



## SAMOA COUNTRY PROGRAM

### ABOUT THE PROGRAM

The Pacific Leadership Program (PLP) is a regional initiative of the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade that recognises the pivotal role of leadership in development. PLP builds, applies and shares knowledge on developmental leadership (i.e. individuals, organisations and other stakeholders working together on inclusive policy and institutional change for the public good).

PLP's work is structured around the following results streams:

- *Results Stream 1:* Building a body of knowledge on developmental leadership in the Pacific;
- *Results Stream 2:* Supporting collective action by Pacific Island leaders;
- *Results Stream 3:* Enabling and achieving policy and institutional change;
- *Results Stream 4:* Delivering high quality and influential communication to inform policy and practice.

PLP commenced in 2008 and is in Phase 3. Guided by an Advisory Panel of influential Pacific Islanders, PLP works at the regional level, including with regional organisations; and nationally and sub-nationally in four countries – Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu. PLP's Advisory Panel representative from Samoa is Deputy Prime Minister, Hon. Fiame Naomi Mata'afa.

### HOW WE WORK

PLP works with influential individuals and organisations as they work to pursue an identified policy reform or behaviour change. We recognise that exercising developmental leadership can be complex and unpredictable, and provide flexible support tailored to the specific needs of each partner. This includes: funding, mentoring, capacity development, research, monitoring and evaluation, training (including on adaptive leadership), networking and information sharing.

### Developmental change and reform coalitions

PLP views coalitions as a strong mechanism for overcoming the deeply entrenched and complex problems that define most development challenges. Coalitions are groupings of individuals and/or organisations working together on a common development problem. Coalition members bring different capabilities, resources, and social and political capital to the coalition, contributing to the achievement of shared objectives.

PLP also facilitates and supports collective action by bringing stakeholders together to share information and resources, and linking groups of people working together (i.e. coalitions) to other reform initiatives occurring nationally, regionally and internationally.

### OUR WORK

PLP works through robust relationships with government and non-government stakeholders in Samoa. We support our stakeholders to develop and implement their own leadership initiatives, and facilitate participation in broader, cross-sectoral coalitions for development change. PLP identifies opportunities to support developmental leadership in Samoa across these priority areas:

- Women's Leadership
- Community Leadership
- Future Developmental Leadership
- Private Sector Leadership

## PRIVATE SECTOR LEADERSHIP

### Samoa Chamber of Commerce and Industry

PLP has a long-term partnership with the Samoa Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Over the course of this partnership, the Chamber has become the leading representative body for the private sector in Samoa. The Chamber implements key initiatives on agribusiness, supports regional trade and runs a youth internship program. PLP support has also helped enhance the Samoa Chamber's capacity to influence national policies on private sector development.

In 2016, the Samoa Chamber introduced private sector think tanks, a key recommendation of the PLP-funded *Review of Policy Positions*. These think tanks are providing member input and expert perspectives in sectors such as ports and shipping, tourism and hospitality and information and communication technology. After each think tank, a policy document is developed and submitted to the Samoan Government.

The government is paying close attention to the Chamber's evidence-based policy advocacy. A Chamber think tank led the government to suspend the planned closure of the Apia wharf for the laying of the Tui Samoa cable. The Government also decided against raising the Value-Added Goods and Services Tax in the 2017-18 Budget following the Chamber's private-sector submission to the government review of taxes, fees and charges.

## COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

### Samoa National Leadership Development Forum

The Samoa National Leadership Development Forum (SNLDF) was convened by PLP to provide a platform for collaboration on leadership issues and key reforms across political and sectoral boundaries. SNLDF is currently focused on assisting the government to strengthen the electoral system. PLP has supported it to complete a baseline analysis for the Official Report of the General Election 2016 and convene a conference on democracy and development in May 2017. The conference discussed the electoral participation of women, youth and people with disabilities, strengthening village and national governance and a review of electoral boundaries. It ended with a National Voters' Day aimed at improving low voter turnout among young people.

## WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP

### Women in Leadership Advocates

Research shows that although women play a prominent role in many spheres of Samoan society, they continue to be underrepresented in political leadership and decision-making roles. PLP supports the SNLDF and the Women in Leadership Advocates (WinLA) network to work towards increased leadership opportunities for women. A PLP and SNLDF report examining women's experiences in the 2016 Samoan Election found that: traditional development assistance (e.g. candidate training) doesn't increase the number of women in Parliament; managing voter expectations and 'playing by the rules' is difficult to do when other candidates are not; women voters must be encouraged to support women candidates; a broad-based campaign is important; and, it helps if women candidates have long-term involvement in Samoan cultural and political institutions (e.g. as matai in village councils). These findings were highlighted in a WinLA workshop, *Paving the Way for Future Women Members of Parliament*, in February 2017. Stakeholders at the workshop, including the Office of the Electoral Commission, UNDP and UN Women, are committed to developing initiatives and partnerships to support women candidates in the 2021 election.

## FUTURE DEVELOPMENTAL LEADERSHIP

### Leadership Samoa

PLP supports Leadership Samoa to bring together Samoa's emerging leaders and provide them with leadership training. One hundred and nineteen participants have graduated from the Leadership Samoa training since 2011. One alumni member has become a Member of Parliament and another has received funding from the Global Environment Facility to implement a climate change education project in Samoan primary schools.

### Samoa National Youth Council

PLP supports the Samoa National Youth Council to advocate for youth development in Samoa. Key achievements have included the establishment of a network of village youth representatives and the completion of the PLP-funded Tracer Youth Employment Report. Key policy recommendations from the report include: strengthening sexual and reproductive health education and services; increasing access to services and mechanisms for innovation, employment and governance; and, integrating the informal sector (including the cultural industry).

For further information on PLP's Samoa Country Program visit [www.plp.org.fj](http://www.plp.org.fj) or contact PLP's Samoa Country Representative, Potoa'e Aiafi on [potoae.aiafi@plp.org.fj](mailto:potoae.aiafi@plp.org.fj)

