



QUESTIONNAIRE

Implementation of the SAMOA Pathway and the MSI, BPOA for the Sustainable Development of SIDS

Please note that strict word limits have been established for each question. The Secretariat is unable to consider any information beyond these established word limits. In this regard, you are requested to report only on new or updated information. Information conveyed in previous surveys will not be considered. Previous surveys can be accessed at XXXX under reports.

PART A

VULNERABILITY REDUCTION AND RESILIENCE BUILDING IN SIDS

1. Enhanced Support for a resilient Post COVID 19 Recovery in SIDS

Vulnerability reduction and resilience building are critical issues that must be addressed by SIDS. Briefly elaborate on any resilience building interventions or strategies (proactive or preventative) that have been or are being implemented at national or regional levels that aim specifically at improving resilience in SIDS. Please include financial resources expended in this regard, if available (750 words).

Aotearoa New Zealand's overall goal during and in the aftermath of the pandemic was to support Pacific Island countries prepare for, respond to, and adapt to, living with COVID-19 in a way that minimised the social and economic impacts of the pandemic and builds long-term resilience.

This focus is necessarily informed by our Pacific Resilience approach. The approach recognises five key pillars to inform Aotearoa New Zealand's International Development Cooperation (IDC) investments. These are:

- Economic and fiscal resilience;
- Climate change and disaster resilience;
- Governance resilience;
- Social resilience; and
- Intergenerational and cultural resilience.

These pillars guide our aspirations and focus on development outcomes for Pacific SIDS, as they did and continue to do in response to COVID-19 support and recovery. Resilience is a key priority for Aotearoa New Zealand as espoused in our policy statement on Aotearoa New

Zealand's International Cooperation for Effective Sustainable Development (ICESD) which requires us to work toward development outcomes that are effective, inclusive, resilient, and sustained. For Aotearoa New Zealand, this means providing support that “strengthens the environment, economy, and societies, to withstand shocks and manage crises while protecting future wellbeing”.¹ Discussions around support for resilience are intended to start from where each Pacific partner is and drive towards where they want to go, rather than a one-size-fits-all approach, ensuring that we conduct ourselves in a posture of accompaniment toward a shared horizon in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

One mechanism for this work in response to COVID-19 was the Polynesian Health Corridors programme. Formally established in January 2021 and co-designed with Polynesian Heads of Health systems (Director-Generals and Secretaries of Health), the PHC Programme has several work streams, mainly managed by a Health Corridors Unit in Manatū Hauora - Ministry of Health's (MOH) Public Health Agency.

One of the focuses of the Polynesian Health Corridors was to support health sector preparation and response to COVID-19. COVID-19 caused and exacerbated challenges along a multitude of vulnerability spectrums – many of which are naturally occurring in small island developing states. In the 2021-22 financial year this programme facilitated the donation and delivery of 360,000 COVID-19 vaccines, upskilling and for over 1,400 health workers, and policy support to countries to respond to outbreaks, for example through providing public health expertise to develop protocols and guide case management.

Another mechanism utilised by Aotearoa New Zealand was the provision of emergency budget support to enable our Pacific partners' to respond directly and rapidly to their own COVID-19 response, as well as priorities for recovery. It also provided strong country ownership and alignment to Pacific partners' strategic priorities. Our budget support placed reliance on country systems for the budgeting, accounting, reporting, and audit of funds. In the 2021-22 financial year Aotearoa New Zealand disbursed NZD 162 million of this emergency budget support which enabled Pacific governments to meet critical spending needs in order to maintain law and order, provide basic public services, prepare health systems, and fund social protection mechanisms.

As well as supporting partner government-led responses, Aotearoa New Zealand used existing programmes to support COVID-19 recovery. For example, both Aotearoa New Zealand's Business Link Pacific and the Pacific SME Finance Facility pilot supported Pacific businesses in eight Pacific countries with access to advice and finance to respond to the economic impacts of the pandemic while investing in long-term sustainability, resilience and growth.

¹ MFAT. 2019, 'New Zealand's International Development Principles'. <https://www.mfat.govt.nz/assets/Aid-Programs/Policy/New-Zealand-International-Development-Principles.pdf>

Aotearoa New Zealand also supported partners' emergence from COVID-19 through our work on border settings. One-way quarantine free travel with Sāmoa, Tonga and Vanuatu opened in October 2021, enabling the entry and employment of more than 11,000 seasonal workers. Then, as Aotearoa New Zealand reopened in 2022, access from the Pacific Island countries was prioritised (reflecting the importance of family, cultural, economic and social connections across the region). We also provided support and advice, where requested, to enable Pacific countries to plan and implement their own border re-opening strategies.

2. Enhanced and Tailored Development Cooperation for SIDS

Improved, tailored development co-operation approaches, calibrated to the specific needs, capacity constraints, and economic challenges facing SIDS are necessary if SIDS are to effectively recover from the COVID Pandemic. Briefly elaborate on any planned or ongoing strategies/approaches to improve and deliver on more tailored development support to SIDS. What are the expected results from these interventions in the targeted countries? Please include indications of resource allocations if available (850 words)

Aotearoa New Zealand's Pacific Resilience approach is guided by principles for engagement with our Pacific SIDS partners:

- tātai hono (the recognition of deep and enduring whakapapa [ancestry or genealogical links] connections);
- tātou tātou (all of us together);
- whāia te taumata ōhanga (journey towards a circular economy);
- turou Hawaiiki (navigating together); and
- arongia ki Rangiatea (focus towards excellence).

Informed by Aotearoa New Zealand's commitment to the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), these principles for engagement chart a course for partnering with Pacific SIDS and for development partners more generally. Our support to SIDS is also formally mandated in the policy statement on Aotearoa New Zealand's International Cooperation for Effective Sustainable Development (ICESD). ICESD emphasises the Pacific as our primary geographic focus and SIDS and LDCs more generally. We are required to spend at least 60% of our total IDC budget in the Pacific. These parameters inform and shape our focus on SIDS.

We aim to be partner-led and support our partners on their path to achievement of the SDGs. With our Pacific SIDS partners, we agree Statements of Partnership that set out a shared set of priorities. These priorities are carried over into our four year plans, which are rolling plans guiding the integrated planning and management of Aotearoa New Zealand's overall engagement, including our International Development Cooperation programme investments. The plans are published on MFAT's external website, and refreshed on an

annual basis.

This approach is informed by our domestic context – specifically our domestic indigenous context – and guides our engagement with Pacific SIDS. As Aotearoa New Zealand, we see and know ourselves to be in and of the Pacific region. In engaging with partners we make concerted effort to recognise and engage in the cultural overlay to our engagement. Aotearoa New Zealand is founded on a partnership between Māori as tangata whenua (literally, ‘people of the land’, the indigenous people of Aotearoa), and the Crown (or government). We are work towards ensuring te ao Māori — the Māori worldview — informs how, why, and what we do, as well as how we connect and locate ourselves in our region and the world.

Our short term focus, particularly in light of COVID-19, has been strengthening and investing in economic and fiscal resilience and social resilience. A prime example is the emergency budget support used to assist the economic and fiscal resilience of Pacific SIDS partners who received it.

The Pacific Resilience Approach is also reflected in engagement on climate change financing and policy. SIDS continue to be at the frontline of the devastation caused by climate change and are some of the strongest voices calling for international reforms and responses to improve access to climate finance. Aotearoa New Zealand welcomed the COP27 decision to establish funding arrangements, including a Fund to address loss and damage, and Vanuatu’s successful bid for an International Court of Justice (ICJ) advisory opinion on climate change.

Tuia Te Waka a Kiwa – Aotearoa New Zealand’s International Climate Finance Strategy guides delivery of our international climate finance. It emphasises that *how* we engage on climate finance is as important as *what* we engage on. Engagement principles include being partner-led, rather than seeking to impose our preferences on our partners. This approach acknowledges our partners’ sovereignty, mana, agency and expertise in determining their own climate change mitigation and adaptation priorities and responses. An implementation example of this approach is flexible funding to be provided directly to governments for implementation of their Nationally Determined Contributions and/or National Adaptation Plans.

A key thread of our development co-operation is the centrality of the relationship in our partnerships with Pacific SIDS. We strive to be a constructive and collaborative partner, responding and tailoring our approach to the context in which we are operating, including local cultural contexts.

PART B

IDENTIFYING POLICY PRORITIES IN SIDS FOR THE NEW AGENDA

The SAMOA Pathway contains a number of action areas which require policy formulation, programmes or projects to be implemented at national, sub regional and/or regional levels. While SIDS have made a fair amount of progress with actioning these over the last decade, a number of gaps remain. As the international community prepares for the 4th International Conference on SIDS, what are the key priority policies, programmes and projects that are needed to further advance the SIDS development agenda and why? (750 words)

Aotearoa New Zealand is reluctant to provide comments and views on the policies, programmes and projects that are priorities for SIDS. We look forward to the consultations on SIDS issues that will occur in the lead up to conference, where these priorities will be identified and debated by SIDS.

The issues we are aware of include: climate change mitigation, climate change adaptation, loss and damage, access to and quantum of development and climate finance, recognition of SIDS unique vulnerabilities by the international development system, debt sustainability, reform of international financial institutions, biodiversity and habitat protection, sustainable oceans management, blue economy development, and economic diversification. We welcome ongoing discussions by SIDS on these and other issues as they come together for the 2024 conference.