



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:

- Building a body of knowledge on developmental leadership in the Pacific;
- Supporting collective action by Pacific Islands leaders;
- Enabling and achieving policy and institutional change;
- Delivering high quality and influential communication to inform policy and practice.

PLP commenced in 2008. Phase 3 of the program began in July 2014 and is expected to run for three to five years. 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.

HOW WE WORK

PLP works with influential individuals, organisations and stakeholders 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 that is tailored to the specific needs of each partner. This includes: funding, mentoring, capacity development, research, M&E, training (including on adaptive leadership), networking and information sharing.

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's regional activities are aligned with the shared priorities of Australia and Pacific Island Countries, with a particular focus on private sector development, women's leadership and ensuring effective regional institutions. PLP works through robust relationships with Pacific Regional Organisations, private sector and non-government stakeholders. We support our partners to develop and implement their own leadership initiatives, and facilitate participation in broader, cross-sectoral coalitions for policy and development change in the following areas.

- Private Sector Leadership
- Political – Bureaucratic Leadership interface (including effective regional institutions)
- Women's Leadership
- Future Developmental Leadership

Private Sector Leadership

Private sector leadership is a priority area for PLP. The program promotes women's economic empowerment, private sector engagement in national policy-making, and greater coordination of regional private sector interests.

COUNTRY AND REGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS AND INITIATIVES

PLP's priority areas closely align with Australia's aid policy in the Pacific, including private sector growth. PLP supports private sector engagement in national policy-making through the Samoa and Tonga Chambers of Commerce and Industry. The program also supports women's economic empowerment through initiatives in the Solomon Islands and Tonga. At the regional level, PLP has a long-term partnership with the Pacific Islands Private Sector Organisation to promote regional private sector interests and economic growth. The following examples demonstrate how PLP works at the regional level, and nationally and sub-nationally in target countries, on the issue of private sector development.

Samoa Chamber of Commerce and Industry

PLP's long-term partnership with the Samoa Chamber of Commerce and Industry has helped build the organisation's capacity to engage with stakeholders on key private sector reforms and policy initiatives in Samoa. Almost all Government and State Owned Enterprise Boards, and Government Steering Committees in Samoa now include mandatory representation from the private sector. This represents a major breakthrough and is a measure not only of Chamber's credibility, but of the value Government places on private sector perspectives in national policy and decision making processes. With PLP support, the Chamber has established industry 'think tanks' for members to discuss hot topics and collectively agree on policy positions. The first two think tanks, on shipping and ports management and hospitality and tourism, were held in mid-2016 and have led to some promising commitments on plug-in changes for containers and Samoa tourism marketing approaches.

The Chamber has also been an active contributor to the initial analysis and drafting of the trade agreement between Samoa and American Samoa, which will bring increased export opportunities for Samoan producers.

Tonga Chamber of Commerce and Industry

PLP also supports the Tonga Chamber of Commerce and Industry. The Tonga Chamber is a strong advocate for the private sector in Tonga, lobbying Government and submitting position papers on national policies that affect the private sector. These have included: the ban on Sunday trading; excise and duty changes; price control; and the foreign exchange levy. The Chamber is also advocating for the establishment of a Public-Private Dialogue platform. The platform will provide a permanent provision for stronger engagement between the government and the private sector on a range of policy and development issues. It is expected to be approved by Cabinet in 2017.

True Tonga Incorporated

True Tonga Incorporated receives technical and financial support from PLP to promote economic empowerment for Tongan women through the development of 'Buy Tonga Made' certified handicrafts. Guidelines and quality standards for these certified handicrafts have been developed by True Tonga Inc in consultation with government, village women's groups and the Tonga Handicrafts Association. Once endorsed, the 'Buy Tonga Made' policy will protect a valuable resource stream for Tongan women and families. Handicraft producers account for approximately 26% of the country's active working population (of which 97% are women).

Simbo for Change

Simbo for Change seeks to develop niche agricultural exports as a means of empowering women on Simbo Island, in the Western Province of Solomon Islands. The initiative is the result of a partnership between PLP, a local Simbo woman and tribal leader and Samoa Women in Business Development Inc. PLP is the primary funder of the initiative and supports a range of interventions including technical assistance, leadership mentoring, coalition building, and learning exchanges. Early successes include the establishment of beehives and a virgin coconut oil production facility which are producing for local markets. Simbo for Change is also completing the process of organic certification, which will make Simbo the first registered organic island in Solomon Islands. Feedback from the Minister for Rural Development indicates that he would like to implement similar models in other provinces in the future.

Pacific Islands Private Sector Organisation

The Pacific Islands Private Sector Organisation (PIPSO) is the peak body for private sector interests in the region and a long-term PLP partner. With PLP support, PIPSO has made important inroads to promote reforms around operational and policy support for small to medium enterprises, which make up 80% of Pacific owned businesses. Results include the Forum Leaders endorsement of a position paper on small to medium enterprises at the 2015 Forum Leaders Meeting. More recently, PIPSO has been included in a high-level working group that will make recommendations on policies impacting small to medium enterprises for tabling at the 2017 Forum Economic Ministers Meeting. PIPSO also supports members through activities such as Women in Business Conferences, Agribusiness Forums, and training.

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