

Independent Evaluation of Tonga TVET Support Program 1 (TSP1)

MANAGEMENT RESPONSE

Prepared by: Education Team, AusAID Nuku'alofa Post
Approved by: John Davidson, Minister-Counsellor, Pacific
Date Approved:

Aid Activity Summary

Aid Activity Name	Tonga TVET Support Program Phase 1 (TSP1)		
AidWorks initiative number	INI954		
Commencement date	May 2010	Completion date	June 2014
Total Australian \$	\$3.71 million		
Total other \$	\$3.71 million		
Delivery organisation(s)	Tonga TVET Support Program (TSP) Office, Ministry of Training, Employment, Youth and Sports (MOTSEYS)		
Implementing Partner(s)	Government of Tonga, Ministry of Training, Employment, Youth and Sports (MOTSEYS) until 1 July 2012 when this program transfers to the Ministry of Education and Training		
Country/Region	Tonga		
Primary Sector	Education		

Aid Activity Objective:

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

Independent Evaluation Summary

Evaluation Objective:

- Provide an independent assessment of the progress against the objectives of the Tonga Technical and Vocational Education (TVET) Support Program (TSP1) referencing AusAID assessment criteria; in particular, the assessment will examine the activity's scope and its management model, strengths and comparative advantages and also provide lessons for future support to TVET in Tonga;
- Identify issues that need to be addressed to improve the implementation and management of TSP1 through to December 2012, and recommend a course of action to accomplish this.

Evaluation Completion Date: July 2012

Evaluation Team:

- Mr Peter Morris – Team Leader
- Dr Ton Farla – TVET and Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist

- Mr Oto Misi – Government of Tonga representative

Management Response

The Independent Progress Review (IPR) was jointly agreed to by the Governments of Australia, Tonga and New Zealand in accordance with the TSP1 design, and was undertaken during April to June 2012. The IPR also coincided with the whole-of-Government of Tonga public sector restructure involving the move of 'training' and TSP1 to the Ministry of Education and Training (MET), beginning 1 July 2012.

While the IPR acknowledges the work of those who have implemented the TSP1, the report concludes that, overall, the TSP1 is not delivering on the outcomes it was designed to achieve. The report identifies a range of factors that led to this situation including, most fundamentally, an overly ambitious design for the Tonga context, and recommends the current approach be reconsidered. In line with Australia's aid effectiveness commitments when expected results are not being achieved, we propose that senior officials from Australia and New Zealand commence consultations with the Government of Tonga to determine the best way forward for TVET in Tonga. We propose discussions take place at mutually convenient time during August 2012.

A number of areas of particular concern raised in the report are as follows. AusAID will seek to address these issues through the below Recommendations:

- A poor **program design which did not adequately reflect the existing TVET context in Tonga** and which did not include adequate analysis to determine priority sectors for support;
- A **lack of a common vision for TVET in Tonga and the absence of any process to build such a vision** based on broad based understanding of TVET concepts and approaches;
- The **absence of a national TVET policy** and legislative framework and missed opportunity to build understanding and ownership through a policy development process including an integrated approach to national system reform;
- A **lack of data, particularly labour market information and skills plans to inform policy development and TSP1 implementation strategies** to help identify appropriate courses and units of competence;
- A **Program Management structure which falsely assumed an adequate level of administrative capacity** within the implementing Ministry and the donors to implement a large (by Tongan standards) development cooperation program;
- A **poorly implemented Donor Funding Arrangement and complex governance structures between the Governments of Tonga, Australia and New Zealand** causing delays, uncertainty and confusion in the delivery of the program.
- **Lack of a cohesive approach to monitoring and evaluation and poor implementation** relating to the Tonga TVET Management Information System.

The management team agreed to 2 recommendations and the management response and actions are noted below.

Recommendation One

Recommendation: That the three Governments, Tonga, Australia and New Zealand commence consultations during August 2012 on the way forward and next steps concerning provision of support to TVET in Tonga.

Response: Agree

Actions: Development Partners (Australia and New Zealand) to initiate discussion to determine the best way forward for supporting TVET in Tonga, and to arrange consultations with the Government of Tonga concerning the way forward to supporting TVET in Tonga.

Recommendation Two

Recommendation: Outline recommended activities to be undertaken over the 9 months, from August 2012 to March 2013 to ensure that the TSP1 is able to continue activities that will benefit TVET in Tonga as well as initiate critical pieces of work necessary to underpin meaningful TVET interventions in the future.

Recommendation 2.1: To undertake a comprehensive a labour market study incorporating both an analysis of the current domestic and regional (to include Australia, New Zealand and possibly the United States) labour markets (including skill shortages, skill gaps and training priorities) and a projection of skill needs over the next 5 years.

Response: Agree

Action: AusAID Nuku'alofa Post:

- Ensure that IPR recommended activities are included the TSP1 work plan for August 2012 through to April 2013;
- Work with TSP1 and program stakeholders to approve the August 2012 - April 2013 work plan and to help expedite the sourcing of necessary technical assistance to enable these activities.

Recommendation 2.2: Development Partners with Government of Tonga support the development of a national TVET policy through which a common vision for TVET in Tonga should emerge.

Response: Agree

Actions: AusAID Nuku'alofa to:

- assist TSP1 recruit/source and technical assistance to support this process and activity

Recommendation 2.3: *A costed workplan produced by TSP1 up to the end of April 2013, based on the recommended activities outlined in the IPR, and submitted for approval of the Program Steering Committee (PSC).*

Response: Agree

Action: AusAID Nuku'alofa to:

- discuss with the TSP1 the recommended activities to be undertaken over the next 9-months as the basis of the TSP1 work plan, and for the workplan to be submitted for approval by the TSP1 Program Steering Committee as soon as possible.