



Inter-Parliamentary Union

For democracy. For everyone.

Mid-term Evaluation report on the UNDP Samoa Parliamentary Support Project (SPSP) 2012-2015

December 2013

Prepared by Mr. Alifereti Bulivou

The views expressed in this report are those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of the IPU

Acronyms & Abbreviations

AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development
COS	Community Outreach Specialist
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CTA	Chief Technical Adviser
DIM/DEX	Direct Implementation/execution Modality
GS	General Secretariat
HRPP	Human Rights Protection Party
ICT	Information and Communications technologies
IPU	Inter Parliamentary Union
LNA	Legislative Needs Assessment
LOA	Letter of Agreement
MCO	Multi Country Office
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MPs	Members of Parliament
NIM/NEX	Nationally Implemented/Executed Modality
NPD	National Project Director
OCLA	Office of the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly
PPP	Pacific Parliamentary Partnerships Programme
RRF	Results Resource Framework
SPSP	Samoa Parliamentary Support Programme
TOR	Terms of Reference
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United National Development Programme
UNV	United Nations Volunteer

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	4
1. INTRODUCTION	5
2. EVALUATION	6
3. PROJECT MANAGEMENT	7
Project board	8
Project manager recruitment	8
Execution of the project	9
Budget constraints	10
<i>Findings</i>	10
<i>Recommendations</i>	11
4. PROJECT DESIGN	12
Design process	12
Choice of outputs	12
<i>Findings</i>	14
<i>Recommendations</i>	14
5. RELEVANCE AND APPROPRIATENESS	15
<i>Findings</i>	16
<i>Recommendations</i>	16
6. EFFECTIVENESS AND EFFICIENCY	16
Summary against 2013 AWP	19
<i>Findings</i>	21
<i>Recommendations</i>	21
7. IMPACT AND SUSTAINABILITY	22
<i>Findings</i>	23
<i>Recommendations</i>	23
8. LESSONS LEARNT AND GOOD PRACTICES	24
<i>Recommendations</i>	25
CONCLUSION	26
Summary of findings and recommendations	26
Main findings	26
Conclusions	28
Annexes	30
ANNEX 1 - Meetings held during the evaluation	31
ANNEX 2 - Terms of Reference	33

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- i. This report presents the finding and recommendations of a mid-term evaluation of the Samoa Parliamentary Support Project (SPSP) 2012 – 2015. It aims to provide a detailed account of observations, lessons learnt and recommendations for the implementation of the SPSP project over the remaining two years.
- ii. Following a Legislative Needs Assessment (LNA) carried out in February 2011, the SPSP was initiated with funding from AusAID, UNDP, the Office of the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly (OCLA) and the Pacific Parliamentary Project. It is the first institutional strengthening project targeting parliamentary support services as well as deepening the democratic processes in the Parliament itself.
- iii. The project document outlined four (4) specific outputs which it aimed to achieve during 2012 – 2015. These were:
 - ◆ Effective leadership and accountability of Members of Parliament and strengthened political parties;
 - ◆ Strengthened Law-making and committee oversight in support of MDGs achievement;
 - ◆ Public engagement with Members of Parliament and a strengthened parliament, with special effort made to engage young people and women;
 - ◆ Efficient, professional and high quality administrative support and services provided to Members of Parliament and other key clients groups.
- iv. The project was launched in 2012, but faced some initial project management and implementation challenges which caused a lot of delays in the implementation of activities. The departure of the Parliamentary Advisor based at the UNDP Pacific Centre immediately after the launching of the project document was another unexpected challenge. The relationship between UNDP and the Office of the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly (OCLA) was very fragile at the beginning of the project, especially due to misunderstandings related to execution procedures. As a consequence, only few activities were carried out towards the end of 2012.
- v. Nevertheless, the project finally overcame those project management and implementation challenges. In 2013, more activities have been signed off and the roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders are now clearly defined and understood. The project has picked up momentum after the successful implementation of key activities. Increased parallel funding was approved in 2013 through assistance from the Pacific Partnership Programme and UNDP Pacific Centre. A new Parliamentary Advisor was recruited by the UNDP Pacific Centre in March 2013 and is now providing the much needed technical advice to the project. Concurrently, a local Project Manager was recruited.
- vi. For the remainder of the project, execution modalities need to be clarified so that both UNDP and OCLA understand their respective roles and that all planned activities can be implemented without posing problems for any of the partners. Also, there is a need to: re-examine the budget and UNDP needs, to follow up with the Government of India regarding their commitment of US\$400'000 to the project, and to new donors. There is insufficient funding available in 2014 to successfully implement all the activities and more resources need to be mobilised. The project could be radically altered if no additional funding is added to the budget in 2014.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Samoa is a parliamentary democracy with a Constitution based on general Westminster principles in terms of the relationship between the Parliament and the Government. The Legislative Assembly is a unicameral legislature with 49 members elected for a five-year term. Following the March 2011 national elections, only two female Members, down from four Members in the previous Parliament, were voted into Parliament, one of whom is a Minister of Government.

1.2 The Legislative Assembly of Samoa recently passed a bill to amend the Constitution to reserve five seats or 10 per cent of the 49 parliamentary seats for female electoral candidates. The Constitution Amendment Act 2013 was passed by Parliament on 24 June 2013 despite strong opposition by the Tautua Samoa Party in the months leading up to the vote.

1.3 An amendment to the Constitution in 1990 provided for universal suffrage, but customary processes (*fa'a Samoa*) exclude the majority of Samoans from contesting elections. To be eligible to stand for the Legislative Assembly, it is still a requirement that all candidates are *matais*.

1.4 The traditional *matai* system therefore still heavily influences the make-up of Parliament. Members of Parliament are elected from two electoral rolls, with the vast majority of voters enrolled on a register for *matai* candidates. The *matai* register is used for two types of constituencies – 35 single member and six dual-member constituencies. The second electoral roll (called the Individual Voters Roll) covers those voters whose ethnicity or other circumstance puts them outside the traditional *matai* system, and this is used to facilitate the election of two seats in Parliament.

1.5 The Government of Samoa is selected from the membership of the Legislative Assembly, according to the Westminster principle whereby the party or group that commands a majority on the floor of the Assembly is invited by the Head of State to form the Government. There are currently 13 Ministers in the Cabinet, including the Prime Minister. Significantly, there is a large group of Government Members of Parliament (MPs) who are appointed as Associate Ministers. This was noted in the 2011 LNA as a practice that weakens the institutional robustness of Parliament and it is often encouraged by Executives to lessen parliamentary restraints on the Ministry.

1.6 The Human Rights Protection Party (HRPP) has been the dominant party in Samoan politics since 1982. Following Samoa's national elections in March 2011, the HRPP Government was elected to Parliament with a substantial majority, but for the first time an official opposition, comprising members of the Tautua Party, was also formed within Parliament. Both the Government and the opposition have indicated a strong commitment to utilize Parliament as a place for debate, discussion and oversight.

1.7 In this context, the time appeared ripe for a Parliamentary Support Project to be implemented which would work with all MPs to strengthen their capacity to use parliamentary processes to more effectively engage with national development issues. Accordingly, this project aims at strengthening capacity of Samoa's MPs to raise accountability and to more effectively promote and progress Samoa's national development priorities and its achievement of the MDGs.

1.8 Following a Legislative Needs Assessment (LNA) carried out in February 2011, the Samoa Parliamentary Support Project was initiated with funding from AusAID, UNDP, the Office of the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly (OCLA) and the Pacific Parliamentary Project. It is the first institutional strengthening project targeting parliamentary support services as well as deepening the democratic processes in the Parliament itself.

1.9 Coordinated by the UNDP, the project is centred on the Office of the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly, the parliamentary department responsible for administering Parliament and supporting its members and operations. Technical expertise for the project is being provided by the Australian and Tasmanian Parliaments under a twinning program known as Pacific Parliamentary Partnerships.

2. EVALUATION

2.1 The UNDP requested for the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) to arrange a mid-term evaluation of the Samoa Parliamentary Support Project (SPSP) 2012 – 2015. The terms of reference for the evaluation were, at the mid-term stage in the project, to:

- ◆ assess the project's accomplishments and its contributions towards the achievement of the anticipated outcomes, including any constraints on its effectiveness, and any unintended outcomes;
- ◆ assess the direct and indirect effects of the project on intended beneficiaries and broader socio-economic, political, MDGs and gender dimensions;
- ◆ assess the appropriateness of the project design particularly as it relates to the achievement of project objectives, its linkages with the government's national strategic plans, and problems it intends to address;
- ◆ assess the management and implementation arrangements of the project, including financial and human resource management, monitoring and oversight as well as the risks and risk management strategies in terms of their contribution to the delivery of project results in accordance with the project Results and Resources Framework (RRF);
- ◆ identify key factors which have contributed to the program's successes and failures to date;
- ◆ document the lessons learnt in the design, delivery, management and monitoring of the project to date that will inform the delivery of the remainder of the project;
- ◆ recommend options to improve on-going UNDP engagement with the Samoa Parliament.

2.2 This evaluation assesses the successes and challenges of this project in terms of whether the project achieved the expected overall outcomes and the annual outputs/targets, specifically in a number of key areas such as:

- ◆ Project Management
- ◆ Project Design
- ◆ Relevance and Appropriateness of the Project
- ◆ Effectiveness and Efficiency of the Project
- ◆ Impact and Sustainability of the Project

2.3 Its evaluation provides a detailed account of observations, lessons learnt and recommendations for the implementation of the SPSP project over the remaining two years. Additionally, the report contains recommendations that would assist UNDP to plan and implement future Parliamentary projects around the region.

2.4 The evaluation was conducted from 9 to 13 December, 2013 through the following methodology:

◆ **Desk Review of Relevant Documentation**

A desk review was undertaken of relevant documentation including:

- The Project Document
- Documentation produced by the project such as manuals, reports (quarterly & annual) and Minutes of Meetings of Project Board;
- Letter of Agreements (LOA)

◆ **Interviews with Key Stakeholders**

In order to assess the impact of the project, interviews were held with numerous stakeholders and project beneficiaries during the period 9th – 13th December, 2013. The aim of these interviews was to analyse the success and challenges of the project in terms of attaining objectives outlined in the project document.

Interviews were conducted with the following:

- Speaker, Legislative Assembly of Samoa
- Senior UNDP Officials
- UNDP Governance and Poverty Reduction Unit
- Project Staff
- Senior Parliament Staff
- Members of Parliament
- AusAID staff

2.5 A full list of interviews conducted can be found in Annex 1.

3. PROJECT MANAGEMENT

3.1 The Samoa Parliamentary Support Project (SPSP) was officially launched in Parliament on 31st May 2012 as part of the opening celebrations of the anniversary of Samoa's Independence. According to the project document, the project was to be directly executed by the UNDP, and implemented through the Parliamentary Secretariat with the focal point for the project being the Clerk to Parliament. The Speaker of the Parliament was the National Project Director (NPD), who assumed overall responsibility for the project outputs, with the assistance of the Project Manager.

Project board

3.2 The work of the project is directed by a Project board which, chaired by the Speaker, makes key decisions for the implementation of the project and is responsible for ensuring that the project stays on track and achieves its objectives. The Project board members are:

- ◆ Speaker (Chair)
- ◆ Government members (1)
- ◆ Opposition member (1)
- ◆ Woman MP
- ◆ Representative from UNDP
- ◆ OCLA (Clerk)
- ◆ Ministry of Finance
- ◆ AusAID (Observer)

3.3 According to the project document, the Clerk is the focal point of the project and the Speaker is the National Project Director as well as Chair of the Project Board. The Board will have overall responsibility for providing strategic guidance and oversight of the project. However, during the evaluation some interviewees felt that the Board's mandate was too large and that the structure, due to its composition, was not flexible enough to achieve all the tasks.

3.4 For better management in the future, the board, which comprises high level representatives, could be tasked with only providing political representation for the project and not be involved in the day to day operations of the project. A separate, more flexible, working Committee, headed by the Clerk and comprising the UNDP Governance Team Leader, could be established to oversee the overall operational coordination of the project. This would also give the Clerk more powers and visibility and would also avoid the possibility of the Speaker bypassing his requests for audience, a situation that was mentioned by some interviewees.

Project manager recruitment

3.5 As per the original Project document, the Clerk was to be supported by a Project Manager for the day-to-day running of the project, with support from UNDP. OCLA indicated that they would prefer a national expert whereas UNDP MCO proposed that a P-3 Chief Technical Adviser (CTA) be recruited based on standard recruitment procedures previously employed in other parliamentary projects in the region when recruiting international experts. Later, UNDP tried to recruit a UN Volunteer, which would have been far less expensive, but could not find one.

3.6 International recruitment was regularly rejected due to its cost. OCLA felt that the salary would take up half of the funding for the project when it could be channelled to fund more activities within the project. Although explanation on the usefulness of an overseas CTA was given, the Board decided not to go for such recruitment. Indeed, as the Samoan Legislative Assembly is actually a developed Parliament, an International CTA would have brought in cutting edge comparative parliamentary knowledge, and shared it on a daily basis. Such recruitment would have permitted regular capacity building by sharing of experience rather than with a Samoan national Project Manager (PM)/CTA whose experience would be restricted to Samoa only. Finally the recruitment of an International CTA, while being costly, could have been a very effective advantage for the project.

3.7 The Pacific Parliamentary Partnerships (PPP) program builds links between parliamentarians and parliamentary staff, shares knowledge of parliamentary systems and processes, and contributes to the on-going development of parliamentary democracy throughout the Pacific. Under this partnership program, Samoa is twinned with the Parliament of Tasmania. PPP completed all its planned activities for 2012 and achieved satisfactory results in 2013. To deliver its activities, PPP sends rotational specialists, mainly from Australia.

3.8 Pending the recruitment of the Project Manager, the Pacific Parliamentary Partnership programme (PPP) also provided interim project management support for three months undertaken in parallel with its main responsibilities as Community Outreach Specialist (COS). This project management method worked very well for an interim period as it really assisted the launching of the project. However, it could not be seen as sustainable since it would have implied a change every three months. The decision to recruit a national Programme Manager was finally taken.

3.9 The project document risk log identified "Delay in recruiting suitable project manager" as a risk and provided as a countermeasure to "Use Pacific Centre to facilitate implementation until PM recruited". However, the Parliamentary Advisor based at the UNDP Pacific Centre left immediately after the launching of the project and it took a bit of time to recruit a replacement. A new Parliamentary Advisor was recruited by the UNDP Pacific Centre in March 2013 and provided technical advice as requested. This helped ease the process and increased its efficiency..

3.10 OCLA finally recruited the current Project Manager in February 2013. It is important to note that although the current Project Manager does not have parliamentary experience, he has a wealth of project management experience, an important criteria for the successful outcome of the project.

Execution of the project

3.11 The modality for the execution of the project do not necessarily follow what was foreseen in the project document, which clearly stated that for management arrangements the project would be directly executed by the UNDP and that monitoring and evaluation would follow DEX modality guidelines.

3.12 However, currently the project can be best described as a hybrid DEX/NEX modality. This could be explained by a lack of understanding of execution modalities by Board members and OCLA but also due to the will of the Samoan Parliament to conduct the project in a "sovereign manner", i.e. without accepting external rules. As a result, even though the project is directly executed by UNDP, it owns an autonomous bank account from which it makes payments.

3.13 Apart from the Project Manager, other positions within the project were recruited i.e. ICT Specialist, Information and Communications Officer, Human Resources, and the Community Outreach Officer. Even though the advertisements were carried out by UNDP, appointment letters were issued by OCLA under their terms and conditions. Payment of salaries, however, was handled directly by UNDP. This working procedure is unique compared to other parliamentary projects around the Pacific, where Project Managers and any staff recruited under the project are normally issued service contracts by UNDP until such time the relevant positions are absorbed into the secretariat and then contracted nationally.

3.14 Since the letter of appointment is issued by OCLA, one can understand that the Project Manager's primary accountability may lie to the service of the Clerk, especially since the Project Manager reports to him on a daily basis. However, the Project Manager should also be someone on which the UNDP could rely on to ensure that its rules and procedures are complied with. As a result, there were instances when payments sent directly to UNDP could not be paid due to non-compliance with UNDP financial procedures, because it simply did not appear on the work plan, or because there were more economical alternatives.

3.15 It was also stated in the project document that for monitoring purposes, Financial and Operational Progress Reports will be prepared by the Project Manager and submitted to UNDP on a quarterly basis with clear deadlines. However, this information seems to have not been included to the Programme Manager contract issued by OCLA. This revealed a separate issue, namely that UNDP pays the Programme Manager but the OCLA issues the contract. As a result, reports are submitted with less regularity than expected which impedes effective UNDP oversight of the project.

Budget constraints

3.16 The total funding required to execute the project was US\$1'529'525. As of March 2012 US\$1'104'200 was mobilized, which meant a shortfall of US\$425'325 i.e. almost 28% of the total budget. The project budget for 2013 is USD 493'900.00. Project Delivery (expenditure) to date is 71% or USD381'947.00, approximately 21% in Quarter 3 compared to 35% in Quarter 2 and 15% Quarter 1. The project is on track and this should continue in Quarter 4 with a much higher delivery rate to be reported for 2013.

3.17 However, there could be a need to re-examine the budget because of the shortfall. In addition, UNDP needs to follow up with the Government of India regarding their commitment of US\$400'000 to the project. There might be not enough funding available in 2014 to successfully implement all the activities, resulting in the need for more resources to be mobilised.

Findings

3.18 Initially, the project faced a lot of problems in terms of project management which caused a lot of delays in the implementation of activities in 2012. However, the project has overcome those initial project management and implementation challenges and, in 2013, the project delivered satisfactory progress.

3.19 The project management Board, made up of the Speaker, several MPs and the UNDP resident representative, is established and meets regularly. However, its mandate foresees that it has overall responsibilities to provide strategic guidance and oversight of the project. However, given its high level of membership, challenges arose since this Board lacked flexibility to really manage day to day operations.

3.20 The recruitment of a Project Manager caused a lot of friction and animated debate within the Board and was one of the main explanations behind shortcomings in delivery in 2012. This situation comes from a clear misunderstanding as there was an expectation by UNDP that an International Chief Technical Adviser (CTA) would be recruited to support the Clerk, whereas OCLA indicated that they would prefer a national expert for this position. International recruitment was rejected by the Board primarily due to the cost associated with such a recruitment. No proper explanation of the advantages brought by an overseas CTA was given.

3.21 The Pacific Parliamentary Partnership programme (PPP) implemented several activities within the project and provided interim project management support for three months before the recruitment of the current Project Manager in February 2013. However, but this arrangement did not prove sustainable since PPP fielded rotational experts. It finally led to the recruitment of a national Project Manager who has good project management experience but not the necessary parliamentary experience. However, this recruitment permitted an increase in effectiveness and efficiency in the delivery of activities in 2013.

3.22 The modality for execution of the project was not very clear from the beginning due to the fact that the execution modalities stated in the Project document were not implemented as they should have been. Although direct execution by UNDP should have applied, the project can be best described as a hybrid direct/national execution modality. As a result, even though the project is directly executed by UNDP, the project now has its own bank account. Also, OCLA issued the contracts for all positions within the project, including for the Programme Manager, which who like himself placed the primary accountability of the recruited project staff to the Clerk. In the case of the Project Manager this caused problems in ensuring that UNDP rules and procedures were complied with. Moreover, Financial and Operational Progress Reports were submitted with less regularity than expected which impeded effective UNDP oversight of the project.

3.23 When the project was designed, it foresaw a total budget of US\$1'529'525, however with regard to mobilization a shortfall of almost 28% was noted. The Government of India committed US\$400'000 to the project and UNDP have to now follow up on this and mobilize other donors to ensure there is enough funding for 2014 activities.

Recommendations

1) Review with OCLA the execution procedures to reach a consensus on the roles of the relevant stakeholders. Such procedures should follow international standards, and having them clearly defined and agreed upon would benefit both UNDP and the Samoan Parliament. Training on these procedures could be organised so that everybody within the Project Board and at OCLA and UNDP levels is on the same page. These procedures could be annexed to the project document and referred to if a problem arises. This would be beneficial for the remaining project execution period and for the design of any potential future project. It would also contribute to enhance the sustainability of the project by increasing national ownership and commitment to the project activities and objectives.

2) Review with OCLA the recruitment contracts so that major discrepancies, such as the absence of reporting modalities in the Project Manager contract, are resolved. This would ensure that quarterly reports are, as outlined in the project document, submitted on time in order for UNDP to be effective in its oversight role of the project.

3) Split the current responsibilities of the Project Board into two, where the high level Board would provide political representation for the project, and a newly established Working Committee would oversee the overall operational coordination of the project. This Working Committee could be headed by the Clerk and comprise the UNDP Governance Team Leader. The establishment of this working group would reinforce national ownership of the project, giving responsibility of the project to the Clerk.

4) Provide the Project Manager with training on parliamentary procedure, UNDP rules and procedures, as well as reporting mechanisms, so that he can effectively implement his duties toward the project and UNDP.

4. PROJECT DESIGN

4.1 The Parliamentary strengthening project has been designed in response to the recommendations of the 2011 Samoa Parliament Legislative Needs Assessment (LNA), as well as in-country consultations with key stakeholders. It focusses on four outputs aimed at strengthening the capacity of Parliamentarians to discharge their mandate, including support of MDGs achievement, as well as training staff to ensure their provision of efficient, professional and high quality administrative support to the members. Engagement of parliamentarians with youth and women and the general public in order to increase their involvement with parliamentary activities is also part of the project.

Design process

4.2 Basing a strengthening parliamentary project on the recommendations of a Legislative Needs Assessment is common practice for UNDP in the Pacific. Between 2000 and 2003 several Legislative Needs Assessments were carried out for eight Pacific Island Countries and, in response, UNDP in the Pacific has developed and mobilised parliamentary support.

4.3 The project was developed through a 17 month participative process where all stakeholders within and outside Parliament, including other development partners, were consulted in order to reach a common agreement on the different outputs of the project. However, in hindsight, the main donor of this project, AusAID, felt that they should have been involved in the design of the project from the start. They felt that more discussion and negotiation could have been done at the design stage to avoid the problems that the project faced later on.

4.4 From the OCLA perspective, it was felt that there should have been more training for OCLA staff on UNDP project management modalities, procedures and processes. OCLA staff admitted that they would have better understood the workings of a project had they had some project management experience. They believed that this would have avoided the initial problems faced by the project.

4.5 The evaluation allowed for the discovery that the project document was not signed by Government or Parliament. The only signature that appears on the document is that of the Resident Representative. Having all requested signatures on the project document would show that all have agreed to the objectives, outputs and modalities contained therein.

Choice of outputs

4.6 The SPSP's first objective is to work with MPs to strengthen their capacity to use parliamentary processes to more effectively engage with national development issues as well as training the Secretariat to deliver sound services to the members. This proved to be a relevant initiative according to the interviewees during the evaluation.

4.7 However, the project also focusses on the development of political parties, both through their MPs and party executives, including through offering training on how to develop party manifestos and policy platforms (Under Output 1 in the project document). It also offers political assistance to women's and youth wings inside political parties, encouraging more women and young people to be nominated as election candidates, in order to respond correctly to the findings and recommendations of the Legislative needs assessment and to improve Parliament's capacity for equitable representation, which is one criteria for a democratic Parliament.

4.8 Some interviewees found that, to a certain extent, this extension of the mandate to the development of political parties and assistance to candidates was confusing with the initial general idea of support for Parliament, its members and secretariat, because it extended beyond the elected body. In addition, it seemed to imply that OCLA would have to compromise itself with external beneficiaries and therefore jeopardize its neutrality. Finally, the issue of encouraging more women and young people to be nominated as election candidates was seen as contrary to the traditional Samoan political processes, which states that only citizens with titles (matai) are eligible to stand for elections. , Estimates give the number of recognized matai titles at around 25,000 with women holding about one in every twenty titles.

4.9 According to the interviewees, the project should concentrate on capacity building initiatives for women that are already elected into Parliament so they could then go out and share their experiences and knowledge with their peers when they carry out their constituency visits. With regard to women outside from Parliament, there is a feeling that the parliamentary project can work with them only if a mock session of Parliament for women is carried out.

4.10 This leads to the problem of management arrangements as they are ultimately implemented. Initially, as stated in the project document, UNDP was to directly implement the project, which would have left opportunities to work inside and outside the Parliament, both with elected members and staff but also with political parties and candidates. However, since the primary modality was not followed, and because the Project Manager was recruited directly by OCLA, the OCLA was forced to occupy a difficult position in implementing activities targeting future candidates and political parties.

4.11 A clear sharing of responsibilities between UNDP and OCLA on the different activities to be undertaken by the project would be beneficial to the overall implementation of the project and would avoid the placement of OCLA in an awkward situation. The status of the Project Manager should be clarified and recruitment of a UNV could be valuable. The sharing of responsibility would show that the project is twofold, focussing primarily on elected members and Parliament's secretariat but also working on political party development and towards more inclusiveness and better representation within the Parliament. As stated in the Legislative Needs Assessment, the number of titles being conferred on women may be increasing as women become better educated, more self-confident of their own status in society, and as the Samoan community has grown more accepting of gender equality. The project has therefore a clear benefit in working with both elected and candidate women to accelerate the process of recognition of gender equality.

4.12 The original project document had allocated USD\$70'000 for capacity building activities for the Secretariat, a mere 8% of total project funding. For Members of Parliament to carry out their work effectively, they need the full support of an effective, well trained Secretariat. The result of the 2011 election reported a 50 % turnover of Members. It seems that more emphasis could have been placed on capacity building programmes for staff during the design stage as it is staff that stay on longer in Parliament than Members. They would therefore be able to retain institutional memory and assist incoming Members with their capacity building programmes.

Findings

4.13 The project was developed following a participatory process which began with a Legislative Needs Assessment and involved in-country consultations and negotiations with key stakeholders. However, after reflection and, to a certain extent, considering the initial problems the project faced, some stakeholders believed that it was not enough and/or that there was not enough explanation on the rules and procedures applied during the execution phase of the project.

4.14 The Project document available on the UNDP website is signed only by the UNDP Resident Representative and dated 31/05/2012 which was both the celebration of the 50th Year of Independence and the launch of the project. The Government and the Speaker of the Parliament should also sign this document to show that all have agreed to the objectives, outputs and modalities contained therein.

4.15 There is a misunderstanding on the way the project should engage with political parties, women and youth. This is an issue for OCLA because its neutrality could be placed into doubt if it takes a lead role in advocating for increased women and youth representation in Parliament and assisting political parties. However, since the project was designed to be executed directly by UNDP, activities outside from Parliament, i.e. elected members and secretariat staff, should have been undertaken by UNDP without putting OCLA in a difficult situation. Nevertheless, since the original execution modalities have been changed, there is a need for UNDP and OCLA to clearly frame the respective roles, including the Project Manager, so that both parts of the project can be implemented in parallel without ambiguity.

4.16 Whilst the main objective of the project is to work with elected members and the secretariat staff, and that Output 4 of the project document provides for "Efficient, professional and high quality administrative support and services provided to Members of Parliament and other key clients groups", the project document only allocated USD\$70'000 (i.e. 8% of the total allocated for the project) for capacity building activities for the Secretariat. Considering that one key point of a successful Parliament is a well trained staff able to provide effective and timely services and advice to members, the total budget for such activities could have been increased to ascertain sustainability of the training activities.

Recommendations

5) For the second part of the project, make sure that all stakeholders are once again aware of the ins and outs of the project, including the new procedures developed if any. Organise meetings and training sessions for all stakeholders to be able to ask questions, understand the objectives of the project and the outputs to be reached, and have clarity on their roles and responsibilities.

6) Make sure that the project document is signed by all relevant stakeholders to avoid problems in the future. Almost two years after the launch of the project, this should be completed without much difficulty.

7) Clearly frame clearly the responsibilities of UNDP and OCLA within the project for activities within and outside Parliament to be undertaken in parallel. Make sure that the Programme Manager is aware of his duties. A UNV or a secondee through PPP could be recruited to manage the "outside" part of the project so that no ambiguity between both sides of the project can be alleged. This recommendation is to be linked to those stated at paragraph 3.20, et seq. as well as recommendation 4.17 above.

8) Review the budget allocation and increase activities targeting staff members so that the Secretariat is able to provide sound advice and timely services to members and create an institutional memory which would reinforce the sustainability of the project outcomes.

5. RELEVANCE AND APPROPRIATENESS

5.1 An earlier Legislative Needs Assessment for Samoa had identified obstacles to good parliamentary governance across the eight Pacific island countries that were assessed, including Samoa. The second LNA that was carried out in 2011 reiterated the call that something should be done to alleviate those problems. It is therefore both relevant and appropriate that a parliamentary project is rolled out considering that the Legislative Assembly forms an integral part of the governance structures of Samoa. The work of MPs also impacts across all areas of economic and social life in Samoa.

5.2 Although the Parliament support project is one of the first large-scale project to be implemented with Parliament, it includes a strong partnership framework, as a number of institutions were already involved in providing assistance in support of Parliament. UNDP, consulted during the design phase, is now managing implementation in cooperation with a wide range of partners comprising the Pacific Parliamentary Partnerships program, the Australian State of Tasmania and sister UN agencies, such as UNICEF, UNFPA and UNWomen. Here again, the coordination put in place within all development partners and stakeholders avoids gaps and overlaps and proves to be relevant since working in partnership with other development partners should enhance the sustainability of the project's outcomes.

5.3 The project also proved to be open, integrating development issues while reinforcing the use of legislative processes and building the capacities of the Members and Staff. This way, the project helps promoting MDGs achievement which is extremely relevant in the framework of Samoa's transition from Least Developed Country (LDC) to Middle Income Country (MIC).

5.4 As the project was designed to respond to the 2011 Legislative Needs Assessment, its outputs are also relevant and appropriate both for activities targeting Members and staff within the Parliament and for activities directed to political parties, women and youth. However, as stated earlier in this evaluation, because of the execution modalities that have not been followed, there is a risk for OCLA, which took the lead in executing the project, to be put in an awkward situation. From that perspective, it would be inappropriate for OCLA to be responsible for supporting political party Executives, even to the extent of offering training to them to develop party manifestos and policy platforms and offering political assistance to women's and youth wings within political parties.

5.5 One of the key implementation principles was "Building ongoing capacity within the Secretariat to ensure sustainability of outcomes," a very appropriate objective for such a project considering that parliamentary civil servants are mandated to stay in the Secretariat whereas the parliamentarians are regularly up for election. Parliamentary staff are key actors in creating the institutional memory which would ensure preservation and transmission of the working culture. However the budget allocated to output 4 "Efficient, professional and high quality administrative support and services provided to MPs and other key clients groups" appears pretty low. It could be relevant to review budget allocation and reinforce this output.

Findings

5.6 The parliamentary strengthening project is both relevant and appropriate with regard to its strategies, outputs and partnerships. It responds to the identified obstacles to good parliamentary governance highlighted in the 2011 Legislative Needs Assessment and takes into account former partnerships and assistance programmes implemented by partners in the Samoan Parliament.

5.7 The focus of activities on MDGs is appropriate as Samoa works towards achieving its MDG targets. The Samoa Parliamentary Strengthening programme was developed under the MDG Acceleration Programme to provide the space for parliamentarians to gain a deeper understanding of the goals and their potential roles as political leaders in improving the performance of Samoa in their realisation by 2015.

5.8 With regard to activities targeting political parties or offering political assistance to women and young candidates, it would be inappropriate for OCLA to take the lead, since it would breach the neutrality it is entrusted with. For these activities UNDP has to retake control of the project and implement it using direct execution modalities.

5.9 Whereas it is extremely appropriate to focus on strengthening the secretariat's capacity, only a small percentage of the budget is assigned to the relevant output. As a matter of relevance, the budget allowed to staff capacity building should be reviewed and increased.

Recommendations

9) UNDP should make sure that direct execution modalities are in use when the project is working with targets external from the Parliament. Management procedures should be reviewed accordingly (as already recommended earlier in the report)

10) Assistance to the Secretariat should really be a major focus of the project. To that end, budget allocation could be reviewed in order to increase funds allocated to output 4.

6. EFFECTIVENESS AND EFFICIENCY

6.1 Initially, the effectiveness of the project was in question due to the many disagreements between OCLA and UNDP. This caused a lot of delays in the implementation of activities. Despite the delay, a number of activities were successfully and effectively implemented in 2012, although some planned activities cost more than what was allocated and resulted in reallocation of funds from those activities earmarked for other quarters. With this in mind, it might therefore be necessary to mobilise additional resources to successfully complete the project.

6.2 The focus of the project in the first year (2012) was two-fold (i) to establish and put in place the implementation modalities/processes to get the programme off the ground; and (ii) to begin the capacity building programmes for the Parliamentarians and OCLA

6.3 The project budget for 2013 is US\$ 493'900.00. Project Delivery (expenditure) to date is 71% or US\$381'947.00. This is about 21% in Quarter 3 compared to 35% in Quarter 2 and 15% Quarter 1. The project is on track and this should continue in Quarter 4 with a much higher delivery rate to be reported for 2013.

6.4 The AusAID funded Pacific Parliamentary Partnership Programme (PPP) had been assisting Pacific Parliaments, including Samoa, with capacity building programmes for both staff and MPs. Given this long association, UNDP contracted PPP to provide technical assistance in the absence of a Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) and the Parliamentary Advisor at the UNDP Pacific Centre in Suva. A Letter of Agreement (LOA) was signed between the two organisations in 2012 outlining clear milestones to be achieved according to the specified budget:

- ◆ Hiring of an interim Project Manager for 3 months from August to October;
- ◆ Hiring of a consultant to conduct an HR assessment for OCLA;
- ◆ Development and conduct of the first seminar training series for MPs and OCLA staff; and
- ◆ Hiring of rotational specialists for capacity development, on the job training, and development of working systems and tools.

6.5 At the end of 2012, all of the above outputs had been carried out, and this showed early on that PPP's engagement was both effective and efficient. However, there were some mixed reactions regarding the effectiveness of some of the rotational specialists that were engaged by PPP from the Australian Federal Parliament. It was also reported that their knowledge of parliamentary procedures was limited to the Parliament they usually work for without openness to other procedures that would have better fit the Samoan context. Some interviewees also felt that some experts made cultural mistakes as they were not used of working in a culturally novel. In this context, these factors may explain why it was reported that the Resident Representative was not in favour of rotational specialists.

6.6 A proper briefing for these specialists could have alleviated the issues of cultural misunderstanding and trained the experts to be sensitive to the local culture and to have a good general understanding of proper behaviour when in a different cultural setting. It is to be noted that the project document refers to Facilitating South-South experience-sharing within the Pacific as one of its key implementation principles. Thus, the project could have organised exchanges with Pacific Parliaments which have already made valuable progresses in their capacity on a specific issue. Also, Consultants with Pacific experience could have been considered if UNDP maintains a Pacific parliamentary expert register (database).

6.7 The Public Education and Community Outreach Strategy that was prepared by the Community Outreach rotational specialist had a vision "to connect the Samoan people with the Parliament that represents them". However, the goals listed are

- ◆ improving awareness among women about the Parliament and its role and functions;
- ◆ improving Samoan women's engagement with the work of Parliament: and
- ◆ increasing the representation of women in the Parliament.

The key target audiences are three levels of women in the community, those who are existing *matai* and senior women (between the ages of 35 to 55), young women (between 18 and 30), and women in remote communities and in the island of *Savai'i*. The programme document foresaw that the plan would help to more effectively disseminate information and collect feedback/inputs from the public, with particular emphasis placed on identifying strategies which will reach out to young people, women and people with disabilities. It is felt that the Department needs a proper Communication Strategy for the Public Education and Community Outreach Division that is going to work with everyone in the community instead of targeting only one cluster out of those specified. Although promoting women participation should be a key activity for the project, focussing only on this may have a contrary effect.

6.8 It was noted that when the Parliament Open week was organised, the UNDP Pacific Centre had to prepare a separate communication strategy just for the occasion.

6.9 The recruitment of the Human Resource private consultant from outside of Parliament was specifically hired to deliver two targeted services - review and enhancement of HR policy and practice, and targeted assistance in transitioning to a new organisation structure. However, two additional aspects to the attachment were agreed upon along with a contract extension at the February SPSP board meeting to carry out the following:

- ◆ completion of the OCLA Corporate Plan incorporating all strategic operational plans to ensure integration of SPSP deliverables and business improvement recommendations made thus far and a management reporting processes against strategic deliverables;
- ◆ completion of an MP training needs analysis and design of a refined and tailored capacity building approach for MPs involving both existing training activity and additional, peer enhanced learning approaches.

The consultant received very good reviews from OCLA and staff confirmed that they learnt a lot of new things during the attachment.

6.10 As can be seen from the table below, a lot of activities have been completed with a few on-going ones that require clearance from OCLA. Overall, 2013 has been a good year for the project. This can be attributed to the recruitment of the Project Manager and the availability of the Parliamentary Advisor from the UNDP Pacific Centre.

Summary against 2013 AWP

PA 1.1.1: Pacific Parliamentary Partnership (Visit to Samoa by Australian Parliament of Australia, Parliament of Tasmania to Samoa. 23-28/03/2013)	1	Complete
PA 1.1.3: 2 nd Seminar Series – “Popular Sovereignty, Law and the Integrity of Parliament”. 12-13/03/2013	1	Complete
PA 1.1.4: Pre-sitting briefings	1,2	On-going
PA 1.1.5: 3 rd Seminar Series –“Committee”	3	Complete
PA 1.1.6: 4 th Seminar Series-“Executive Oversight”	4	In Progress
PA 1.2.1: Workshop on – party structures, role and responsibilities of elected representatives as political party members	1	Combined with PA 1.1.5 and PA 1.1.6
PA 2.1.1: Briefings for all MPs on Climate Change	3	Postponed to final quarter
PA 2.1.2: Mobilization of the MDG Advocacy Group in Parliament	2	On-going
PA 2.1.3: Briefings for MPs on Key Development Issues	3,4	Under Preparation
PA 2.2.1: Training Programme designed and implemented for all parliamentary committee members and committee division staff, with a special focus on oversight in support of MDGs achievement.	3	Complete
PA 2.2.1: Training Programme for PAC members/staff + general committee training	4	Under Preparation
PA 2.2.3: Support review and Draft amendments to Standing Orders as necessary and support implementation	2,3,4	On-going
PA 2.2.4: Produce publication for the public - how to make a submission to a parliamentary committee	3,4	Complete
PA 2.3.1: Development of ICT Strategy and Implementation Plan	2,3	Complete
PA 2.3.3: Development of Legal & Research Strategy	2	Complete
PA 3.1.1 Revision and Implementation of Public Education & Outreach Strategy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ School Open Week ◆ Parliamentary Newspaper ◆ Educational materials ◆ Parliamentary promotional videos 	2	Complete Complete 2 nd edition

PA 4.1.1: HR Strategic Corporate plan implementation	1,2,3,4	On-going
PA 4.1.2: Finalize Parliament Corporate 1 Complete Plan	1	Complete
PA 4.1.3: Development and Implementation of Corporate plan reporting and evaluation processes including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Management development workshop ◆ Annual review workshop for all staff 	1,2,3,4	On-going
PA 4.1.4: Draft Parliament of Samoa Bill	2	Draft
PA 4.1.5: Undertake annual staff training needs analysis	1	Complete
PA 4.1.6: Develop and implement annual learning and development programme for staff – integrating seminar series and management development activities		Complete
PA 4.1.8 Develop and implement an annual Customer satisfaction survey as a mechanism for establishing service benchmarks	2	Complete
PA 4.2.2: Develop ICT Systems Improvement Plan & work with Secretariat to mobilize specific resources to implement	1,2,3,4	On-going
PA 4.2.4: Copier/Scanner/fax for Library to facilitate info management and archiving	2	Complete
PA4.2.6: Develop and Implement ICT Systems Improvement Plan i.e including procurement of UPS/Power Failure Backup/Standby Diesel Generator; Wifi Access Points within and around the Buildings; Optic Fibre to the new buildings.	2	In Progress
PA4.2.7: Provision of basic ICT equipment for Members of Parliament to assist in their Legislative, Oversight and representation functions and in liaising with the Secretariat	2	Complete
PA 4.3.1: M&E Plan for project & work of OCLA; Includes Baselines, Indicators, Targets and Outputs developed in M&E Plan.	1,2	Complete
PA4.4.1: A capacity development plan developed for the 6 new SPSP Managers with continual support from the PPP on specific areas of work to deepen the learning process.	1,2,3,4	On-going

Findings

6.11 Initially, the effectiveness of the project could be questioned due to some initial project management and implementation challenges that occurred at the beginning of the project. These caused a lot of delays in the first year of implementation. However, the project is now on track and going from strength to strength. This should continue in Quarter 4 with a much higher delivery rate to be reported for 2013.

6.12 When reviewing activities against the annual work plan, more than half of the activities have been completed with a few on-going ones that require clearance from OCLA. This significant improvement in project effectiveness and efficiency can be attributed to the recruitment of the Project Manager and the availability of the Parliamentary Advisor from the UNDP Pacific Centre in Suva.

6.13 The Pacific Parliamentary Partnership Programme was able to deliver all its activities during the first year of the project (2012). It carried the momentum into 2013 and also delivered satisfactory results. However, the capacities of their specialists were sometime an issue since whilst being highly paid; they had very limited knowledge of working in any other Parliament apart from Australia and little awareness of the Pacific islands context.

6.14 With regard to the strategy on public education and community outreach, it was prepared to connect the Samoan people with the Parliament that represents them and foresaw special emphasis to reach out to young people, women and people with disabilities. However, the goals set for this strategy are only women-related, which may create a "promotion of women fatigue" influencing a counter-productive impact in conflict with the desired outcome.

Recommendations

11) In the future, a briefing on Pacific Islands sensitivity and culture could be organised for new experts to avoid cultural misunderstandings as much as possible.

12) As foreseen in the project document, sharing of experience within the Pacific islands Parliaments should be developed. Such exchange of knowledge would in fact benefit both sides which would learn from each other. Also, more emphasis should be placed on engaging more Pacific parliamentary experts.

13) Ensure that implementation of the project is inclusive without focusing too much on any particular group especially when the activity is meant to target the general public. There are specific activities targeting specific groups but comprehensive implementation is a key to success.

7. IMPACT AND SUSTAINABILITY

7.1 The project proved to have a positive impact on the way the Parliament both works and is perceived by the population.

7.2 Despite the absence of an appropriate communication strategy, the Public Education and Outreach Programme has been described as successful, gauging by the response from MPs, students and women. It was reported that following the Parliament Open Week, a secondary school student from *Savai'i* was impressed with the workings of Parliament.

7.3 The Parliament Open week also was able to show members of the public how they can be part of the law making process. MPs noted that members of their constituencies are now more aware of what goes on in Parliament. Apart from reports on television and radio, the free *Palemene* newspaper has been providing updates to members of the public on draft bills that are before Parliament

7.4 The Parliamentary Practice and procedure manual developed to assist MPs will be of relevance well into the future and will only need to be amended whenever the Standing Orders and Constitution are revised.

7.5 Members have also reported that the pre-sitting briefings have also been very helpful to them in terms of understanding draft legislations before the debate in the House. The seminars organised by the project and OCLA have made them more aware of their roles. The Speaker reported that there has also been an improvement in the way Members debate in the House, they are more aware of emerging and topical issues and he has witnessed a more informed debate in the House.

7.6 In order to achieve maximum impact, MPs could be regularly briefed by Government Ministries, in particular the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, on issues such as the current status of MDGs and other topical issues like Climate Change and Human Rights. Only in this way can they capably undertake their parliamentary roles as well as keep their constituents informed.

7.7 Secretariat staff, through the seminar series, is now able to clarify their parliamentary support roles and their relationship to each other, understand the value of teamwork in the provision of service to Members, and acknowledge the importance of impartiality. OCLA is now adequately staffed to address the wide ranging activities that have been highlighted in the Corporate Plan. The team will be more than adequate to maintain the process of continual change that has commenced. Staff training was a success, reflected by the fact that during the evaluation, members noted that there has been a positive change in the way members of the Secretariat carry out their work.

7.8 As the project has just started to roll in 2013 after the early delays in implementation, more improvement is expected to be seen with the way MPs and Secretariat staff carry out their work. It is expected that at the end of the project, MPs will have a stronger sense of importance of their role as parliamentarians and legislators, and will be suitably provided with support from OCLA.

7.9 If the project is to make a lasting impact, it should ensure that basic guides and procedures are established as a matter of priority. This includes an elaborate communication strategy for the outreach division, guides for all divisions, and urgent completion of the Department's first annual report. Once the basics are established, then all other activities will fall into place. The project has already put in place some of these basic activities, which will make it easier for new MPs and Secretariat staff to settle into their work in Parliament.

7.10 Finally, it is also important to recognise that other issues, such as general elections where it is possible to have a high turnover, can have a direct impact on Parliament's sustainable capacity. This applies not only for the MPs but also for the General Secretariat. Therefore, a continued capacity building of Parliament is indispensable and should be part of long term plans for the project at the end of the present parliamentary strengthening project.

Findings

7.11 The project has had a significant impact on Parliament of Samoa. Initiatives supported by the project have assisted Members, staff and the general public. It helped improve working methods and the way the public perceives the Parliament.

7.12 Many of the activities put in place and the tools developed by the project are clear evidence of its impact and permitted to gain the commitment that development will be sustained.

7.13 For the remainder of the project there should be a focus in establishing basic guides and procedures as a matter of priority. This will ensure sustainability of the project since good and relevant procedures will be followed regardless of subsequent developments.

7.14 While there have been achievements in the project, the lack of commitment in some services and/or external circumstances, such as elections, could endanger the sustainability of the project outcomes unless further work is done to ensure that such risk is monitored as part of the regular work practices of the Parliament. Further technical assistance is vital to the continued progress.

Recommendations

14) Establish basic procedures and guides as a matter of urgency as these will ensure real sustainability of the project.

15) Focus on consolidating the activities already carried out to ensure their effective uptake by members and staff of the Parliament. Guarantee their sustainability in view of elections scheduled for 2016.

8. LESSONS LEARNT AND GOOD PRACTICES

8.1 Given the advantage of an external viewpoint and with the benefit of being able to survey the operation of the project over a period of time, the evaluation team noted a number of areas where lessons can be learned:

8.2 National ownership of any project is key to enhancing capacity. When MPs and the Secretariat take ownership of the project, it shows that the project has been successful. In this case, despite the good relationship fostered between UNDP Pacific Centre, OCLA and the twinned Parliament, the ambiguity on the execution modality led to misunderstandings and to management problems during the first year of implementation.

8.3 Whereas procedures between UNDP and OCLA are to be clarified to really define roles within the project during the remainder of the project, future parliamentary projects should see relationship building as a priority amongst stakeholders if it is to develop the sense of ownership that previous projects managed to create.

8.4 Building capacities within a state institution is a long-term commitment. However, there is need to ensure, periodically, that gains are consolidated and this may require a "back to basics" approach, revisiting components and ensuring that they have strong foundations to complement more advanced training. In the case of this project, this might mean providing more training to the Secretariat to ensure stability and sustainability of the project's outcomes. This would also allow for a consolidation of capacity-building initiatives, sustain relationships built within OCLA, and allow for a more strengthened institution to be more involved in and better able to lead and take ownership of a new design process for a potential new phase of support at the end of the current Parliamentary Strengthening Project.

8.5 No project team, however, experienced and competent, can deliver the entire range of support needed by its development partners. The SPSP was clearly aware of this and organized very interesting partnerships from the beginning with on-going assistance programmes like PPP and sister UN organisations to deliver input within the project. There could be a widening of the base of delivery partners to multiply inter-parliamentary exchanges and the development of institutional linkages.

8.6 UNDP could seek to establish more partnerships with other institutions involved in supporting parliamentary strengthening over this remaining period of implementation in order to facilitate the delivery of training. It would also be useful to initiate engagement in concrete strategic partnership discussions in order to design a new phase of support.

8.7 Parliament is unique and is very important being the watchdog of all Government policies and strategies. This project focussed on the issue of MDGs which is a priority area for UNDP. Future projects should also take into account such priorities of the country and UNDP when developing the focus of future Parliamentary projects.

8.8 The Parliament does not operate in a vacuum and there are close links between the Parliament and other governance areas within which UNDP has operated in the past or is currently working such as: electoral issues, developing political parties, promoting gender issues, decentralisation, anti-corruption measures and supporting human rights institutions. UNDP in its Parliamentary development or support projects should take into account the inter-linkages between these practice areas when developing and designing future Parliamentary projects.

Recommendations

16) Reaffirm current partnerships and establish new ones with other institutions involved in supporting parliamentary strengthening to ensure delivery of training during the remainder period of execution. Begin designing a follow-up phase of the strengthening programme.

17) Ensure that the cross-cutting nature of Parliamentary work and its links to other areas of democratic governance is taken into account when designing future parliamentary projects

18) UNDP works in many related fields including elections, building political parties, decentralisation and human rights and these have clear links to the work of Parliament. This should be highlighted when developing projects in these fields.

CONCLUSION

Summary of findings and recommendations

Main findings

Project Management

- ◆ The project faced initial project management and implementation challenges but overcame them and, in 2013, the project delivered satisfactory results.
- ◆ The project management Board has overall responsibilities to provide strategic guidance and oversight of the project. However, given its high level membership it lacks flexibility to really manage the day to day operations. Establishing a working committee could be a solution.
- ◆ The recruitment of the Programme Manager was delayed which is one of the explanations of the low level of delivery during the first year. The Pacific Parliamentary Partnership programme (PPP) assisted the project by providing a three-month interim project management support.
- ◆ Misunderstandings in the modalities of execution has led the project to be implemented with hybrid direct/national execution modalities. However, the project document clearly provided for a direct execution from UNDP. This causes several problems and will have to be addressed.
- ◆ The project's budget is not entirely funded and UNDP has to follow up on commitments and to mobilize other donors to ensure funding for 2014 activities.

Project Design

- ◆ Although the project was developed following participatory processes, some stakeholders think that these were insufficient and/ or that there was not enough explanation on rules and implementation procedures.
- ◆ The Project document available on the UNDP website is signed only by the UNDP Resident Representative. The Government and the Speaker of the Parliament should also sign this document to show that all have agreed to the objectives, outputs and modalities contained therein.
- ◆ There is a misunderstanding on the way the project should engage with political parties, women and youth. Because of the issue in the execution modalities there is a need for UNDP and OCLA to clearly frame respective roles and functions so that both parts of the project can be implemented in parallel without compromising anyone.
- ◆ Insufficient funds are allocated for capacity building activities for the Secretariat despite the fact that a well trained staff able to provide effective and timely services and advice to members is a key factor to successfully strengthen a Parliament.

Relevance and Appropriateness

- ◆ The project is both relevant and appropriate with regard to its strategies, outputs and partnerships which respond to the identified obstacles to good parliamentary governance.
- ◆ Focussing on MDGs is appropriate as Samoa works towards achieving its MDG targets.
- ◆ For activities related to political parties, women and youth UNDP has to retake control of the project to implement it using direct execution modalities so That OCLA does not risk compromising itself.
- ◆ The focus on strengthening the secretariat's capacity is highly relevant but only a very limited budget was allocated to the relevant output.

Effectiveness and Efficiency

- ◆ Initially, the effectiveness of the project seemed low but the project is now delivering efficiently.
- ◆ Improvement in project effectiveness and efficiency can be attributed to the recruitment of the Project Manager and the availability of the Parliamentary Advisor from the UNDP Pacific Centre in Suva.
- ◆ The Pacific Parliamentary Partnership Programme delivered all its activities in 2012 and carried the momentum into 2013. However, the rotational specialists employed by PPP had only Australian parliamentary knowledge and were not sensitized to Pacific culture.
- ◆ The strategy on public education and community outreach was to connect the Samoan people with Parliament with a special focus on reaching out to young people, women and people with disabilities. However, goals only refer to women, risking the creation of a "promotion of women fatigue".

Impact and Sustainability

- ◆ The project has had a significant impact on Parliament of Samoa. Activities implemented and tools developed have benefited the members, staff and the general public.
- ◆ For the remainder of the project there should be a focus on establishing basic guides and procedures as a matter of priority as it will ensure sustainability of the project. Further work is to be done to avoid the possibility that changing external circumstances or lack of commitment could endanger the sustainability of the project outcomes.

Conclusions

In conclusion, this evaluation underlines the following recommendations to be emphasized for the remainder of the project:

- ◆ Review execution procedures to reach a consensus on defining respective roles between UNDP and OCLA. Such procedures should follow international standards and be clearly defined and agreed upon. This would benefit both UNDP and the Samoan Parliament. Training should be organised to raise awareness among stakeholders.
- ◆ Review OCLA issued recruitment contracts so that major discrepancies, such as the absence of reporting modalities in the Project Manager contract, are resolved.
- ◆ Split the current responsibilities of the Project Board into two, where the High-Level Board would provide political representation for the project and a newly established Working Committee would oversee the overall operational coordination of the project.
- ◆ Provide the Project Manager with training on parliamentary procedure and UNDP rules and procedures, as well as reporting mechanisms, so that he can effectively implement his duties toward the project and UNDP.
- ◆ Ensure that all stakeholders are once again aware of the ins and outs of the project, including the new procedures developed.
- ◆ Make sure that the project document is signed by all relevant stakeholders to avoid future problems. This resolution should not be problematic considering that the project has been ongoing for almost two years.
- ◆ Frame clearly the responsibilities of UNDP and OCLA within the project for activities within and beyond Parliament to be undertaken in parallel. A UNV or a secondee through PPP could be recruited to manage the "outside" part of the project so that no ambiguity between both sides of the project can be alleged.
- ◆ Review budget allocation and increase activities targeting staff members to ensure that the Secretariat is able to provide sound advice and timely services to members and create an institutional memory which would reinforce the sustainability of the project outcomes.
- ◆ Ensure that direct execution modalities are in use when the project is working with targets external to the Parliament. Management procedures should be reviewed accordingly.
- ◆ Focus on assistance to the Secretariat and review budget allocation accordingly.
- ◆ Organise sensitivity briefings on Pacific Islandculture for newcomers experts to avoid cultural misunderstanding.
- ◆ Develop the sharing of experiences within the Pacific islands Parliaments and increase efforts to recruit Pacific parliamentary experts.
- ◆ Ensure an inclusive implementation of the project without focusing too much on any one group.

- ◆ Establish basic procedures and guides as a matter of urgency as these will ensure real sustainability of the project.
- ◆ Focus on consolidating the activities already carried out to ensure their effective uptake by members and staff of the Parliament, effectively guaranteeing sustainability.
- ◆ Reaffirm current partnerships and establish new ones with other institutions involved in supporting parliamentary strengthening, both for the remainder period of execution of the programme, and in preparation for the design of a follow-up phase.
- ◆ Ensure that the cross-cutting nature of Parliamentary work and its links to other areas of democratic governance is taken into account.
- ◆ Highlight links between the work of Parliament and other UNDP programmes in many related fields including elections, building political parties, decentralisation and human rights.

Annexes

ANNEX 1 - Meetings held during the evaluation

Samoa Parliamentary Support Project (SPSP) Mid-Term Review Consultation Program

Date	Time	Person	Designation
9/12/2013	09.00 – 10.00	Ms. Chalene. Malele	Deputy Clerk
	10.30 – 11.00	Fepuleai Attila Ropati	
	11.00 – 12.00	Ulu B Crawley	SPS Project Manager
	13.00 – 14.45	Anthony Woods	UNDP – Deputy Resident Representative
	15.00 – 16.00	Peseta Noumea Simi	Ministry of Finance, Government of Samoa
10/12/2013	09.00 – 10.00	Sala Georgina (SKYPE)	UNDP – Assistant Resident Representative
	10.30 – 11.30	Ms. Valasi Iosefa	Human Resource Person, Project Team
	11.30 – 12.00	Honorable Leuatea Laauli	Speaker and Chairman of the SPSP Board
	13.30 – 14.30	Mulitalo Bernie	ICT Manager, Project Team
	15.00 – 16.00	Urika Semua	Outreach Program Manager, Project Team
11/12/2013	09.00 – 10.00	Tiatia Graeme Tualaulelei	Committee
	10.00 – 11.00	Ms. Talosaga Aiolupotea	OCLA Finance Manager
	11.00 – 12.00	Toesulusulu Cedric Schuster	Member of Parliament (MP) – Tautua Party (Opposition)
	2.00 – 3.00	Lautafi Purcell	MP and SPSP Board Member (HRPP Party)
	4.00 – 5.00	Asenati Lesa -Tuiletufuga	Governance Manager, Australian High Commission

Date	Time	Person	Designation
12/12/2013	10.00 – 10.30	Taefu Lemi	MP – HRPP Party
	10.30 – 11.30	Gatoloaifa’ana Ama	MP and SPSP Board member (Not available for interview)
	14.00 – 15.00	Lealailepule Rimoni Aiafi	MP and SPSP Board member (not available for interview)
	15.30 – 16.00	Ms. Moana Luamanuvae Mohamed Tinauri Janine Twyman Mills Jasmine Subasat	UNDP <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operations and Procurement • Gender
13/12/2013	09.00 – 10.00	Ms Lizbeth Cullity (UNDP RR) Mr Anthony Wood (UNDP DRR)	Debriefing
	11.00 – 12.00	Fepuleai A Ropati Ms. Chalene Malele Ms. Valasi Iosefa Ulu B Crawley	Debriefing

ANNEX 2 - Terms of Reference

Samoa Parliamentary Support Project (SPSP)

Project Mid-term Evaluation Consultant

Background

The Samoa Parliamentary Support Project (SPSP) was developed at the request of the Speaker of the Samoa Parliament to UNDP to implement key recommendations that emanated out of a Legislative Needs Assessment that was carried out by UNDP on the Parliamentary system in Samoa in February 2011. The SPSP is the first institutional strengthening project targeting parliamentary support services as well as deepening the democratic processes in Parliament itself and increasing the level of understanding of Members of Parliament, including Opposition MPs, about their specific roles and responsibilities of a Parliamentarian and holding the Government to account for the delivery of development goals and achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). There are 4 specific outputs as follow:

Output 1: Effective leadership and accountability of Members of Parliament and political parties strengthened.

Output 2: Law-making and committee oversight strengthened in support of MDGs achievement.

Output 3: Engagement of public and Members of Parliament and Parliament strengthened with special effort made to engage young people and women.

Output 4: Efficient, professional and high quality administrative support and services provided to Members of Parliament and other key client groups.

Key operating principles which the UNDP is using in implementing this project include: (i) Integrating efforts to promote MDGs achievement into existing parliamentary processes; (ii) Working in partnership with other support providers to maximise eventual sustainability. To that end, the Project has been developed based on feedback not only from in-country parliamentary stakeholders, but also from existing parliamentary support partners notably the Australian Federal Parliament and the Tasmanian Parliament, as well as UN Agencies. (iii) Facilitating South-South experience-sharing within the Pacific and outside as appropriate. (iv) Implementing the Project incrementally, starting with high priority activities, even as resources mobilisation activity continue.

Objectives

The objective of this consultancy is to undertake a mid-term evaluation of the UNDP Samoa Parliamentary Support Project (SPSP) in Samoa. More precisely the consultant is expected to:

- At the mid-term stage in the project, assess the projects' accomplishments and its contributions towards the achievement of the anticipated outcomes, including any constraints on its effectiveness, and any unintended outcomes;

- At the mid-term stage in the project, assess the direct and indirect effects of the project on intended beneficiaries and broader socio-economic, political, MDG and gender dimensions;
- At the mid-term stage, assess the appropriateness of the project design particularly as it relates to the achievement of project objectives, its linkages with the government's national strategic plans, and problems it intends to address;
- At the mid-term stage, assess the management and implementation arrangements of the project, including financial and human resource management, monitoring and oversight as well as the risks and risk management strategies in terms of their contribution to the delivery of project results in accordance with the project Results and Resources Framework (RRF);
- Identify key factors which have contributed to the program's successes and failures to date;
- Document the lessons learned in the design, delivery, management and monitoring of the project to date that will inform the delivery of the remainder of the project;
- Recommend options to improve ongoing UNDP engagement with the Samoa Parliament.

Scope of work

In order to accomplish the above objectives, the consultant will:

- Undertake a briefing with the UNDP Pacific Centre Parliamentary Development Specialist prior to commencement of the evaluation process through a teleconference call;
- Undertake a literature review, considering in particular, relevant documentation and credible sources (list, including some reading materials will be forwarded to successful consultant prior to in-country visits);
- Review the implemented SPSP activities;
- Review any other relevant documents, including, Parliament Corporate plan, government policy documents, national development plans, relevant academic papers, and the projects' Annual and quarterly progress reports.
- In developing the mid-term evaluation report, consult with key national and international stakeholders, including:
 - Staff in the Samoa Multi-Country Office;
 - SPSP Project Manager;
 - Staff from the Office of the Clerk of Legislative Assembly (OCLA);
 - The Office of the Speaker;
 - Current Members of Parliament;
 - Pacific Parliamentary Partnerships (PPP) (By phone / Skype)
 - AusAID
 - Civil society representatives and media;
 - Women representatives or groups in Samoa;
 - Any other relevant donors or key stakeholders.
- At the end of the in-country visit the consultant is expected to meet and present the initial results with key findings with the UNDP SPSP Project Manager and relevant stakeholders from the OCLA.

Expected Outputs, timelines and milestones

The main output of this consultancy will be a mid-term project evaluation report with detailed accounts of observations, lessons learnt and recommendations for the implementation of the SPSP over the remaining two years. The report will follow the evaluation format outlined below and include sections on the following:

Criteria	Main questions
Project Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To date, have the SPSP Project Management arrangements been appropriate at implementation and strategic level?
Project Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To date, to what extent did the design of the project help in achieving its own goals? - Were the context, problems, needs and priorities well analysed while designing the project? - Were there clear objectives and a clear strategy in the project document? - Were there clear baselines indicators and/or benchmarks for performance? - Was the process of project design sufficiently participatory? Was there any impact of the process?
Relevance and appropriateness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is the project relevant, appropriate and strategic to national goals and challenges? - Is the project relevant, appropriate and strategic to the mandate, strategy, functions, roles, and responsibilities of the Parliament as an institution and to the key actors within that institution? - Is the project relevant, appropriate and strategic to UNDP mandate?
Effectiveness and efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To date, have the actions taken to achieve the outputs and outcomes been effective and efficient? - To date, what have been the lessons learned, failures/lost opportunities? What might have been done better or differently? - To date, how has the project dealt with risks? - To date, have the outputs been achieved in a timely manner? - To date, have the available resources been utilized in the best way possible?

Impact and sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Will the outputs/outcomes achieved thus far lead to benefits over the next 2 years and beyond the life of the existing project? - To date, have the actions and results of the project been owned by the local partners and stakeholders? - To date, has capacity (individuals, institution, systems) been built through the actions of the project? - To date, what has been the level of contribution of the project management arrangements to national ownership of the set objectives, results, and outputs - To date, have the modes of deliveries of the outputs been appropriate in order to promote national ownership and sustainability of the results achieved?
----------------------------------	---

The Consultancy shall follow the following schedule and milestones of deliverables:

Deliverable	Dates¹	Work days
Review of background documents and prepare methodology	Between signature of contract and field mission	1.5
Briefing & discussions by telephone/skype with relevant key stakeholders		0.5
In country travel, interviews and observations completed, initial findings presentation given to Un Joint Presence CDM and key stakeholders in parliament	5-day field mission	5
First draft of the evaluation report drafted and submitted to UNDP Multi-Country Office for review and feedback	Draft awaited for week following the field mission	3
Redrafting of the report following feedback from the UNDP MCO and final submission of report to UNDP MCO	Final report to be sent within the week following receipt of UNDP feedback	2
TOTAL		12

Copies of all work will be delivered to the UNDP Samoa MCO and UNDP Pacific Centre in electronic format. Reports produced and recommendations are the property of UNDP and cannot be reproduced without permission of same.

¹Logistical difficulties may occur, and timeline may have to be revised accordingly.

Management and Coordination Arrangement

The Evaluation consultant will have the overall responsibility for the design and implementation of the evaluation, writing of the report and the timely submission of the draft and final version. The Consultant shall be reporting directly to the UNDP Pacific Centre Parliamentary Development Specialist who shall exercise oversight throughout the duration of the Consultancy engagement.

Duty Station and duration of work

This evaluation requires the consultant to travel to Samoa. While in Samoa the consultant is required to conduct interviews with project beneficiaries and other stakeholders who will be jointly identified by UNDP and stakeholders in Parliament. The total timeframe for this assignment is 12 days commencing in December 2013.

Qualifications and experience

- Advanced university degree in political science, development studies, legislative studies, law or related field;
- At least 10 years of relevant experience in parliamentary work at senior level with previous experience engaging with parliamentary development projects desirable;
- Proven experience in undertaking project;
- Global experience engaging with parliamentary development is highly desirable;
- Excellent English writing and communication skills;
- Excellent interpersonal and cross-cultural communication skills; and
- Ability to meet deadlines.