support that it was difficult for learning to occur when basic needs were not being met was a sensible one and this was also an effective strategy to gain counterpart engagement.
- Adding women orientated content in Agribusiness, Office Administration and Business Studies, Tourism and Hospitality courses and replacing the *life-skills* course with a new course *Vocational Pathways for Young Women and Girls*. Students and trainers interviewed during the evaluation said that they liked the new course but regretted the fact that modules on food and nutrition had been removed.
- Introducing gender equity and social inclusion compliance requirements at SINU and RTCs;
- A focus on key DFAT policies such as the Child Protection policy in compliance requirements.
- Gender and Child Protection Forum held in 2017
- Introducing 120 of 200 available places in Tourism and Hospitality and Agribusiness Courses as part of the SIG Vocational Scholarships program targeted at young women and girls

S4EG has had a detailed and comprehensive program to support GESI that in no way can be considered tokenistic. It will be interesting to track the women's participation in the courses and their enrolment prospects. In the future such information can be used to further refine the GESI strategy. It is important that the program is sensitive when approaching gender issues on different islands that they can interact to local cultural systems and contexts. Some islands are matrilineal and some are patrilineal and societies with different kinship structures will interact differently with ideas about gender equality. The program should not rush to implement a GESI strategy without ensuring full buy in from RTC stakeholders. Ideally, initiatives regarding gender equality should stem from local communities themselves.

## SIELT40117 Certificate IV in Electrical Technology

**ABOUT SINU**

Since 2013 SINU is the National University of the Solomon Islands. The School of Technology & Maritime Studies (STMS) is SIG's training provider for Apprenticeship programs. In 2017 SINU – STMS will launch the new Apprenticeship courses leading to internationally benchmarked qualifications. **SIELT40117 Certificate IV in Electrical Technology** is a new course being offered by SINU from July 2017. SINU's trainers are qualified and experienced to deliver the new SI National Curriculum across a wide range of vocational courses aimed at skilling Solomon Islanders for a variety of occupations.

**COURSE OVERVIEW**

SINU – STMS delivers quality automotive training to suit current industry needs. The **SIELT40117 Certificate IV in Electrical Technology** is designed to offer students the opportunity to develop skills suited to the electrical industry of the Solomon Islands.

Graduates of this qualification will be able to use their skills to install, commission and repair electrical systems in new and existing work; such as new construction work, commissioning and decommissioning electrical installations, mining camps; almost every industry sector.

These technicians undertake repairs to electrical appliances, refrigeration and air conditioning systems, power plants and power distribution networks.

Possible **employment opportunities** include:

- Domestic electrical installations
- Appliance repairs and maintenance
- Industrial and commercial design and installations



**Figure 3: Woman featured in SINU Trade Course Poster**

## Evaluation Question 5

### **How has the structure of the program and the way it's been implemented played a role in the achievement or otherwise of program outcomes?**

The results framework and program structure has facilitated a clear work program which the program team has focused on methodically and efficiently to produce a substantial number of outputs that fit together coherently as well as strong support from some counterparts.

The design of the program and end-of-program outcomes have specifically focused the program on better matching graduates with the formal wage sector. This makes sense in the context but it has resulted in S4EG focusing on the top tier of rural training centres and accreditation systems which connect with overseas systems rather than provincial and rural employment and livelihood opportunities which employ the clear majority of the population.

It is notable that almost all the advisers have been Australians with backgrounds in the TAFE sector which may have resulted in an increased tendency to view content lifted from the Australian context as suitable. There have been few Pacific islanders and few development specialists. The program has made extensive efforts to recruit local advisers but has found it challenging to do so.

Also, unlike some other Pacific TVET programs, the design of the program doesn't allow for the provision of resources for local entities to make decisions and innovate. Other programs take a different approach: Vanuatu have Provincial boards consisting of local representatives that identify training needs based on local demand. This may affect ownership and sustainability of program outcomes. In thinking about the design of the program it is worthwhile considering the advantages and disadvantages of different entry points.

The number of beneficiaries is limited (251 students at SINU and 200 in 2019 at RTCs) given the large number of short and long term advisers and this affects value for money. While the program is focusing on developing courses in local institutions that, if sustainable, would serve larger numbers of beneficiaries in the longer term, it may be challenging to scale out the program without external assistance due to the high cost of the equipment incurred with the CBT approach to training.

## Evaluation Question 6

### **What lessons can be learned to inform the next stage of Australia's support to the TVET sector?**

The independent review has been conducted during the implementation period, therefore outcomes have not yet been fully established. Some lessons will not become clear until the end of program implementation. Nevertheless, some preliminary key lessons that have emerged are as follows:

- Many SINU and RTC trade students have not finished high school and may not have attended school for some years so introducing curriculum with a great deal of content, substantial literacy and numeracy demands and English language may be challenging for them. The program team need to monitor the match between student capacity and the curriculum and adjust as necessary. Content on literacy, numeracy and employability should be included as is the program team's plan for 2019.
- Improving the receptiveness of industry to graduates from national TVET issues will take considerable time and there are underlying and structural changes that need to be addressed. These include basic employability, literacy and numeracy skills of graduates and the ability of the TVET system to afford equipment and facilities that enable them to provide the appropriate and up-to-date training and finding a way that industry can invest in the TVET system. Having catalysed change around this issue DFAT should be prepared for long term engagement.
- Support for infrastructure and equipment is an essential part of support for introducing CBT in low funding environments but it raises a challenge of recurrent funding. The issue of recurrent funding should be addressed at the outset. This lesson learned points to a need to consider carefully which is the best entry point for working with institutions. It may be better to ensure

the governance settings are right before focusing on course content. The challenge also points to the need to advocate for increased funding and prioritisation of TVET at a national level.

- At poor and remote institutions such as RTCs basic needs must be met before higher level needs can be. S4EG has recognised this with support for basic infrastructure. There may be other aspects of the course where basic building blocks are not there to support the program's higher level initiatives such as the ability to run and capacity to use the new Quality Management Systems. The program team should be monitoring these risks and be willing to change initiatives if the underlying capacity to implement them is not available. The team should also collaborate with other development partners working with RTCs to learn lessons around this issue
- Implementing agencies cannot be expected to manage coordination on their own particularly in light of private sector competition in the aid space. DFAT and other donors need to be clear and directive about how they expect implementing partners to coordinate and collaborate, including between different DFAT projects.

**Secondary question 1: Is there a need for another phase of the bilateral program?**

S4EG has made some important achievements but they are still emergent and will need a few more years of support to become sustainable, notwithstanding that there are some risks to the approach around counterpart capacity to fully integrate the changes into their systems and fully adopt the reforms.

With a new design for its third phase, the Australian Pacific Technical College (APTC) has a similar mandate to S4EG (supporting local TVET systems) in addition to its current work of offering Australian standard courses. In moving forward, the risk of fragmentation and duplication between the two programs is high. There is the option that APTC could absorb some of the results framework of S4EG as well as support programming where there may have been gaps. However, it is still early days for the new APTC program and it is not clear exactly what the focus of the program will be or the level of resourcing it will bring to the Solomon Islands. Moreover, there are questions around whether a regional program will be able to provide the kind of intensive support needed to continue the S4EG agenda. An appropriate response is therefore to extend the current phase for one year to December 2020 and at the start of 2020 commence a design process considering the following options:

- A second phase of a bilateral S4EG with a similar structure to the current program with potentially some extra programming around the rural informal sector/supporting local innovation
- APTC continue the S4EG agenda with TA to support SITESA as well as programming for the rural informal sector/supporting local innovation (no bilateral program)
- APTC continue the S4EG agenda with TA to support SITESA and a bilateral program focuses on programming around the rural informal sector/supporting local innovation.

**Secondary question 2: If there is another phase of the program, how can the GoA ensure that it complements the work of other programs, in particular the regional Australia-Pacific Technical College (APTC) program, USP and Pacific TAFE, the New Zealand funded START program implemented by Caritas and Wintec, the Seasonal Workers program and the Pacific Labour Mobility Scheme?**

The TVET sector in Solomon Islands is crowded. DFAT needs to take a strong lead role in coordinating both within DFAT programs and with other donor programs. Program complementarity needs to be managed at the government-to-government level with coordination and collaboration with other players prioritized as part of performance management of implementing partners.

Regarding APTC, with their current mandate of delivering Australian standard TAFE courses, there have been some coordination challenges between S4EG and APTC (e.g. both programs have been working in the School of Tourism and SINU and Don Bosco). The risk of duplication will intensify in APTC's new phase where, in addition to delivering courses, APTC have a new mandate to support national systems strengthening. Having two DFAT programs in the same sector may be inefficient and



counterproductive. APTCs work plan has not yet been developed and it's not yet clear how quickly they will begin operation and how much resources they will bring to SI. APTC have given early indications that they may work with SINU and the same RTCs where S4EG are working. Representing different commercial interests (managing contractors) there is risk that the projects will seek to undermine each other. DFAT should consider rationalizing the two interventions into one at the end of the S4EG Phase 1 depending on the work program and availability of resources from APTC.

In the meantime, (prior to the end of S4EG Phase 1), S4EG and APTC should share information and S4EG should look for ways to utilize APTC resources. For example, APTC foundations courses could perhaps be delivered at SINU and the RTCs to strengthen literacy and numeracy. Despite attempts, the review team was not able to organize a meeting with University of the South Pacific (USP).

At an implementation level coordination between S4EG and the NZ MFAT funded programs (Caritas and Wintec) has been reasonable with the two programs focusing on some similar locations but different programming areas (curriculum development vs leadership and governance). From the MFAT perspective, after the initial shift from a sole focus on SINU to include the RTCs, there could have been more consultation. Billy Mae, the head of the Solomon Islands Association of Rural Training Centres (SIARTC) has played a key role in coordinating the two programs. Moving forward S4EG and the MFAT funded programs should develop a coordinated approach to working in the RTCs. With their focus on different areas the two programs can learn a lot from each other and share ideas to enhance the outcomes of both programs.

Coordination with the Seasonal Workers Program/Pacific Labour Scheme that plan to source labour through RTCs and S4EG should be straightforward. At this stage, it does not make sense to try to line up RTC courses with sectors for labour mobility demand as numbers are still small and the sectors are not fixed.

There are also opportunities for coordination with Strongim Bisnis, a private sector development program run by DFAT. There are training components to several areas of rural value chain and rural economic development that Strongim Bisnis is working on relating to processing activities that form part of value chain and value add development. These include the use of chocolate and cocoa in pastry making, cocoa drink, coconut oil production and copra production. There may be opportunities for skills training in these areas to be incorporated into curriculum at RTCs where S4EG is working.

**Secondary question 3: Does the current design and modality offer value for money? Is the current modality (a managing contractor) the best model for Australia's intervention in the TVET sector? Why or why not?**

As stated above the program is also limited in scale which affects Value for Money (VfM) although if the systems established become sustainable then there should be many more beneficiaries in the future. However, due to the high cost of equipment and the need for students to use equipment sets individually in order to demonstrate competency under the CBT approach, it may not be possible to scale the courses without further external funding.

## 6. Key Conclusions

The training partnerships initiated by S4EG have resulted in a marked improvement in the quality of curriculum offered at SINU STMS through redesign of courses, support for facilities and equipment and quality management systems. Institutional governance issues at SINU including performance and career management systems, the standing of STMS within the university and funding for trade activities are challenges to the program. These issues could result in risks to sustainable outcomes, for example, due to lack of succession planning for trainers or lack of funding for recurrent costs to maintain equipment or scale up the programs.

Students and trainers at SINU appear to have responded well to the new approach and appreciated the benefits such as improved rigour of content, a student-centred practice based approach to learning and availability of equipment on which to practice skills. However, it also seems that the courses are very dense and some students struggle to keep up with the courses particularly because the courses are in English language and some of the students left school a few years previously. The program team needs to have ways to obtain feedback on comprehensibility of the curriculum and update and adjust the curriculum accordingly.

The S4EG team have taken a multifaceted comprehensive approach to improving the linkages between courses and industry requirements for skilled labour including labour market analysis, consultation with industry representatives on the design of curriculum and developing a competency based approach which provides quality assurance in regard to graduate capacity against recognised standards. Improvement in links to industry are an excellent start but it will take some time for industry and training institutes to develop strong linkages.

Employers will want to see improvements in literacy and numeracy as well as some soft skills such as work ethic, problem solving, sense of urgency and being methodical among graduates which are as important to employability as specific technical skills. The program team are responsive to these priorities and introducing foundations and employability courses as part of curriculum as well as competency in specific technical skills. As a key beneficiary of skilled labour industry needs to be positioned to invest in skills training particularly given restrictions in funding from the TVET sector. This will require ongoing effort and advocacy.

The program team performed well on GESI with a comprehensive strategy of supporting basic living needs for female students at RTCs and teachers at Bethdesa Disabled School, increasing course content that relates to women including revising course specific for women (from Life Skills to Vocational Pathways for Young Women and Girls) and including more female friendly content in other courses such as agribusiness, office administration and tourism and hospitality. The program team has also ensured that females receive a fair share of RTC scholarships and promoted participation of women in traditional male trades.

The team has taken a multifaceted approach to supporting management through the introduction of quality management systems at partners and RTCs. The team will need to monitor whether these systems introduce management complexity that puts strains on remote and poor institutions.

The design focused on matching course outcomes to formal sector job opportunities but 85% of the population works in the informal sector. Consideration should be given to whether in the future DFAT's scope in the sector could expand to focus on skills needs in local provincial economies.

The TVET sector in Solomon Islands is crowded. DFAT needs to take a strong lead role in coordinating both within DFAT programs and with other donor programs. Program complementarity needs to be managed at the government-to-government level with coordination and collaboration with other players prioritized as part of performance management of implementing partners. Having two DFAT programs in the same sector may be inefficient and counterproductive. APTCs work plan has not yet been developed and it's yet not clear how quickly they will begin operation and how much resources they will bring to SI. APTC have given early indications that they may work with SINU and the same



RTCs where S4EG are working. Representing different commercial interests (managing contractors) there is risk that the projects will seek to undermine each other. DFAT should consider rationalizing the two interventions into one at the end of the S4EG Phase 1 depending on the work program and availability of resources from APTC.

## 7. Key Recommendations

Based on the findings and key conclusions the IR has proposed the following recommendations for consideration.

**Recommendation 1:** DFAT to extend the current phase for 12-months to allow time to assess the best model moving forward. This would allow for one more year of implementation to consolidate outcomes and obtain more clarity on APTCs work program and the corresponding SI budget before commencing on a design and tendering process in early 2020.

**Recommendation 2:** DFAT to consolidate support for SITESA but retain careful oversight of risks relating to institutionalisation of the authority. If SITESA fails to be gazetted or lack of institutionalisation transpires for other reasons DFAT should consider encouraging SIG to shift the focus to regional accreditation for TVET courses.

**Recommendation 3:** DFAT support SIG to consolidate the training packages and institutional support at SINU and RTCs but retain oversight of the risks relating to governance at the institutions.

**Recommendation 4:** DFAT to consolidate and continue to support linkages between SINU/RTCs and industry and conduct further analysis of opportunities for industry to fund training. This would also include S4EG conducting further analysis on how to support governance and management issues at partner institutions

**Recommendation 5:** S4EG to support partners to consider ways to stagger work placements with industry in order to provide continuity of labour supply for industry partners.

**Recommendation 6:** S4EG to consider including content on food and nutrition (originally in the life-skills courses but was removed) back into the Vocational Pathways course. The program team to consider removing the WASH modules as cross cutting content in all courses.

**Recommendation 7:** The program team to consider approaches and methods to collect data on a longitudinal basis to provide an evidence-base of how the curriculum is being applied and how teachers and trainers are improving in capacity as a result.

**Recommendation 8:** Both DFAT and S4EG to consider overall resourcing requirements for the proposed extension phase with an emphasis on “localising support” in light of the high number of expatriate advisers on the program. S4EG to consider issues of empowerment and whether there are any opportunities to support local counterparts to implement their own ideas and solutions

**Recommendation 9:** DFAT considers supporting SIG to draw on the extensive needs analysis of skills demand in local provincial economies that has been conducted by WB, ADB and S4EG to develop courses aimed at meeting labour demand in local provincial economies.

**Recommendation 10:** Both DFAT and S4EG to consider how scaling up can occur keeping in mind that TVET courses are expensive and local institutions may not be able to afford scaling up on their own. DFAT should encourage and provide secretariat support for SITESA to take on a leadership role in donor coordination and develop joint approaches and share lessons learned with stakeholders in the space.

## Annex 1: Scope of Services, Independent Review of the Solomon Islands Skills for Economic Growth

### **Overview and context**

The Solomon Islands labour market is characterised by a shortage of adequately skilled workers. Unemployment is high, particularly in rural areas; at the same time, firms struggle to fill skilled positions due to a lack of suitably qualified candidates. The Skills for Economic Growth program aims to address this by increasing the quality and relevance of technical and vocational training in the Solomon Islands.

The program's goal is 'to strengthen the capacity of the nation's post-secondary education and training system to produce quality graduates who are in demand in the labour market and who have the skills and knowledge needed to increase national productivity and competitiveness'.

The program has three components:

- i) support to the Solomon Islands National University (SINU), the largest provider of technical training in the Solomon Islands;
- ii) support to a selected number of Rural Training Centres (RTCs) in Western, Malaita and Guadalcanal provinces; and
- iii) support to the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development (MEHRD) in developing national systems.

The intermediate program outcomes are:

- Quality of skills course delivery improved to meet industry standards
- Improved capacity of skills providers to deliver higher level, quality qualifications
- Equitable access and increased participation of women and people with disability in skills trainings
- Graduates knowledge, skills and attitude match the demand of the labour market
- Increased support by governments (national/ provincial), private sector and civil society in Skills development activities in provinces
- Improved relevance of skills courses and qualifications and
- Increased recognition by the private sector of the relevance of skills training and national qualifications to meet labour market demand.

The end of program outcomes are:

- Graduates with more relevant and higher quality skills and qualifications that will contribute to national and provincial economic development
- Improved relevance of TVET courses and qualifications
- Quality of TVET course delivery improved to meet industry needs
- Equitable access to quality assured skills development for women and young people and people with a disability and
- National and internationally recognised qualifications.

The program contributes to two of the aid program's three strategic objectives in the Solomon Islands; enabling economic growth and enhancing human development.

The Skills for Economic Growth program is valued at \$16 million. The program began in November 2015 and is currently in the third year of an initial four-year investment. The program is

implemented by a managing contractor, Palladium, and staffed mainly by international skills advisers who are supported by a small team of local staff.

When the program was designed it was envisaged that it would be the first phase of a ten-year investment in TVET in the Solomon Islands by the Australian Government.

In addition to the bilateral Skills for Economic Growth program, Australia supports the TVET sector through the regional Australia-Pacific Technical College (APTC) Program. The Australian Government also supports Youth at Work, a small local NGO that helps young people find jobs and establish small businesses. Our support to Youth at Work will end in August 2019. Australia also supports the University of the South Pacific and Pacific TAFE, which have campuses in the Solomon Islands.

The New Zealand Government funds the Strengthening Technical and Agricultural Rural Training (START) program, which is implemented by Caritas, and Wintec.

### ***Program progress***

With the program's support, the Solomon Islands Government passed legislation creating a mandate for the Solomon Islands Tertiary Education and Skills Authority (SITESA), an education authority that will be responsible for technical training in the Solomon Islands. However there have been delays in establishing the authority.

The program has developed 15 'National Skills Packages', certificate level courses in a range of vocational subjects. The aim is for these courses to be accredited by SITESA when it is established, and for the technical training institutes the program supports to either be registered as training providers, or on a path to registration, by SITESA.

To date, the program's support to technical training institutes has focussed on improving facilities and providing tools and other equipment. At the Solomon Islands National University's School of Technical and Maritime Studies, the program has built an electrical training workshop and model office. It will soon complete an automotive centre of excellence.

The program has signed partnership agreements with eight Rural Training Centres (RTCs). Support has focussed on Tabaka RTC in Western Province, APSD in Malaita Province and, to a lesser extent, Don Bosco and Divit RTC in Guadalcanal Province.

The program has refurbished the facilities at DIVIT RTC to create a small tourism and hospital training centre. A larger tourism and hospitality training centre is currently being built at Tabaka RTC.

The program has also focussed on developing the capacity of trainers to deliver competency-based training. International Skills Advisers have mentored trainers at SINU and the RTCs the program supports. The program has also supported trainers to complete trainer development courses, including the International Training and Assessment Course (ITAC).

### ***Support required***

The purpose of this tasking note is to engage a team to conduct an independent evaluation of the program. There has been no independent evaluation of the program to date.

The main purpose of the evaluation will be to inform the future of Australian support to the TVET sector in the Solomon Islands. The Skills for Economic Growth program will end in December 2019.

The recommendations from the evaluation will also be used to improve program performance in the final year of implementation. In particular, we would like to know whether the program is on track to achieve its end of program outcomes.

Questions the evaluation will answer

The evaluation will focus on the following key evaluation questions.

1. To what extent has the program improved the capacity of technical training institutes to deliver quality training courses?
  - a) To what extent have trainers at SINU adopted competency based approaches to training?
  - b) To what extent have trainers at the RTCs the program supports adopted competency based approaches to training?
  - c) Have the new facilities contributed to an increase in the quality of courses? Are the facilities being used appropriately?
  - d) What changes have been made to the governance of training institutes as a result of the program, including in relation to their policies on women and people with disabilities?
2. Do improvements in skills training meet industry expectations?
  - a) To what extent has industry been actively engaged in providing labour market information/data and content for developing courses?
  - b) Are employers in the Solomon Islands satisfied with the changes that have been made to technical training, including the alignment of courses with labour market needs?
  - b) Does the private sector feel that the Skills program is delivering it tangible benefits?
  - c) Have improvements in skills training delivery improved employment prospects for graduates?
3. To what extent has the program increased the capacity of the Solomon Islands Government to administer the skills training system in the Solomon Islands?
  - a) To what extent has the Solomon Islands Government demonstrated increased commitment to vocational education and training systems, including planning, budgeting and resourcing?
  - b) To what extent has the program influenced national skills development through its advice and support to the Solomon Islands Government?
  - c) To what extent does the program align with and respond to Solomon Islands Government priorities as identified in the MEHRD National Education Action Plan?
  - d) Has the program led to increased engagement between the Ministry of Education, industry and training providers?
4. What social and economic impact has the program had on program beneficiaries including students, trainers, school leaders and employers?
  - a) In particular, to what extent has the program increased participation and equitable access for women and people with disabilities?
  - b) As a result of S4EG program activities, do partners increasingly treat gender equality and inclusion of people with a disability as a priority through their own policies and processes?
5. What lessons can be learned to inform the next stage of Australia's support to the TVET sector?
  - a) Is the current modality (a managing contractor) the best model for Australia's intervention in the TVET sector?
  - b) Does the current modality offer value for money?
  - c) Is there a need for another phase of the bilateral program?
  - d) If there is another phase of the program how will it ensure that it complements the work of other programs, in particular the regional Australia-Pacific Technical College (APTC) program, USP and Pacific TAFE, the New Zealand funded START program implemented by Caritas and Wintec, the Seasonal Workers program and the Pacific Labour Mobility Scheme?

The evaluation team will be required to develop a detailed evaluation plan to determine how these key questions will be answered.

### ***Specific skills and qualifications required***

There will be three people in the evaluation team. The team will be led by an evaluation specialist with expertise in monitoring and evaluation preferably in the TVET sector. The evaluation team should also include a local person who can present the views of local industry and employers.

The evaluation team will be supported by a representative from DFAT, who will support the evaluation team by arranging interviews and site visits.

Relevant background documents

- DFAT's Monitoring and Evaluation standards
- The Skills for Economic Growth program concept paper
- The Skills for Economic Growth program Design document
- The Skills for Economic Growth program's annual reports
- The Skills for Economic Growth program's labour market reports
- The Australia Pacific Technical Coalition Phase 3 Design document
- The Solomon Islands Aid Investment Plan
- Ministry of Education's National Education Action Plan

### ***Expected outputs***

The evaluation team will review the relevant documents and prepare an evaluation plan to be submitted to DFAT for approval. The evaluation plan should outline the methods and timeframe the evaluators will use to answer the key evaluation questions listed above.

The evaluation team will undertake a ten day visit to the Solomon Islands to meet with stakeholders and conduct site visits. Suggested stakeholders include the Minister for Education and Human Resource Development, the Permanent Secretary of MEHRD, the APTC Country Director and Vocational Training Manager, the International Programme Manager at Wintec, the Senior Programmes Manager at Caritas, the Director of the Association of Rural and Vocational Training Centres, members of the S4EG Strategic Advisory Group and program staff. The evaluation team should also interview staff and students at the technical training institutes the program supports and industry representatives. The evaluation team will confirm the people and organisations they wish to consult in their evaluation plan.

The team leader will submit and present an initial Aide Memoire (3-4) pages outlining the key findings of the evaluation upon completion of the in-country mission. A draft independent evaluation report (maximum 20 pages excluding attachments) should then be submitted. A final evaluation report (maximum 25 pages) should be submitted within two weeks of receiving DFAT's comments.

DFAT will be the primary user of the evaluation report. The report will be shared with Palladium, the Ministry of Education and the Australia-Pacific Technical College. DFAT may choose to publish the report. Reports should be consistent with DFAT's Monitoring and Evaluation Standards.

### ***Timeframe***

The evaluation team should review the relevant background documents and prepare an evaluation plan by 30 September 2018. The in-country mission should take place in October, and the Aide Memoire should be presented at the end of the mission. The draft evaluation report should be submitted to DFAT by 17 November. The final evaluation report should be submitted to DFAT by 7 December 2019.

## Annex 2: S4EG Independent Review - Schedule

Day	Date	Time	Activity	Notes
1	Wednesday 14/11	1.55 - 2.00 PM	Arrival in Honiara.	Henderson Airport
		2.30 - 3.30 PM	Travel to Heritage Park Hotel	Hotel
		4.00 - 4.30 PM	Meet with DFAT.	(TBD)
		<i>End of meetings</i>		
2	Thursday 15/11	8.00 - 9.00 AM	First Secretary Education, Leah Horsfall Second Secretary Skills, Vivienne Sykes Program Manager Skills, Vanessa Teutao Senior Program Manager Political, Natalina Hong	AHC Annex, Small Conference room
		10.30 - 11.00 AM	Leave AHC Annex to S4EG office (SINU)	DC 2-5
		11.00 AM - 12.00 PM	<i>Interviews with Skills For Economic Growth program:</i> Monitoring & Evaluation Officer, Lilita Waleanisia - M&E Framework	S4EG office, SINU
		12.00 - 1.00 pm	<i>Interviews with Skills advisers:</i> Senior Skills Adviser, Bede O'Brien	(TBD) / ANZ café, S4EG office, SINU
		1.00 - 1.30 PM	Lunch	(TBD)
		1.30 - 2.30 PM	<i>Interviews with Skills advisers:</i> Senior Skills Adviser, James Knynenburg	(TBD) / ANZ café, S4EG office, SINU
		3.00 - 5.00 PM	<i>Interviews with Skills For Economic Growth program:</i> Team Leader, Barry Peddle	(TBD) / ANZ café, S4EG office, SINU, Heritage Park Hotel - Terrace café
		<i>End of meetings</i>		
3	Friday 16/11	8.30 - 9.15 AM	Leave Heritage Park Hotel for Bethesda. <i>Travel time approx. 40mins</i>	DC 2-5
		9.30 AM - 2.30 PM	<i>Interviews with Bethesda</i>	Bethesda
		3.30 - 4.30 PM	<i>Interviews with New Zealand High Commission:</i> Second Secretary New Zealand's Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Trade, Dana Avram	New Zealand High Commission residence, Lengakiki

		<i>End of meetings</i>		
4	Saturday 17/11	NA	Rest day	Hotel
5	Sunday 18/11	XX.XX	Travel day	HIR-MUN
		XX.XX	Check-in Agnes Gateway Hotel	Agnes Gateway Hotel
6	Monday 19/11	8.30 - 9.00 AM	Leave Agnes Gateway Hotel for Tabaka. <i>Boat trip approx. 30mins</i>	OBM Contact: Caleb, ( <i>phone</i> )
		9.30 - 4.00 PM	<i>Interviews with</i> (TBD)	Tabaka RTC
		4.00 - 4.30 PM	Leave Tabaka for Agnes Gateway Hotel. <i>Boat trip approx. 30mins</i>	OBM Contact: Caleb, ( <i>phone</i> )
		<i>End of meetings</i>		
7	Tuesday 20/11		Travel day	HIR-MUN
		XX.XX	[*TBC]	
		12.00 - 1.00 PM	Lunch	(TBD)
		XX.XX	<i>Interviews with the Solomon Islands National University (SINU) students:</i>	
		<i>End of meetings</i>		
8	Wednesday 21/11	8.00 - 9.00 AM	[*TBC] <i>Interviews with</i> Industry Representatives: CEO Solomon Power, Pradip Verma	(TBD)
		9.30 - 10.30 AM	<i>Interviews with the Solomon Islands National University (SINU):</i> Dean of the School of Technical & Maritime Studies, Solomon Pita Acting Vice Chancellor, Professor Prem Rai Director of the Institute of Tourism & Hospitality, Charlie Panakera	SINU
		11.00 AM - 12.00PM	<i>Interviews with</i> Industry Representatives: Tongs Limited/Chair Solomon Islands Manufacturer's Association, Joe Sika Construction supervisor Mechanic supervisor.	Tongs Limited office
		12.30 - 1.30 PM	Lunch	(TBD)
		2.00 - 3.00 PM	<i>Interviews with</i> SICCI: CEO SICCI, Dennis Meone CEO (Incumbent), Atenasi Ata Wasuka	SICCI office *tentative.
		3.30 - 4.30 PM	[*TBC] <i>Interview with Ministry of Education &amp; Human Resource Development:</i> ( <i>position</i> ), James Bosamata TVET Unit, Martin Marairi	MEHRD
		<i>End of meetings</i>		
9	Thursday 22/11	8.00 - 9.00 AM	<i>Interviews with</i> Australia Pacific Training Coalition: Country Director, APTC, Donald Malasa	APTC office

			Vocational Training Manager APTC, Glyn Milhench	
		9.30 - 10.30 AM	<i>Interviews with University of the South Pacific:</i> Pro Vice Chancellor & Head of School of Public Health, Professor Prem Misir	USP Campus
		11.00 AM - 12.00 PM	Free	(TBD)
		12.00 - 1.00 PM	Lunch	(TBD)
		1.30 - 2.30 PM	[*TBC] <i>Interview with Ministry of Education &amp; Human Resource Development:</i> Permanent Secretary, Dr Franco Rodie	(TBD)
		3.00 - 4.00 PM	[*TBC] <i>Interview with Ministry of Education &amp; Human Resource Development:</i> Director National Training Unit (NTU), Clement Tito	(TBD)
		XX.XX	Free	(TBD)
		7.00 - 8.30 PM	<i>Informal Dinner</i>	Melissa's house, Tasahe
		<i>End of meetings</i>		
10	Friday 23/11	8.00 - 9.00 AM	<i>Interviews with Skills adviser:</i> Gender Equality & Social Inclusion, Policy & Compliance adviser, Kathleen Iarcurto	Heritage Park Hotel - Terrace café
		9.30 - 10.30 AM	Leave Heritage Park Hotel for Divit. <i>Travel time approx. 1 Hour.</i>	DC 2-5
		10.00 AM - 4.30 PM	<i>Interviews with (TBD)</i>	Divit
		<i>End of meetings</i>		
11	Saturday 24/11	NA	Rest day	Hotel
12	Sunday 25/11	NA	Rest day	Hotel
13	Monday 26/11	8.00 - 9.00 AM	<i>Interviews with Skills adviser:</i> Curriculum, Workforce Development & Quality Adviser, Marty Burgess	Heritage Park Hotel - Terrace café
		9.05 - 9.30 AM	Leave Heritage Park Hotel, for Don Bosco (Tetere). <i>Travel time approx. 30mins.</i>	DC 2-5
		10.00 AM - 4.00 PM	<i>Interviews with (TBD)</i>	Don Bosco, Tetere
		4.30 - 5.00 PM	Leave Don Bosco (Tetere) for Heritage Park Hotel. <i>Travel time approx. 30mins.</i>	DC 2-5
		<i>End of meetings</i>		
14	Tuesday 27/11	8.00 - 8.30 AM	Free <i>Interviews with Industry Representatives:</i> Jay - Hatanga?	



		9.00 AM - 3.00 PM	Free	
		3.30 - 4.30 PM	<i>Interviews with Seasonal Worker's Program (SWP)</i> SWP Support Program Manager, Jodie Cornish SWP Senior Program Officer, David Ramosaea	Level One, Central Plaza
		<i>End of meetings</i>		
15	Wednesday 28/11	9.00 - 10.00 AM	<i>Aide Memoire:</i> High Commissioner, HE Roderick Brazier	AHC Chancery (TBD)
		10.30 AM	<i>Catch Heritage Park Hotel transfer bus</i>	HP/Henderson
		2.00 PM	Travel	HIR-BNE

### Annex 3: List of People Interviewed

Date	Time	INFORMANT NAME	INFORMANT POSITION	Organisation	Location of interview	EV. TEAM member
Thursday 15/11/2018	9:00 - 10:00 am	Leah Horsefall	First Secretary Education	DFAT	AHC Annex, Small conference room	Frances Barns & Jennifer Tugunau
		Vivienne Sykes	Second Secretary Skills	DFAT		FB and JT
		Vanessa Teutao	Program Manager Skills	DFAT		FB & JT
		Natalina Hongg	Senior Program Manager Political	DFAT		FB & JT
	11:00-12:00 pm	Lilita Walenisia	Monitoring and Evaluation Officer	S4EG	S4EG officce	FB & JT
	12:00-1:00 pm	Bede O'Brien	Senior skills adviser	S4EG	S4EG officce	FB & JT
	1:30-2:30 pm	James Kynnenburg	Senior skills adviser	S4EG	S4EG officce	FB & JT
	3:00-5:00 pm	Barry Peddle	Team Leader	S4EG	Heritage Park Café	FB & JT
Friday 16/11/2018	8:30-2:30 pm	Gideon Row	School Principal	Bethesda RTC	Principal office	FB & JT
	3:30-4:30 pm	Dana Avram	Second Secretary New Zealand's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade	New Zealand High Com	NZHC	FB & JT
Monday 18/11/18	9:00-1:00 pm	Joash,	Principal,	Tabaka RTC	Principal Office	FB & JT
		Jason Maedada,	Carpentry and building tutor,	Tabaka RTC	Staff Office	FB & JT
		Job Rina Toaka,	Electrical Tutor	Tabaka RTC	Staff Office	FB & JT
		Rev. Hansel Makupe	NTS/School chaplain	Tabaka RTC	Staff Office	FB & JT
		Jeffrey Paitopala	Mechanical Tutor	Tabaka RTC	Staff Office	FB & JT
		Philemon Ruia	S4EG Skills Dev Coordinator	Tabaka RTC	Staff Office	FB & JT
		Joycelyn Haheiseu	Life skills tutor	Tabaka RTC	Staff Office	FB & JT
		Micah Silukana	Agriculture/livestock	Tabaka RTC	Staff Office	FB & JT
		Johnson Lukakolo	Construction/Deputy Principal	Tabaka RTC	Staff Office	FB & JT

		George Ngimaika	Business studies/Freelance Tutor	Tabaka RTC	Staff Office	FB & JT
	1:00-3:00 pm	Tabaka RTC Students	Students	Tabaka RTC	Life skills room & Common hall	FB & JT
	1:30-2:30 pm	Vincent Fiuta	Electrical Instructor,	SINU	Model Office	FB
		Ricky Hoa	Carpentry Instructor	SINU		FB
	1:30-2:30 pm	Students	Carpentry students, Electrical Students	SINU	Model Office	FB & JT
	2:30-3:30 pm	Tony Blair	Carpentry Adviser	SINU	Model Office	FB & JT
Wednesday 21/11/2018	9:30-10:30 pm	Solomon Pita	Dean of School of Technical and Maritime Studies	SINU	Dean's office	FB & JT
	11:00-1:00 pm	Joe Sika,	General Manager	TONGS	Tongs Conference room	FB & JT
		Aaron	Construction Manager	TONGS	Tongs Conference room	FB & JT
		Dennis Meone,	Out-going CEO	Solomon Islands Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SICCI)	Hyundai Café	FB & JT
	2:00-3:00 pm	Atenasi Wasuka	New CEO	Solomon Islands Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SICCI) DFAT	Hyundai Café	FB & JT
		Melissa Stutsel	Acting Deputy High Commissioner		Australian High Commission	FB & JT
	3:30-4:30 pm	Pradit Verma	CEO	Solomon Power	Heritage Park Café	FB & JT
	4:30-5:30 pm	Donal Malasa	Country Director	APTC	Director's office	FB & JT
Thursday 22/11/2018	8:00-9:00 am	Glyn Milhench	VOcational Training Manager	APTC MEHRD	Director's office MEHRD'sconference room	FB & JT
		Soli Middelby	Pacific Regional Director			FB & JT
		Constance Nasi	Under Secretary (Education)			FB & JT

	1:30-2:30 pm	Sr. Anna	Principal	Divit RTC, Visale	Staff office	FB & JT
		Kay Schofield	APTC Design Reference Group Chair			FB
	4.30-5.30pm	Sr. Jenny	Bursar	Divit RTC, Visale	Staff office	FB & JT
Friday 23/11/2018	9:00-12:30 pm	Billy Mae	Director	SIARTC	SIARTC Office	FB & JT
	12:30-1:45 pm	Dr. Franco Rodie	Permanent Secretary	MEHRD	MEHRD	FB & JT
	2:00-3:00 pm	Marty Burgess	Skills adviser	S4EG	Heritage Park Café	FB & JT
Monday 26/11/2018	8:00-9:00 am	Kathleen Iacurto	Skills adviser	S4EG	Heritage Park Café	FB & JT
	9:15-10:15 am	Louise Ellerton	First Secretary Labour Mobility	DFAT	Map room	FB & JT, Vivienne Sykes
	11:00am -12:00 pm	Nick Borthwick	Program Manager, Wintech	Wintech	Phone	FB
	2.00pm - 3.00pm	Ana Gibert	Team Leader, Vanuatu Skills Partnership	Scope Global	Phone	FB
	4.30pm-5.30pm	Fr. Bai Albessa Sob	Salesian,	Don Bosco (Tetere campus)	Don Bosco campus	
Tuesday 27/11/18	9:00am - 12:00pm	Fr. Albert Lenon	Agriculture teacher,	Don Bosco (Tetere campus)	Don Bosco campus	
		Joseph A'aron,	Salesian Principal,	Don Bosco (Tetere campus)	Don Bosco campus	
		Maria Kuri,	Deputy principal,	Don Bosco (Tetere campus)	Don Bosco campus	
		Francis Ngaovera,	Lifeskill teacher,	Don Bosco (Tetere campus)	Don Bosco campus	
		Fr. Angelo Fazzini	Computer/religious education	Don Bosco (Tetere campus)	Don Bosco campus	
			Principal	Don Bosco (Henderson campus)	Principal's office	JT & Vanessa Teutao
	1:00-2:00 pm	Maxwell Kaefia	Carpentry instructor	Don Bosco (Henderson campus)	Library	JT
		Cecy Suruau	Office administration	Don Bosco (Henderson campus)	Library	JT
	2:00-4:00	Jenter Witney Wairepo	Tourism and hospitality	Don Bosco (Henderson campus)	Library	JT
		Ester Makatoro	Office administration	Don Bosco (Henderson campus)	Library	JT
		John Wesley Vongara	Electrical student	Don Bosco (Henderson campus)	Principal's office	Vanessa
	2:00-4:00	Jodi Cornish,	SWP Support Program Manager,	Seasonal Workers Program	Market street kitchen	FB
	3:30-4:30	Nick Crosling	AISS Manager	Scope Global	Phone	FB

## Annex 4 List of References

- Ministry of Development Planning and Aid Coordination, *Medium Term Development Plan (2014-18)*, Solomon Islands Government,
- Ministry of Finance and Treasury, *Solomon Islands Budget 2014 Budget Strategy and Outlook Paper*, Solomon Islands Government, (2014)
- Ministry of Development Planning and Aid Coordination, *National Human Resource Development and Training Plan 2012 2014*, Solomon Islands Government, (2011)
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- Solomon Islands National Statistics Office, *Solomon Islands 2009 Population and Housing Census*, Solomon Islands Government,(2011)
- Peddle, Barry, *Report Solomon Islands Tertiary Sector*, Australian Government, (2013)
- Bateman, Cassity & Fangalusuu, *Financing TVET in the Pacific – Solomon Islands Country Report, unpublished draft*, Australian Council for Education Research, (2014)