



9 February 2021

Dear Leasiosiofa'asisina,

Subject: Green Climate Fund-Vaisigano Catchment Project (GCF-VCP)
Interim Evaluation Management Response

I am pleased to provide you with a final copy of the Interim Evaluation (IE) Management Response Report.

As we had advised in August 2020, an independent IE was undertaken in September and October 2020 for the GCF Vaisigano Catchment Project (VCP) which involved all Implementing Agencies (IAs) and stakeholders of the VCP. Twenty-seven Recommendations were made by the evaluator and which proposed Actions relating to the following:

- Corrections to the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the project;
- Follow-up/reinforcements to ensure delivery of expected results as per the Funded Activity Agreement (FAA) with GCF; and
- Proposals for future directions underlining main objectives.

As per UNDP standard practice for monitoring of post-evaluation actions, the recommended Actions are listed on the IE Management Response following extensive review by the UNDP Country Office and Bureau of Regional Hub, PMU, and IAs. The document will be uploaded on the UNDP Evaluation Resource Centre

UNDP would like to extend thanks to the PMU and IAs for the extensive review of the recommended Actions, and would like to request that an update on implementation of the Actions be provided by the PMU at the next Project Board Meeting in Quarter 1, 2021.

Leasiosiofa'asisina Oscar Malielegaoi
Chief Executive Officer
Ministry of Finance
APIA

CC: Leiatua Henry Ah Ching, Deputy Chief Executive Officer, MOF
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For further information, please do not hesitate to contact Ms. Yvette Kerslake (yvette.kerslake@undp.org) or Ms. Karen Komiti (karen.komiti@undp.org).

Yours sincerely,



Jorn Sorensen
Resident Representative

VCP/GCF Management Response

Management response to the Interim Evaluation of the UNDP-supported GCF-financed project titled 'Integrated Flood Management to Enhance Climate Resilience of the Vaisigano River Catchment in Samoa' (GCF Samoa)

Prepared by: UNDP MCO

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Recommendations and management response

Recommendation 1. PMU, MoF UNDP need to review the current GCF-VCP Implementation Plan and Funding Proposal Budget (divided by years of the project) and re-assessing based on annually agreed disbursement amounts				
Management response: In its capacity as the Accredited Entity (AE), UNDP agrees with this recommendation and will contribute to the work of the PMU and MoF in reviewing the current GCF-VCP Implementation Plan. The GCF-VCP Annual Work Plan and Budget (AWPB) and Multi Year Work Plan and Budget (MYWPB) is reviewed pro-actively and as part of the annual and multiyear work planning and budgeting workshops involving the Implementing Agencies (IAs), led by MoF and facilitated by the GCF Project Management Unit (PMU) with UNDP engagement and contribution. The November 2020 Joint Planning Retreat reviewed and validated the revised GCF-VCP 2021 AWPB integrated with the MYWPB until the end of 2023, matched with an Updated Implementation Plan that includes re-assessing of the disbursement amounts against the Disbursement Plan in the Project Document (ProDoc).				
Key action(s)	Completion date	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking ¹	
			Comments	Status ²
1.1 Review and update the 2021 AWPB and the Implementation Plan MYWPB to 2023.	5 November 2020	MoF/PMU, IAs, UNDP		Completed

¹ If the TR is uploaded to the ERC, the status of implementation is tracked electronically in the Evaluation Resource Centre database (ERC).

² Status of Implementation: Completed, Partially Completed, Pending.

1.2 Updated 2021 AWPB and MYWPB presented and approved by the 12 th Project Board.	16 December 2020	MoF/PMU, IAs, UNDP		Partially completed
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Recommendation 2. There is a need for UNDP (as AE) to establish clarity from the GCF Secretariat on Contingency payment rulings (in light of the COVID-19 pandemic). Also seek to provide some acceptable alternatives to help sanction future drawdowns from the Contingency Budget in future disbursement payments

Management response: Management agrees with this recommendation. UNDP has been in liaison with the GCF Secretariat since the start of the project to determine the process for accessing the Contingency Funds, and some informal criteria for contingency disbursement were communicated via email in 2017. GCF sees the contingency funds as funds based on disbursements that are not to be treated by default as readily available funding. GCF has emphasized that contingency requests will be treated on a case-by-case basis in line with the criteria to be established and process to be followed. In July 2020, the GCF Secretariat informed of a process to formalize the informal criteria through a Side Letter. This process is underway in discussion between UNDP and the GCF Secretariat.

Key action(s)	Completion date	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking	
			Comments	Status
2.1 Complete discussions on Side Letter with GCF Secretariat	28 February 2021	UNDP		Pending
2.2 Execute Side Letter between UNDP and GCF to confirm arrangements to access Contingency Funds	15 March 2021	UNDP		Pending

Recommendation 3. MoF/UNDP to instruct PMU to update the MEF to better reflect latest project observations, clarities, consistencies and results attained since the start of the project. It is suggested to add (within the revised MEF) the need for an annual review workshop event to offer a platform for all stakeholders to be informed of and discuss progress and challenges of the project, also serving as a knowledge sharing event.

Management response: Management agrees with this recommendation. UNDP will work closely with the Ministry of Finance (MoF) and PMU to review the discrepancies or inconsistencies between the logical framework and the narrative in the body of the Funded Activity Agreement (FAA) as well as those captured in the 2020 Interim Evaluation (IE) Report, and propose an update to the Monitoring & Evaluation Framework (MEF) for internal project purposes. The PMU has raised some observations, discrepancies and inconsistencies between the MEF and the narrative in the body of the FAA and the ProDoc. The MoF, on assumption that the changes to MEF/MEP would be considered 'minor changes', has instructed the PMU to update the MEF (revised as at June 2018) to reflect observations made in the IE including results attained since the start of the project. The changes are to be tabled at the Project Board for endorsement in March 2021, shared with the

GCF Secretariat in a Note-to-File, and reported in the narrative and annexed to the Annual Progress Report (APR) for review and approval by the GCF Secretariat..

Key action(s)	Completion date	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking	
			Comments	Status
3.1 MoF to submit paper with updated report on Revised and Updated MEF/MEP to the 13 th PB for endorsement	31 March 2021	MoF/UNDP		Pending
3.2 A Note-to-File to be prepared and communicated to the GCF Secretariat with the proposed modifications to the Logical Framework	31 March 2021	MoF/UNDP		Pending

Recommendation 4. UNDP to produce a midterm “tracking tool” (see Annex XI of this IE) as an additional midterm tool.

Management response: Management partially agrees with this recommendation. The IE Management Response tracking tool will be used as the Mid-term “tracking tool” referred to in the IE recommendation, and uploaded in UNDP’s online Evaluation Resource Centre (ERC). UNDP will work closely with the PMU to include an update on implementation of the IE Management Response actions in the Quarterly Progress Reports and in Board Meetings for the remainder of the project.

Key action(s)	Completion date	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking	
			Comments	Status
4.1 GCF IE Management Tracking Tool completed by UNDP MCO and posted on ERC	31 January 2021	UNDP		Partially completed
4.2 IE Management Tracking tool update annexed to Quarterly Progress Reports and tabled at Board meetings	31 March 2021	UNDP		Partially completed

Recommendation 5. UNDP/MoF to produce a new “Project COVID-19 Contingency Plan” (or “COVID-related impact risk assessment”) which may be annexed as a sub-section within existing Quarterly Reports or APRs

Management response: Management partially agrees with this recommendation. UNDP will provide guidance and support to PMU so that a COVID-related impact risk assessment can be prepared that will be updated with the Quarterly Reports. The impact of the COVID-19 related State of Emergency declared by the Government of Samoa in March 2020 on the project and remedial actions taken during that period have been well documented in the last three quarterly reports for 2020, and the project has been adaptive in its response within its capacity. The risk assessment will hence be forward-looking and focus on a potential outbreak of COVID-19 in Samoa. UNDP/MoF will hold consultations with the National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC) and undertake a review of the Government of Samoa's overall COVID-19 contingency plan. This will be included in the APR in the section on challenges.

Key action(s)	Completion date	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking	
			Comments	Status
5.1 A joint COVID-related impact Risk Assessment matrix in line with NEOC Contingency Plan will be shared with the 2020 APR.	31 January 2021	UNDP/MoF/PMU		Pending
5.2 Impact risk assessment matrix first update to be submitted with Q1 2021 Quarterly Report	31 March 2021	MoF/PMU		Pending
5.3 UNDP to update its risk register on ATLAS	31 March 2021	UNDP		Pending

Recommendation 6. PMU need to update the Project Results Framework Indicators as identified in Table 3.1 of this IE to make them SMART. The pending APR 2020 must also be aligned consistently with the Funding Proposal, the Project Document, the FAA and the MEF. In addition, the MoF also should consider revising the MYWPB based on current progress and future APR 2020 information in line with GCF and UNDP policies.

Management response: Management partially agrees with this recommendation. It is important to note that neither the PMU nor UNDP can make changes to the Project Results Framework (PRF), but any proposed changes require the agreement by the GCF Secretariat. UNDP/PMU can assess the PRF and submit their assessment with proposed changes to the GCF Secretariat. Once approved, UNDP/PMU can make the changes and report this in the APR. The MoF/PMU proposes to undertake this work in conjunction with Recommendation 3 and 21, in order to make amendments based on the IE SMART Analysis of PRF Indicators (Table 3.1), as well as further assessment of changes in the Results-based Framework required and identified in Annex XIII b of the IE. The MoF has agreed to review and undertake any adjustments needed on the MYWPB based on annual work plan implementation status and to align with decisions made on the PRF, if appropriate, and to ensure consistency with the FAA.

Key action(s)	Completion date	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking	
			Comments	Status
6.1 MoF to submit Paper with updated report on Revised and Updated	31 March 2021	MoF/UNDP		Pending

Results-based Framework to the 13 th PB for endorsement				
6.2 A Note-to-File to be prepared and communicated to the GCF Secretariat with the proposed modifications to the Logical Framework	31 March 2021	UNDP		Pending
6.3 All future reporting to be in line with endorsed/revised Project Results Framework effective Q2-2021	30 June 2021	MoF/UNDP		Pending

Recommendation 7. UNDP/MoF and PMU should partner to take action to streamline the PMU structure (streamlining and preparing updated ToRs for members) to enhance its mandate and internal decision making capacity.

Management response: Management agrees with this recommendation. UNDP recognizes the need to ensure that the structure, roles and size of the PMU is aligned as closely as possible with the FAA. Changes are underway and UNDP notes the progress made by MoF/PMU to address critical capacity gaps with recruitment during 2020. The current PMU structure includes a Senior Technical Advisor (STA) recruited in collaboration with UNDP to support due diligence and decision-making with operational and upstream ecosystems and watershed programmes, in addition to a PMU Technical Assistance (TA)- Engineering Advisor to support due diligence and decision-making with all infrastructure works including flood mitigation infrastructures. This is supported by a Flood Monitoring and Geo-hazard Assessment Specialist (FMGAS). In addition, MoF has contracted a Social and Environmental Safeguard Consultant (SESC) to reinforce support for project Safeguard compliance. UNDP will continue its due diligence and monitor and report on the PMU capacity and cost through the APR. The key actions under this recommendation should be linked to the key actions identified under Recommendation 25.

Key action(s)	Completion date	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking	
			Comments	Status
7.1 UNDP and PMU to discuss and confirm updated PMU organizational structure	31 January 21	MOF/PMU, UNDP		Pending
7.2 Report on PMU capacity, changes and costs through a Note-to-File to the GCF Secretariat if the changes are found to be significant , and reporting in the APR	31 March 21	UNDP/MOF		Pending

Recommendation 8. Regarding Activity 1.2, MoH to clarify in more detail (via an advisory note or workshop event), to the PMU and UNDP, how the specific set of CDSC guidelines produced to date focus on flood-borne diseases and responses relating to trauma (injuries, cuts, hypothermia).

Management response: Management partially agrees with the recommendation. UNDP recognizes that the Contagious Diseases Surveillance Guidelines produced under the GCF project is an approved national document. The issue is one of alignment with the Funding Proposal – as it makes no specific mention of flood-borne diseases, although the guidelines include responses to all known contagious diseases in Samoa. The guidelines do not address specific responses relating to flood-related injuries, trauma and others, which is a main purpose of the training activities under Activity 1.2. The IA's position (Ministry of Health, MoH) is that no further action will be taken to better align this CDSC guidelines activity and no further clarification is required. In this context, UNDP will work jointly with the PMU to review activities under MoH responsibility and for proper adaptive management procedures to be undertaken to realign sub-activities under 1.2 and suggest the appropriate changes (this also applies to Recommendation No.20). These steps include: (1) An assessment of the sub-activities proposed in the Funding Proposal (FP) and whether these remain a priority for the Government of Samoa and MoH; (2) an assessment of the "new" or emerging needs of the government and MoH in relation to flood-related health issues; (3) an assessment whether the new needs contribute towards the intended outputs and if they do not, they should be considered outside the scope of the project and project should not support them; and (4) if they are within the scope of the project, PB approval will be sought for "new" sub-activities and reported to GCF in the APR process. These steps can form part of the assessment and modification of the Logical Framework exercise (as per Recommendation 3 and 6).

Key action(s)	Completion date	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking	
			Comments	Status
8.1 Assess the sub-activities proposed in the FP and whether these remain a priority for the Government of Samoa	28 February 2021	MOF/PMU, UNDP, MOH		Pending
8.2 Assess the "new" or emerging needs of GoS in relation to the FP and MoF to submit Paper with updated report to the 13 th PB for endorsement	31 March 2021	MOF/PMU, UNDP, MOH		Pending
8.3 Report on PMU capacity, changes and costs through a Note-to-File to the GCF Secretariat where the changes are significant and, in the APR.	31 March 2021	MOF/PMU, UNDP, MOH		Pending

Recommendation 9. Regarding Activity 1.4.2 (Flood Model Houses), PMU to revise activity scopes and ToRs to better fit within allocated budgets and to re-tender the design and build with immediate effect.

Management response: Management agrees with the recommendation. UNDP will work closely with PMU and monitor the work of the IA (Ministry of Works, Transport and Infrastructure, MWTI) as part of the

Infrastructure Technical Advisory Group (I-TAG), so that the scope and design of the Flood Model Houses (FMH) is being revised to align more closely with the budget allocated for this activity. It was agreed with the IA and PMU to revise the activity scope and design of the FMH accordingly. Comments from stakeholders the original concept for FMH designs will be incorporated in the FMH designs and Tender documents finalized for re-tendering.

Key action(s)	Completion date	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking	
			Comments	Status
9.1 Monitor revised TORs to fit within allocated budgets and submit final designs and tender documents of the FMH to the I-TAG for review and approval.	31 March 2021	UNDP/PMU/IA		Pending

Recommendation 10. Regarding Activity 1.4.4 (Building Practitioners Registration), the MoF/PMU and UNDP to determine whether this could be better focused and targeted to current national needs, as opposed to being restricted to the original 2017 wordings set out in the FAA. The outcome of this issue must be clarified and updated within the Procurement Plan and Operational Manual accordingly.

Management response: Management agrees with this recommendation. UNDP will work closely with the PMU to better focus this activity towards national needs. This will include how best to address the activity given the national context to make progress while at the same time ensuring its alignment with the FAA-associated FP. UNDP and the PMU will document the inconsistencies of the activity with the national context as was noted since start of the project, as reflected in the IE Report. An assessment of the activity will form a part of the MEF review alongside Recommendation 3 and will be tabled to the Board for endorsement in March 2021, reported in the narrative and annexed to the APR for review and approval by the GCF Secretariat.

Key action(s)	Completion date	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking	
			Comments	Status
10.1 Paper submitted on Review and update narrative and outcome of Sub-activity 1.4.4 to the 13 th PB for endorsement.	31 March 2021	UNDP/MoF		Pending
10.2 A Note-to-File to be prepared and communicated to the GCF Secretariat with the proposed modifications to the Logical Framework for Activity 1.4.4, if the changes are found to be significant, and reporting in the APR.	31 March 2021	UNDP/MoF		Pending

Recommendation 11. Need to reassess work planning needs associated with Activities 2.2.4 and 2.2.5 to ensure they focus on achieving intended results. EE need to review a series of possible strategies and budget re-allocations to support the PMU to devise options to manage these separate activities for the remainder of the project.

Management response: Management notes and agrees with this recommendation. UNDP will continue supporting the work on planning and reassessing needs involving the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MNRE) and PMU for Activities 2.2.4/2.2.5 and 2.2.6. This work has been on-going since the last quarter. This includes working collaboratively with the Civil Society Support Programme (CSSP) and MNRE on the review of Activity 2.2.4/2.2.5 for the integration of key ecosystem activities in the implementation of the Ecosystem-based Adaptation Enterprise Development Programme (EbAEDP), as well as work with the MNRE Cash-for-Work Programme (CfWP) implementing partners (Water Resource Division, Division of Environment and Conservation and Forestry Division) to review planning and the methodology for landscape restoration work undertaken as part of Activity 2.2.6. This is to improve reporting to the TAG/Project Board on a quarterly and annual basis, as well as fully aligning with the VCP intended results.

Key action(s)	Completion date	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking	
			Comments	Status
11.1 Work with MNRE on re-assessing work planning and activities with CSSP on 2 nd Call for proposal.	31 March 2021	MOF/PMU/MNRE		Partly completed
11.2 Work with MNRE key divisions on reassessing work planning and reporting needs for the CfWP (2.2.6)	31 March 2021	MOF/PMU/MNRE		Partly completed
11.3 Present report on the reassessment for sub-activities 2.2.4 and 2.2.5 and 2.2.6 to Activity 2.2 TAG meeting for approval.	31 March 2021	MOF/PMU/MNRE		Pending

Recommendation 12. PMU (through MNRE) to confirm the number of women, young people and people living with disability and older people from the families of the hired CfW workers and the percentage will be used to determine the percentage of cash for work activities targeting the vulnerable groups.

Management response: Management agrees with the recommendation. This exercise is being undertaken by PMU and MNRE. MoF/PMU are currently reviewing the Target indicators as part also of response to Recommendation 21 and working in close collaboration with the Samoa Bureau of Statistics using the household data within the 31 villages covered by the project. A methodology will be developed by the project to confirm the target percentage of CfW targeting vulnerable groups as part of this overall indicator review exercise, and confirming the number of women, young people, elderly and Persons with Disability benefitting from the CfW activities.

Key action(s)	Completion date	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking	
			Comments	Status
12.1 Develop appropriate methodology to reassess target indicator for participation in the CfWP by vulnerable groups	31 January 2021	MNRE/MoF/PMU		Partially completed
12.2 Present report on the reassessment of target indicators for CfW to the Activity 2.2 TAG meeting for approval	31 March 2021	MNRE/MoF/PMU		Pending

Recommendation 13. Activity 2.4 should be moved up to Output 2.1 as it is realistically the same work but was in the original Funding Proposal to allow this work to be part of the bridge or wall construction work. Regarding Activity 2.4.2, this again should link better to 2.1.2 (construction works only)

Management response: Management takes note but disagrees with the recommendation. The FAA Schedule 3 comprises of the Activity-level information for the project. Changes to the FAA Schedules are not recommended especially if adaptive management measures allow the project to be implemented by keeping in line with the FAA. There is already recognition by AE, EE and IAs that planning and construction of the infrastructures under these activities are connected and need to be scheduled in a sequential manner – recognition is reflected in the IAs' work scheduling and critical paths of these activities. The review of current designs of floodwalls adjacent to both bridges are in effect part of the channelization of Segments 2, 3 and 4. Both IAs are working in close collaboration for the implementation of Activity 2.4 in line with Activity 2.1. This will be documented as part of the 2020 APR. While changing the MEF may not be required, will be considered as part of the upcoming discussion on proposing updates to it.

Key action(s)	Completion date	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking	
			Comments	Status
13.1 Documentation/ information incorporated in the 2020 APR	1 March 2021	UNDP/PMU		Pending

Recommendation 14. There is a need for UNDP to consider new approaches to help with coordination of responses (under the role of the PMU) to consultancy/technical reporting outputs. A formal procedure is needed to improve comment collation in a more efficient manner (i.e.: 1 person needs to be formally tasked with compiling all IA comments and dispatching to UNDP etc or alternatively, to undertake and coordinate parallel report reviews etc).

Management response: Management agrees with this recommendation. Coordination of responses refers to the due diligence and review processes effected by both IAs and UNDP on the consultants' and contractors' technical reports, contracts and built infrastructure work. UNDP will work with the PMU and IAs and contractors to conduct its due diligence reviews seamlessly in parallel to reviews by the IAs, including

comment collation and timelines, to ensure efficient and timely implementation. It is important to recognize UNDP's fiduciary duties as the AE as stated in the Accreditation Master Agreement (AMA). There is a need for written guidelines to clearly define timelines and due diligence role requirements and to clarify roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders and the channels of communications between the EE, AE and IAs.

Key action(s)	Completion date	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking	
			Comments	Status
14.1 UNDP and PMU to agree on timelines and streamlining the process for conducting due diligence/oversight	31 January 2021	MOF/PMU, UNDP		Pending
14.2 Clarify roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders and channels of communications to improve coordination of UNDP due diligence in written guidelines.	31 January 2021	MOF/PMU, IAs, UNDP		Pending

Recommendation 15. MoF to review co-financing budget line amalgamations to help streamline the project as it progresses.

Management response: Management agrees with the recommendation. UNDP will work closely with MoF/PMU in reviewing co-financing budget lines planned specifically for the Operation and Maintenance activities of infrastructure as per the original FAA budget under the three Outputs. These activities are yet to be initiated mainly due to delays in the construction of infrastructure, and the budget will need to be re-aligned with activities funded under the MYWPB. In the meantime, guidelines and instructions have been received from UNDP specifically for reporting co-financing as part of the APR 2020, and MoF will work closely with UNDP to ensure the full requirements in reporting co-financing in 2020 are compliant with the GCF requirements.

Key action(s)	Completion date	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking	
			Comments	Status
15.1 UNDP and MOF/PMU to discuss co-financing budget lines and provide a revised budget aligned with the MYWPB	31 January 2021	MoF/PMU, UNDP		Pending

Recommendation 16. UNDP, PMU and MoF to ensure that all matters pertaining towards answering the "Risk Flag" issues are prioritised with immediate effect. Urgent attention is needed to improve progress to address this issue.

Management response: Management partially agrees with this recommendation. UNDP will seek clarity from the GCF Secretariat on the status of the pending mission as indicated in the Risk Flag Letter. In the meantime, PMU will ensure that all required information and documentation required by the GCF Secretariat is ready and available in line with the due diligence responsibility of UNDP within the FAA/AMA.

Key action(s)	Completion date	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking	
			Comments	Status
16.1 UNDP to seek additional clarity on the status of the mission of the independent chartered engineering firm as part of the Letter of issuance of Risk Flag	28 February 2021	UNDP		Pending
16.2 PMU to share pending information required as part of the information already shared with GCF on past works	31 January 2021	MoF/PMU		Pending
16.3 All required documentation for the ad-hoc check to be undertaken by GCF through a chartered engineering firm is ready and available	28 February 2021	UNDP		Pending

Recommendation 17. PMU to authorise the need to update the current Activity 2.2. Operational Manual to ensure it reflects the current project situation (with lessons learnt and experiences to date) to help it provide the evidence base required to help formulate a framework for effective and sustainable flood management policy delivery into the future. The Operational Manual (set up to improve contract procurements) may be easily updated to reflect this new COVID 19 situation and demands.

Management response: Management agrees with the recommendation. This is currently being acted upon by MNRE and PMU. MNRE has initiated the process of revising the OM following recommendations made by PMU. UNDP and PMU will continue supporting the work of MNRE to review and document improvements needed to the OM for Activity 2.2 for integration of key ecosystem activities (2.2.1; 2.2.2), and the implementation of the CfW and the EbAEDP with partners CSSP and Samoa Business Hub. This updating and review is to ensure alignment of Activity 2.2 with the Funding Proposal and builds on lessons learned and experience to-date in implementing this Activity while reflecting the impacts of the COVID-19 State of Emergency.

Key action(s)	Completion date	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking	
			Comments	Status

17.1 PMU to continue work with MNRE key divisions and CSSP on updating Activity 2.2 OM	15 March 2021	PMU/MNRE		Partially completed
17.2 Present report and draft Revised OM for Activity 2.2 to the TAG meeting for approval	31 March 2021	PMU/MNRE		Pending

Recommendation 18. The PMU Procurement Team to support IAs to fast track procurement procedures or invite shortlisted consultants where appropriate on a “call down” preferred status basis to avoid any further delays regarding contract related implementation.

Management response: Management agrees with the recommendation. The PMU procurement team follows the Government procurement guidelines that follows strict step-by-step procedures, timelines, approval levels and ceilings. These are reviewed and presented to the IAs yearly as part of the project Annual Planning retreat to ensure understanding and compliance by IAs. The PMU will review this option in close collaboration with MoF and the Government’s Tenders Board procedures, but IAs will need to ensure compliance with the Government procurement guidelines. The MoF/PMU agrees to optimize the use of the PMU Procurement Team with more cohesive collaboration and support of the IAs in fast tracking procurement procedures to avoid delays in procurement action and matching contract implementation.

Key action(s)	Completion date	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking	
			Comments	Status
18.1 PMU/IAs to complete the revised Procurement Plan based on IE recommendation, UNDP due diligence and the revised MYWPB and table it for approval at the 12 th PB	16 December 2020	PMU, IAs, UNDP		Partially completed

Recommendation 19. In light of the above recommendations, MoF/UNDP/GoS need to agree on strategies to enhance and use national contractors in light of COVID 19 travel restrictions. There is also a need to relook at reviewing the qualifications of national or international firms/contractors to help them “partner up” with local contractors/consultants. This may include the need to set up a register of national contractor capabilities and competencies (database etc).

Management response: Management agrees with this recommendation. UNDP will work closely with the PMU and IAs on the formulation of the recommended strategy. GoS/IAs are already encouraging Joint Ventures (JVs) of local contractors to try and meet tendering requirements. Of note, the Land Transport Authority (LTA) already has an updated register of local contractors and is requiring JVs as one of the criteria in the tender documents. The existing practice in tendering of local works is for overseas-based contractors to identify local counterparts. With the exception of a few, overseas contractors are working with local counterparts. The use of national companies in partnerships, virtual technology, and of the ‘essential work’

category to allow overseas-based contractors to travel to Samoa is also being discussed with the PMU and IAs. UNDP will raise with the PMU and IAs the effectiveness of formalizing a list of national contractors, e.g. construction companies that are registered with or known to IAs. UNDP will also discuss the requirement that every TOR for international bidders will include partnering with a local company/counterpart.				
Key action(s)	Completion date	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking	
			Comments	Status
19.1 Review need for hiring of contractors during January-July 2021 against the procurement plan and Develop strategy for enhanced use of national contractors.	31 January 2021	MoF/GoS/UNDP		Pending
19.2 Update Register of local contractors as one of the criteria in the tender documents that needs to be met.	31 January 2021	GoS/MOF/IAs		Partially completed

Recommendation 20. MoH should internally review their combined commitments (in light of COVID-19 commitments) and, if suitable, request that certain budget lines within the GCF-VCP are used to help design new training programmes for staffs on climate change related issues that is also aligned to their current workloads.

Management response: Management agrees with the recommendation. There is need to implement adaptive management for Activity 1.2 in regard to the capacity of MoH to deliver and re-align activities with the objectives of the project considering the impacts of COVID-19 on budget resources and capacity at MoH. As per Recommendation No.8, UNDP will work jointly with PMU to review activities under the MoH responsibility and for proper adaptive management procedures to be undertaken to realign sub-activities under 1.2 and suggest the appropriate changes. These steps include: (1) An assessment of the sub-activities proposed in the FP and whether these remain a priority for the GoS and MoH; (2) an assessment of the "new" or emerging needs of the government and MOH in relation flood-related health issues; (3) an assessment whether the new needs contribute towards the intended outputs and if they do not, they should be considered outside the scope of the project and project should not support them; and (4) if they are within the scope of the project, PB approval will be sought for "new" sub-activities and reported to GCF in the APR process.

Key action(s)	Completion date	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking	
			Comments	Status
20.1 Re-Assess the sub-activities proposed in the FP for activity 1.2 and budgets - whether these remain a priority for the GoS	28 February 2021	MOF/PMU, UNDP, MOH		Pending

20.2 Assess the "new" or emerging needs of GoS and budgets for decision-making by Project Board	31 March 2021	MOF/PMU, UNDP, MOH		Pending
20.3 MoF Submit Paper with updated report on Revised and Updated Results-based Framework to the 13 th PB for endorsement	31 March 2021	MoF/PMU/UNDP		Pending
20.4 A Note-to-File on Activity 1.2 to be prepared and communicated to the GCF Secretariat if the changes are found to be significant, and reporting in the APR	31 March 2021	UNDP		Pending

Recommendation 21. Existing generic and unachievable indicators need to be reviewed with regarding gender issues, for example, PMU to determine the number of women, young people and people living with disability and older people from the families of the hired CfW workers and the percentage will be used to determine the percentage of cash for work activities targeting the vulnerable groups. The project should, where possible also be actively sourcing opportunities for women employment (including this within revised indicators).

Management response: Management agrees with the recommendation. UNDP will work closely with the PMU to review indicators regarding gender and vulnerable groups' participation in the project. PMU/IAs/UNDP will review the indicator framework and make recommendations for changes. Refer also to Management Response to Recommendation No.12 on the review of the CfW indicators. The point on actively sourcing opportunities for women employment is noted and efforts have been made by MNRE to employ more women on CfW activities despite difficulties encountered in recruitment over time. Similar to recommendation No.3, the changes are to be tabled at the Project Board for endorsement in March 2021, shared with the GCF Secretariat in a Note-to-File if they are found to be significant, and reported in the narrative and annexed to the Annual Progress Report (APR) for review and approval by the GCF Secretariat.

Key action(s)	Completion date	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking	
			Comments	Status
21.1 Develop methodology to reassess target indicator for participation in CfWP by vulnerable groups	31 January 2020			Partially completed
21.2 Present report on the reassessment of target indicators for	31 March 2021			Pending

CfWP to Activity 2.2 TAG for approval				
21.3 MoF submit Paper with updated report on Revised and Updated MEF/MEP to the 13 th PB for endorsement.	31 March 2021	MoF/UNDP		Pending
21.4 A Note-to-File to be prepared and communicated to the GCF Secretariat with the proposed modifications to the Logical Framework if they are found to be significant , and reporting in the APR	31 March 2021	MoF/UNDP		Pending

Recommendation 22. UNDP should encourage use of lessons learned through the project so far. This could be done e.g. through: (i) National and local inter-institutional seminars and workshops with the participation of all project partners, and other organizations/projects working in the same areas; and (ii) coordinated regional Pacific focused initiatives. To this end, an improved and updated GCF-VCP project “Visibility Plan”, needs to be re-launched and effectively disseminated to all relevant parties is needed for the remaining project period. One additional idea is for UNDP to consider possible South-South Cooperation activities for already completed tasks and those about to be completed up to the end of the GCF-VCP.

Management response: Management agrees with this recommendation. This is a joint UNDP and PMU effort and also linked to implementing Recommendation 23. Key actions will include the identification of a mechanism to capture, disseminate and allow learning from lessons of the project thus far. An existing workshop forum for this exercise is the annual VCP planning retreat in Q4 of every year, which involves all project stakeholders. UNDP will further explore opportunities for organizing a forum for sharing experiences and lessons learned in implementing climate action projects in Samoa and other PICTs. Updating of the GCF-VCP Visibility Plan will be implemented in conjunction with Recommendation 23. Note, the Visibility Plan is part of the Communication and Knowledge Management Strategy (CKMS).

Key action(s)	Completion date	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking	
			Comments	Status
22.1 UNDP and PMU discuss and agree on the Visibility Plan as part of the Communications and Knowledge Management Strategy and Action Plan	31 January 2021	MOF/PMU, UNDP		Pending

Recommendation 23. The Communications and Knowledge Management Strategy and Action Plan needs updating in light of new methods of communication required to address the COVID-19 pandemic and the impacts this is having on project specific and wider outreach communication and awareness requirements

Management response: Management agrees with this recommendation. UNDP will work closely with the PMU to update relevant areas of the existing plan and linking action points with implementation of Recommendation 22. Important to note that MoF/PMU has made good progress and put much effort in improving GCF-VCP visibility and communications in the last year with a new website launched, information videos, social media accounts, regular monthly newsletters and several outreach campaigns. MoF understands the need to review the CKMS/AP based on lessons learned and impact of COVID-19 on the project. This phase is in line with the visibility plan proposed in Recommendation 22 and wider lessons learned in Recommendation 24.

Key action(s)	Completion date	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking	
			Comments	Status
23.1 UNDP and PMU to update the Communication and Knowledge Management Strategy and Action Plan	End March 2021	MOF/PMU, UNDP		Pending

Recommendation 24. It is important that the project team puts focus on wider lessons learned, documenting emerging best practices (at a national and regional level) to further build public awareness, including outreach to and collaboration with beneficiaries, community representatives, including schools. The collection of lessons learned from specific activities could also help inform the implementation of upcoming activities. The GCF-VCPs MEF should give a stronger emphasis on impacts and lessons learned, including PMU's follow-up with IAs to assure that they establish good and reliable baselines and understand how to measure impact. UNDP should consider the option of adopting a "Community of Practice (COP) modality to support this. This can be used as a new "communication response" (or Plan) between the AE, EE and GCF Secretariat which can address new issues (such as the impact of COVID-19 on the projects ability to secure existing co-financing commitments). A separate consultancy is recommended to provide recommendations on how to provide this response strategy.

Management response: Management agrees with this recommendation. While lessons learned are already shared and discussed at the level of the TAGs for Infrastructure and Activity 2.2., UNDP will work with the PMU on devising a systematic approach to collecting and sharing lessons learned and documenting emerging best practices. This should be implemented based on an agreed approach. The need for UNDP to consider adopting a "Community of Practice" modality and for a separate consultancy will be explored as part of UNDP/MoF/PMU agreement on the best approach for collecting and sharing lessons learned.

Key action(s)	Completion date	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking	
			Comments	Status
24.1 Agree on project approach to systematically collecting and sharing lessons learned and	28 February 2021	UNDP/PMU		Pending

documenting emerging best practices				
24.2 Agree on process for IAs baseline data collection for PMU to demonstrate impacts of VCP activities.	28 February 2021	UNDP/PMU/IAs		Pending

Recommendation 25. The PMU should undertake a forward-looking review of staffing and capacity needs for the IAs within the GCF-VCP spanning the current operational phase, reporting, closure period and “life after the GCF project” period. Capacity improvements may need to include the setting up and delivering more online training courses as part of this GCF-VCP to help add value and demonstrate long term sustainability of GCF funds. Likewise, CSSP Project Officers, for example, may benefit from having expertise on EbA to be able to help convey to project beneficiaries (and SBH) how households and businesses may introduce nature based solutions into their work plans to address flood management.

Management response: Management agrees the recommendation. UNDP will work in support of the PMU on a forward-looking review of staffing and capacity needs in line with the monitoring of the PMU organisational structure as per recommendation No. 7. The MoF in collaboration with the Public Service Commission (PSC) and IAs undertake annual reviews of IAs’ capacity needs as part of the GoS annual budget process to ensure sustainability of GCF-VCP investments after the GCF project life. Action needed in forward-looking staffing and capacity needs align with the requirements of Recommendation 27 and would require undertaking an IA mid-project capacity assessment taking into account the remaining operations, project closure period and post-GCF sustainability. Some of this work has already been undertaken across IAs following capacity issues encountered during implementation and to improve delivery and efficiency.

Key action(s)	Completion date	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking	
			Comments	Status
25.1 Undertake a forward-looking review of IAs and partners staffing and capacity needs to inform follow-up actions and exit strategy	30 November 2021	UNDP/PMU/IAs		Pending

Recommendation 26. GoS may wish to consider the creation of a new national Flood Policy (that is aligned to a new Spatial Plan and linked to Activity 1.4.2.2 to produce an “Upland Watershed Policy”) will help to influence the need for future policy implementation

Management response: Management partially agrees with this recommendation and will propose to GoS to create a new National Flood Policy. This policy would be based on the advances made by the project in flood mitigation, flood control infrastructures, flood related CLEWS, flood emergency response, new drainage masterplan, health surveillance and best practices in ecosystem-based adaptation enterprises and upper catchment protection. There is an existing Upland Watershed Policy in place, adopted in 2015, and also a revised Apia Urban Area Spatial Plan that could be incorporated in this analysis for such a Flood Management Policy. This will need to be considered by the GoS in line with the work and decision-making of the NEOC and possibly the Planning and Urban Management Agency (PUMA) as part of the exit strategy

proposed in Recommendation 27. In addition, consideration may be given by GoS to updating of the Samoa Flood Management Action Plan 2007-2012 which has specific reference to the Vaisigano river and build on this but under a separate new project. Note that MNRE already has the endorsed 'National Upland Watershed Conservation Policy' and in process of procuring of a Consultant/Legislative Drafter to develop an Upland Watershed Conservation Regulation to regularise the Policy.

Key action(s)	Completion date	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking	
			Comments	Status
26.1 MOF to discuss with other GoS partners to consider a proposed Flood Management Policy to be based on the lessons learned from the GCF-VCP project.	30 June 2021	MoF/MNRE		Pending

Recommendation 27. UNDP/PMU/MoF to produce a “Sustainability Plan, Replication/Upscaling and Exit Strategy” to help set out a framework for upscaling the results of the project as appropriate. This strategy or plan should make it clear which stakeholder(s) would assure sustainability and by what means (for example, through budget incorporations, work plan incorporations, hiring of staff, maintenance of infrastructure and other materials provided directly and indirectly by the Project. Whilst the Project Document doesn’t request an “exit plan” specifically, it may be necessary to prepare one with a view to making the sustainability of the project more likely and shall help to gain consensus on the activities required for a possible future upscaling strategies. Hence it is recommended that the “exit plan” is enlarged to be a “Sustainability-Replication-Exit Strategy” to provide new flood engineering designs, clear finance and budget lines and clarity on lessons learned from the project to date, including (amongst others) the need to include specific surveying exercises on Government lands to help design flood “buffer” corridors etc.

Management response: Management agrees with this recommendation. UNDP will work closely with MoF/PMU and IAs to formulate the recommended “Sustainability Plan, Replication/Upscaling and Exit Strategy”. This is particularly relevant in the context where the GoS contribution of USD 8 million for maintenance of assets/investments extends beyond the project life for a period of 25 years.

Key action(s)	Completion date	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking	
			Comments	Status
27.1 Develop draft Sustainability Plan, Replicability/Upscaling and Exit Strategy for endorsement by the Project Board	31 March 2022	UNDP/PMU/MOF		Pending
27.2 Draft Exit Strategy in the narrative and Annex of the 2022 APR for	1 March 2023	UNDP/PMU/MOF		Pending

sharing with GCF Secretariat				
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