



Vava'u
Group

OPERATIONAL PHASE 8 (OP8)

SGP COUNTRY PROGRAMME STRATEGY (CPS)

TONGA



Tongatapu
Island

'Eua
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OP8 Financial Resources - SGP Country Programme (estimated US\$)¹

Total SGP Grants to date since Country Programme start date 2009	USD
OP8 GEF Core Funds	USD 456,818 TBC
OP8 GEF STAR Funds	USD 536,000
Other funds (secured)	USD
Other funds (expected/to be mobilized)	USD

1. INTRODUCTION

The Eighth Operational Phase of the Small Grants Programme (SGP OP8) builds on 30 years of successful experience in empowering local civil society organizations (CSOs) and community-based organizations (CBOs) in designing and leading community driven initiatives that have enhanced household wellbeing, increased awareness, and resilience regarding environmental threats, and generated global environmental benefits. With economic development pressures intensifying in many parts of the developing world and the associated rising inequalities, local communities, particularly vulnerable and disadvantaged groups are becoming increasingly marginalized, unable to cope with threats associated with ecosystem degradation, biodiversity loss and climate change. Lessons learned and experience gained in previous SGP Operational Phases have demonstrated that integrated, landscape-seascape approaches are effective in mobilizing multiple stakeholder collaboration, linking local CSOs/CBOs with enabling partners and achieving mutually supportive livelihood and environmental outcomes at scale.

The objectives of the SGP OP8 is to engage local CSOs/CBOs in landscape-seascape approaches across the world, providing them access to knowledge and information, capacitating them through learning-by-doing, skills development, and delivering technical and grant assistance for interventions that enhance wellbeing and socioeconomic conditions and generate global environmental benefits.

The OP8 objectives reflect the key features of GEF Small Grants Programme 2.0, including new approaches to support youth, women and Indigenous Peoples, linking up with complementary mechanisms, such as the Microfinance Initiative and CSO Challenge Programme, cooperating with other GEF Agencies, and leveraging opportunities with GEF strategies, including the delivery of the GEF-8 Integrated Programmes. In addition, OP8 will facilitate opportunities for innovation and scaling up, catalyze multi-stakeholder alliances to assess new approaches through CSOs, and leverage its dialogue platforms towards greater impact. OP8 will also align and contribute to the UNDP Strategic Plan (2022-2025).

¹ The level of SGP OP8 resources is an estimated total of: (a) the GEF8 core grant allocation; (b) approved STAR resources; as well as (c) other sources of cost sharing & co-financing (country, regional and/or global levels). SGP countries with remaining OP7 balances that have not been pipelined will be expected to use these balances in line with the OP8 strategic approach in order to be coherent in terms of SGP programming and results expected.

2. COUNTRY PROGRAMME SUMMARY: Key results and achievements

The Global Environment Facility Small Grants Programme (GEF SGP) began operations in Tonga in 2009. Since its inception, the Programme has committed approximately **US\$2.52 million** to **81 community-led projects** across the country. These initiatives span the breadth of Tonga's main island groups and have yielded wide-ranging environmental and social results. Project partners contributed **US\$637,767** in-kind and **US\$33,140** in cash to complement the grant support, demonstrating strong local ownership and co-investment.

GEF SGP OP8 in Tonga prioritizes **climate change and land degradation**, two interlinked threats that exacerbate vulnerabilities in a country ranked 7th globally for climate risk (ND-GAIN Index). Despite national resilience efforts, more is needed to build adaptive capacity at the community level.

According to the World Bank (2021), Tonga has experienced approximately **0.6°C warming since 1979**, with future trends expected to increase in intensity and unpredictability. Key risks include **sea-level rise, intensified cyclones, saline intrusion, wave-driven flooding, and habitat loss**, all of which compromise biodiversity, public health, and food security. The 2022 eruption of **Hunga Tonga-Hunga Ha'apai** underscored the growing displacement and vulnerability of coastal communities.

GEF SGP contributions to date include:

- **Enhanced global environmental benefits**, including marine and terrestrial ecosystem protection.
- **Strengthened local governance** and civic leadership in environmental stewardship.
- **Increased awareness and community resilience** to environmental and climate stressors
- **Poverty reduction and improved livelihoods** through alternative income streams (e.g., poultry, piggery, climate-smart farming)
- **Policy engagement and replication of best practices** across government and donor agencies

The programme has embraced the principle of “**leaving no one behind**,” embedding **gender equality, youth inclusion, and disability access** into project design and monitoring. Civil society partnerships — particularly through the **Civil Society Forum of Tonga (CSFT)** — have enabled CSOs to influence high-level policy reviews, secure seats on national environmental steering committees, and contribute to national reporting under international conventions.

Internationally, SGP-funded projects have gained recognition and interest from postgraduate students and researchers from universities across **Europe, Australia, New Zealand, and the Pacific**. Locally, GEF SGP is now routinely referenced in **government documents, donor collaboration frameworks, and national consultations**.

As Tonga looks to scale integrated and inclusive approaches under OP8, the foundation laid in OP4 to OP7 — across seascapes, landscapes, and the hearts of communities — will be the springboard for transformation.

3. COUNTRY PRIORITIES AND STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

3.1 Alignment with national priorities

Tonga's national environmental strategy is deeply embedded in its commitments to international conventions and agreements. The country has ratified and adopted various multilateral environmental agreements and national frameworks, including:

- **Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)** and National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
- **UNFCCC** and its mechanisms, including NDCs and the Joint National Action Plan II (JNAP II, 2021)
- **UNCCD** National Action Programme (2021)
- **Stockholm Convention** and associated National Implementation Plans
- The **Tonga Climate Change Fund Bill** and **Disaster Risk Management Act** (2021)

The **Tonga Strategic Development Framework II (TSDF II, 2015–2025)** is the overarching development policy framework. It aligns national goals with the **SDGs**, emphasizing inclusive, sustainable development, environmental stewardship, and resilience building.

GEF SGP aligns with these national priorities by supporting community-led interventions that contribute directly to:

- Biodiversity protection and restoration
- Climate adaptation and mitigation
- Land rehabilitation and sustainable food systems.
- Chemical safety and waste management

Additionally, the OP8 strategy reflects the **GEF-8 priorities**, including integrated approaches, nature-based solutions, and strong results monitoring.

Table 1. List of relevant conventions and national/regional plans or programmes

Conventions + national planning frameworks	Date of ratification / completion
GEF-8 National Dialogues	
Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF)	29 th July 1998
CBD National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP)	29 th July 1998
Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-Sharing (ABS)	Not Yet
UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)	20 th July 1998
UNFCCC National Communications	20 th July 1998
UNFCCC Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMA)	20 th July 1998
UNFCCC National Adaptation Plans of Action (NAPA)	Not formally ratified but adopted its Second Joint National Actions (JNAP 2) as its National Action Plan, October 2021
Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) for the Paris Accord	Submitted report in 2015 & 2020
UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)	24th December 1998
UNCCD National Action Programmes (NAP)	Submitted October 2021

Stockholm Convention (SC) on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)	23 rd October 2009
SC National Implementation Plan (NIP)	Submitted in 2009
Minamata Convention (MC) on Mercury	Accession on 22 nd January 2019
UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	Launched in 2015, National Strategic Development Framework II, 2015 – 2025, aligned to global SDGs.
Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) for the UN SDGs	Submitted in 2016, 2019 & 2022
Strategic Action Programmes (SAPs) for shared international waterbodies (IW)	Not ratified any specifics SAP but has implemented various national policies and strategies to manage its resources
Others (list) as relevant	

3.2 Gaps and opportunities

Key challenges that GEF SGP OP8 can address include:

- **Misalignment between Key Priority Areas** identified in the national budget and strategic frameworks (e.g. TSDF II), which limits coordinated planning and resourcing.
- **Limited strategic thinking and policy analysis capacity** among some NSC members and stakeholders, creating a need for targeted upskilling.
- **Scarcity of local expertise** in global environmental and sustainability frameworks, particularly linking national action to international obligations
- **Short-term mindsets** in project implementation, where sustainability and post-funding planning remain weak.

These gaps also present opportunities for GEF SGP to:

- Serve as a convener for **cross-sector collaboration and knowledge exchange**.
- Establish a **Community of Practice** to bridge local and global expertise.
- Introduce sustainability criteria and **intergenerational responsibility models** into project selection.
- Invest in **capacity-building workshops and mentorship programmes** for emerging environmental leaders.

3.3 OP8 strategic priorities of the SGP Country Programme

The Tonga OP8 Country Programme Strategy commits to supporting local CSOs/CBOs through:

- **Landscape-seascape approaches** that integrate biodiversity, livelihoods, and governance.
- **Inclusive solutions** that empower women, youth, persons with disabilities, and remote island communities
- **Policy engagement** to ensure bottom-up influence on national and regional planning.
- **Knowledge generation, replication, and upscaling** of proven models
- **Resource mobilization** and alignment with other development partners

Tonga's SGP OP8 will prioritize interventions in **five GEF focal areas**:

1. Biodiversity
2. Climate Change
3. Land Degradation
4. Chemicals and Waste

5. Multi-Focal Area Projects

These align with national climate and conservation targets, particularly through programs like JNAP II, NBSAP, and the Ocean Management Plan (2024). The **NSC composition** ensures cross-representation of government ministries, civil society, private sector, and environmental experts, with special attention to social inclusion and transparency in decision-making.

In **Table 2** of the CPS, each OP8 Strategic Initiative is mapped to Tonga's national priorities, ongoing government programmes, and regional UNDP CPD outputs, forming a strong synergy between grassroots action and institutional transformation.

Table 2. SGP Country Programme's alignment with SGP OP8 Strategic Initiatives and country priorities/projects/programmes

SGP OP8 Strategic Initiatives - Global	SGP Country Programme's OP8 Priorities (Choose priorities among the SGP OP8 Strategic Initiatives on the left column. Some are mandatory and already included.)	SGP Country Programme's complementarity with GEF, UNDP, and other projects and programmes (identify related projects/programmes for cooperation)
Community-based conservation of threatened ecosystems and species 1) Improve the effectiveness of biodiversity and ecosystem conservation and management through equitable governance systems by recognizing and respecting the rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities. 2) Improve community-led biodiversity-friendly practices and approaches, including promoting blue economy approaches (e.g., agriculture, fisheries, forestry, tourism, infrastructure, etc.). 3) Enhance community-led actions for the protection of threatened species.	<i>To improve the management of existing parks and reserves and, consistent with the integrated land use plan, to expand the conservation area network to cover a representative sample of all major terrestrial ecosystems.</i>	a) Coastal Resilience Project (MEIDECC)2004 -2026 b) Collaborate with the current national pledge to have 30% of Tonga in SMA by 2030% c) Further collaborate with the R2R project as part of its upscaling to shared lessons learnt from its current Phase 2 – targeting specific species at the Fanga'uta Lagoon.
Sustainable agriculture and fisheries, and food security 1) Increase efficiency and effectiveness of overall food production and value chain, including in vulnerable ecosystems (mountains,	1. Enhance the productivity of land through sustainable land use and management of soil and water resources. 2. Improve capacity for quality assurance and safety standards for crop, livestock, and fisheries	a) Support organic certification of Coconut, Vanilla, and Sandalwood farmers, where land conservation practices are promoted as a package to rehabilitate large acreages

island ecosystems, etc.). - Increase diversification and livelihood improvement. - Remove deforestation from supply chain and expand restoration of degraded lands.	<i>products</i>	of degraded land. - Promote replanting and multi-cropping to enhance natural control of pests. - R2T approach to food security and crop management
Low-carbon energy access co-benefits Support implementation of Paris Agreement and the NDCs - Promote renewable and energy efficient technologies providing socio-economic benefits and improving livelihoods. - Promote off-grid energy service needs in rural and urban areas.	<i>Promote and facilitate the use of renewable energy technologies at the household and institutional levels.</i> <i>Train artisans to install demonstrations and provide subsidies.</i> <i>Invest in wind power generation</i>	- Scale up the biogas project as well as establish pilots project on biomass and Solar projects. - Replicate use of renewable energy technology e.g., solar. Promote alternative fuels, waste recycling and re-use by joining with EU- energy conservation program
Local to global coalitions for chemicals and waste management - Reduce and promote alternative to mercury use in artisanal and small-scale gold mining. - Promote plastics/solid waste management and circular economy. - Reduce/remove the use of chemicals in agriculture. - Enhance local to global coalitions on chemicals, waste, and mercury management.	<i>Part of the National Steering Committee on Waste and Chemicals</i> <i>Campaign on No Plastics or alternative use of Plastic.</i> <i>Support request for the Government to review the current Legal framework on: Chemical Act (Ministry of Agriculture), Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) (MEIDECC)</i>	Stockholm Conventions
Catalyzing sustainable urban solutions - Improve capacities to promote community-driven, socially inclusive, and integrated solutions to address low-emission and resilient urban development. - Demonstrate innovative socially inclusive urban solutions/ approaches (including waste and chemical management, energy, transport, watershed protection,	<i>Grantees of GEF SGP are to plant ten fruit trees in their Town allotments.</i> <i>Upscale campaign to ban Deep Sea Mining</i> <i>Continue to advocate for the use of non-fuel transportation between outer islands.</i> <i>Continue building on community Parks, Community Water-Catchment and community disaster-response System where Private and Public entities can work together</i>	- Use the FAO PPP approach to Food Security to improve production and smart solution farming. - Capitalized KEWA Park Rangers PROJECT to manage Eua National Park, with support from Tourism and the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry - Use the Bread for the World project to ban deep-sea mining as a platform to protect the Ocean and its ecosystems. - UNCLOS and Deep-Sea

ecosystem services and biodiversity). 3) Implement public-private partnership approach for low carbon energy access for marginalized urban communities.		Mineral's Act 2014
Community-Based Adaptation (CBA Phase 3) (with DFAT funding) 1) Reduce vulnerability and improve the adaptive capacity of communities. 2) Provide countries with concrete ground-level experience on Climate Change Adaptation and CBA. 3) Provide clear policy lessons and mainstream CBA within national processes.	1. Focus on the preventive approaches to building foreshores, coastal buffers (mangrove and coastal plants) 2. Establishing more tree parks in urban areas for ventilation 3. Enforcement of the building code to ensure houses are climate-proofed. 4. Integrate CBA into the National Disaster framework	a) MEIDEC Coastal Resilience Project (coastal buffers) b) National Building Codes c) Joint National Plan for Climate Actions d) Urban Development Plan e) National Disaster Act 2019
CSO-government-private sector policy and planning dialogue platforms 1) Promote/enhance community voices and participation in global and national policy, strategy development related to the global environment and sustainable development issues.	Promote and target common areas identified under Government GPA 7 (PPP) and with various Ministries representative of the NSC	a) MEIDEC – JNAP II, Coastal Resilience Project b) Ministry of Agriculture – Sector Plan 2015 c) Ministry of Fisheries -Sector Plan
Enhancing social inclusion (mandatory) 1) Promote inclusive targeted initiatives. 2) Mainstream social inclusion in all projects. (e.g., women/girls, Indigenous Peoples, youth, and persons with disabilities).	Enhancing social inclusion 1. Promote targeted inclusive initiatives. 2. Mainstream social inclusion in all projects. 3. Maintain a capacity network and improve the inclusion of a gender lens in Environmental Monitoring and government Evaluation activities	Ministry of Internal Affairs: WEGET – Gender Policy Person with Disability – Policy 2020 Youth Policy
Knowledge Management (KM) (mandatory) 1) Capture knowledge and lessons from projects and activities. 2) Improve the capacities of	Knowledge Management 1. Capture knowledge and lessons from projects and activities. 2. Improve capacities of CSOs/CBOs. 3. Conduct South-South Exchanges	a) University of the South Pacific – Traditional Knowledge/Climate Resilience b) GNDR c) OXFAM – Humanitarian

CSOs/CBOs. 3) Conduct South-South Exchanges to promote technology transfer and replication of good practices.	to promote technology transfer and replication of good practices. 4. Conduct training and awareness programs for Grantees on how to capture and store information, which can be included in their reports. 5. Conduct training workshops on how to use tools for capturing and storing information. 6. Provide a Knowledge Fair on the last year of OP8 for the transfer of knowledge and skills amongst the grantees. 7. Participation in the GEF SGP in the National Environmental Program to showcase knowledge and project skills/activities	d) Project e) UNDP -FALE PROJECT
Results Management, Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) (mandatory) 1) Administer new M&E strategy in Country Programme and project design, implementation and overall decision making using participatory mechanisms.	Results Management, Monitoring & Evaluation 1) Administer new M&E strategy in Country Programme and project design, implementation and overall decision making using participatory mechanisms.	

4. OP8 PRIORITY LANDSCAPES/SEASCAPES & STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

4.1 Grant making within the priority landscape/seascapes.

For Tonga's OP8 strategy, five target thematic areas have been selected across familiar land and seascapes to enhance restoration, replication, and community ownership:

1. **Biodiversity**
2. **Climate Change**
3. **Land Degradation**
4. **Chemicals & Waste Management**
5. **Multi-Focal Area Projects**

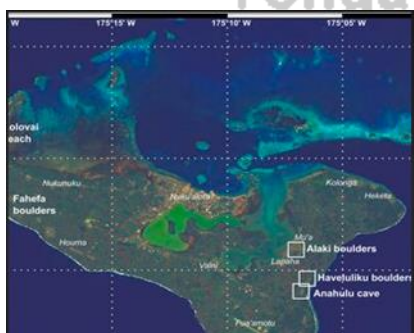
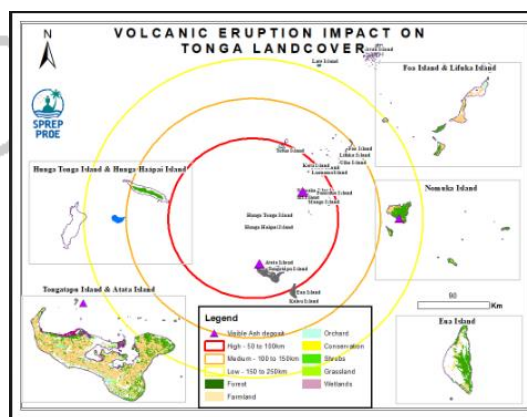


Figure 2. Tongatapu Group

These themes are geographically anchored in the **Tongatapu, Ha'apai,** *Figure 1. Geological Map of*

Vava'u, and 'Eua island groups — reflecting continuity from OP7 and upscaling opportunities where SGP has already laid a strong foundation. Site selection was guided by:

- Historical success and readiness for replication
- Ecological vulnerability and biodiversity value
- Community engagement and governance structures
- Logistical feasibility (e.g. local transport, NSC access)

Strategic Implementation Highlights:

- Continue leveraging the **Ridge to Reef** project and the **Ocean Atlas** launched in 2024.
- Build on work from partners like **IUCN BIORAP, MEIDECC, the Department of Environment, and the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry**
- Ensure **community-driven governance** and inclusion of women,

youth, and remote island groups.

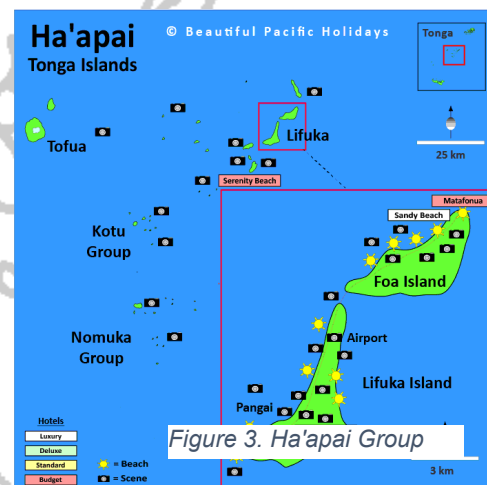


Figure 3. Ha'apai Group

Grant making will focus on integrated approaches, addressing overlapping threats while elevating ecosystem stewardship and sustainable livelihoods.

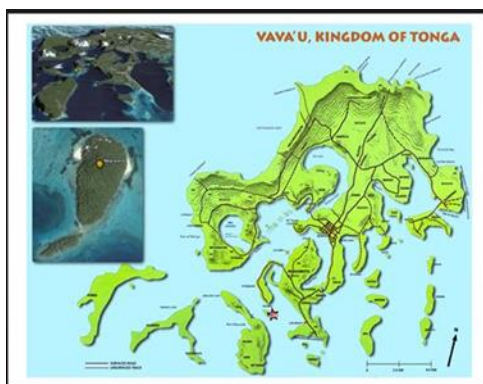


Figure 4. Vava'u Group

a) Process for selecting priority landscapes and seascapes.

The selection of OP8 priority landscapes and seascapes was informed by a review of OP7 implementation, baseline assessments, community project performance, and consultations with the National Steering Committee (NSC). The selection process involved:

- Reviewing project scalability, replication readiness, and alignment with Tonga's ecosystem typologies
- Identifying ecological vulnerability and biocultural significance, including biodiversity hotspots and degraded areas
- Evaluating geographic feasibility for implementation and NSC monitoring access
- Mapping lessons learned across 81 projects implemented since 2009.

This process confirmed that the existing geographic clusters in **Tongatapu, Ha'apai, Vava'u, and 'Eua** remain the most appropriate OP8 targets. These regions offer viable ecosystems,

active community governance, and extensive in-situ capacity for CSO leadership.



Figure 5. 'Eua Group

b) Selected landscapes/seascapes for OP8

These areas reflect Tonga's diverse ecological zones and provide opportunities for integrated, community-led interventions across GEF focal areas.

The following sites represent Tonga's OP8 priority land and seascapes:

Island Group	Ecosystem Characteristics	Strategic Rationale
Tongatapu	Urban–coastal interface, MPAs, agroforestry	Densely populated, restoration-ready ecosystems, active CSOs
Ha'apai	Coral reefs, volcano-impacted zones	Climate-vulnerable, post-HTHH recovery, marine buffers
Vava'u	Endemic-rich forests, traditional fishing grounds	High biodiversity value, community-led ICCAs
'Eua	Uplands, watershed recharge zones	Forest degradation, ecotourism potential

All four regions are supported by existing civil society platforms, past project baselines, and government sector plans, providing synergistic opportunities for co-financing, policy alignment, and data continuity.

c) OP8 Strategic Initiatives in the landscapes/seascapes

A key comparative advantage of the GEF SGP is its strong emphasis on *social inclusion and support for vulnerable groups*, including women, Indigenous Peoples, persons with disabilities, the elderly, and youth. Under OP8 – Part 1, the programme aims to achieve the following outcomes:

1. 100 hectares of land and ecosystem areas restored.
2. 100 hectares of land under improved sustainable practices
3. 100 hectares of marine protected areas under enhanced management
4. 100 hectares of marine habitats under improved practices
5. 10,000 direct beneficiaries reached (equivalent to 10% of the national population), of whom at least 5,000 will be women.

Cross-cutting themes (gender equality, youth engagement, disability inclusion) are embedded in all OP8 calls for proposals and NSC grant review criteria.

Focal Area & Strategy	Objective	Approach	Targets by 2027	Key Assumptions
Biodiversity Strategy	Strengthen sustainable, community-led biodiversity conservation by integrating traditional ecological knowledge, safeguarding threatened species, and aligning with the	➤ Support community-managed conservation areas and ICCAs. ➤ Engage national partners to recognize ICCAs in policy. ➤ Promote alternative livelihoods (eco-tourism, biodiversity-	✓100 ha under improved land practices ✓100 ha of marine protected areas under better management ✓3 community conservation areas recognized.	❖ Continued commitment from conservation agencies ❖ Alignment with Tonga's NBSAP and Ocean Plan (2024)

	CBD Kunming-Montreal GBF.	friendly products) ➤ Build local capacity (financial literacy, resource management, entrepreneurship)	✓ 5 endangered species projects supported	❖ Biodiversity data integrated into national policy reviews
Climate Change Mitigation Strategy	Promote low-carbon, climate-resilient development at the community level through renewable energy adoption and ecosystem-based mitigation.	➤ Implement small-scale solar, biogas, wind solutions. ➤ Align with Dept. of Energy and district plans. ➤ Mainstream climate-smart agriculture ➤ Link mitigation to socioeconomic co-benefits	✓ 0.001 tonnes CO ₂ emission avoided. ✓ 100 kW of installed RE ✓ 3 energy-efficient/RE models piloted	❖ Technical feasibility and partner buy-in ❖ Integration with TERM, JNAP II, and SDG targets
Land Degradation Strategy	Support restoration and sustainable land/agroecosystem management through community-led approaches, balancing productivity and ecological integrity.	➤ Promote agroforestry, organic farming, and native species. ➤ Restore degraded forest, rangeland, and farms. ➤ Mainstreaming stewardship into governance ➤ Facilitate CSO-private-ministry partnerships	✓ 100 ha under restoration/improved practices ✓ 25 partnerships in sustainable agriculture/forestry ✓ 1 national knowledge fair ✓ 5 technical training events	❖ Engagement of USP, SPC, MAFF ❖ Women's inclusion in agroforestry ❖ Replication of OP6–OP7 pilots
Chemicals and Waste Management Strategy	Strengthen community-based hazardous chemical and waste management aligned with Stockholm and Minamata Conventions.	➤ Raise awareness on POPs and safe alternatives. ➤ Support segregation, recycling, zero-burning. ➤ Partner with regulators (MAFF, MEIDEC) ➤ Build CSO capacity for bylaws and advocacy	✓ 10 community waste projects ✓ 5 invasive species initiatives ✓ Participation in national platforms (e.g. Chemicals NSC) ✓ 2 local policy inputs	❖ Government openness to community feedback ❖ Lessons from other GEF/donor chemical programs adapted locally
Sustainable Urban & Multi-Focal Strategies	Integrate biodiversity, climate resilience, and inclusion into urban/peri-urban	➤ Promote nature-based urban solutions (tree parks, rainwater	✓ 5 community parks/tree buffer zones ✓ 5 CSO-private	❖ Continued PPP budget (TOP 61.8M, FY2024/25)

	zones through scalable community innovations.	harvesting) ➤ Foster PPPs in waste, energy, and coastal resilience ➤ Amplify urban CSO voices via events. ➤ Link to regional urban adaptation efforts	partnerships in urban design ✓ GEF SGP presence in urban resilience dialogues	❖ Active local council engagement
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d) Grantmaking outside the priority landscapes/seascapes

The Tonga OP8 CPS is grounded in a landscape-seascape strategy refined over 15 years. For OP8, the GEF SGP Tonga Country Programme designates the **entire Kingdom of Tonga as a single integrated landscape/seascape**, recognizing the interconnected ecological, cultural, and governance systems across island groups. Based on a review of the previous CPS and current baseline, the National Steering Committee (NSC) endorsed this approach to maintain continuity and enable grant-making across all islands without geographic differentiation.

As such, **no distinction will be made between “inside” or “outside” landscapes** for funding purposes — all eligible proposals that align with OP8 strategic objectives may be supported, regardless of island or district.

4.2 CSO-government-private sector dialogue platforms

GEF SGP Tonga is a **recognized policy contributor** — sitting on national committees (e.g. NBSAP, NDC, OCEANS 7) and co-leading dialogues on chemical safety, waste, deep-sea mining, and biodiversity.

The **Public–Private–People (PPP)** platform has evolved into a strategic feature of GEF SGP Tonga, creating shared spaces for cost-sharing, co-governance, and scale-up of community-driven innovations. In OP8, this platform will be further institutionalized through structured policy participation and collaboration with line ministries and civil society coalitions.

Key government frameworks supporting PPP approaches include:

- A dedicated **TOP 61.8 million (~USD 32.4 million)** in Tonga’s FY2024/25 budget allocated to PPP initiatives.
- An enabling environment for CSO inclusion in climate resilience, disaster response, and agriculture planning
- Ongoing SGP engagement as observer/member on national steering committees (e.g. chemicals, NBSAP, NDC, NAMA)
- Joint delegations to international forums, such as **COP29**, and national environmental celebrations (e.g. World Oceans Day)

Implementation Strategy:

- Leverage existing CSO-government platforms to showcase SGP lessons learned and grassroots models.
- Facilitate co-funding arrangements and policy briefs that influence environmental legislation and budget allocations.

- Strengthen engagement with Ministries of MEIDECC, Fisheries, Agriculture and Forestry, Finance, and Tourism — many of which are represented on the NSC.
- Encourage youth, gender, and disability groups to present data and advocate through the PPP mechanism.

SGP OP8 will also explore new alliances with:

- The Tonga Chamber of Commerce and private sector networks
- Regional development councils and district officers
- Academic institutions and policy think tanks, such as the **UNDP FALE initiative** and **USP Tonga Campus**

By using PPP as a policy lever and knowledge platform, GEF SGP will support Tonga's national ambition for inclusive, resilient, and community-centred environmental governance.

4.3 Promoting social inclusion, including gender equality and women's empowerment.

Social inclusion is a cornerstone of GEF SGP Tonga's OP8 strategy. Guided by Tonga's **National Development Framework (2015–2025)** and the **Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality Tonga Policy and Strategic Plan of Action (WEGET 2019–2025)**, the CPS commits to ensuring that **no one is left behind** in the design, implementation, and governance of environmental initiatives.

Key statistics that inform this work:

- Women represent **51%** of Tonga's population (2021 Census)
- **24%** of the population lives in multidimensional poverty, 51% of whom are women.
- Government funding for gender programs **decreased by 9%** in FY2023/24
- Meanwhile, support to youth **increased by 399%** (TOP 449.6k)

In response, GEF SGP OP8 will:

- Require all funded projects to include **gender-sensitive governance** and equitable benefit-sharing.
- Collect and report **disaggregated data** (gender, age, disability status)
- Host targeted trainings for grantees on **gender mainstreaming, disability inclusion, and intergenerational equity.**
- Embed inclusion metrics into M&E systems and require quarterly progress against them.

Key platforms for implementation:

- Tonga's **National Gender Policy (WEGET)**
- The **Persons with Disability Policy (2020)**
- Collaboration with the **Ministry of Internal Affairs, TNYC**, and gender focused CSOs

Examples of inclusive programming under OP8:

- Entrepreneurship programs for women in agroforestry and coastal restoration
- Youth-led innovation challenges on renewable energy and waste solutions
- Disability-inclusive design of Tree Parks and water catchment projects in outer island groups
- Community governance committees that reserve **50% of seats for women** and youth

In addition to promoting inclusion in project design and delivery, GEF SGP Tonga will celebrate champions from marginalized communities during national Knowledge Fairs, grant award events, and regional exchanges.

OP8 aims to empower at least:

- **10,000 direct beneficiaries** by 2027
- Of these, **5,000 will be women.**
- At least **10 grants will have targeted support** for youth, women, or persons with disabilities.

By intentionally embedding equity across every step — from concept note to impact review — OP8 will help model environmental development that is both **inclusive and transformative**.

4.4 Knowledge Management

Knowledge management (KM) is a central pillar of GEF SGP Tonga's OP8 strategy — both to **capture lessons learned** and to support **scaling up successful models**. Building on OP6 and OP7, the country programme has adopted tools that combine **visual documentation, community storytelling, and data structuring** to ensure long-term impact.

Thematic objectives include:

- Codifying best practices for replication and policy influence
- Preserving institutional memory across communities, ministries, and NSC leadership
- Promoting transparency, visibility, and participatory learning

Key KM Infrastructure:

- Use of **drones and professional videography** to document coastal erosion, restoration, and inclusive governance models.
- Creation of a **central photo and video archive**, categorized by location, date, grantee, and focal area.
- Routine **curation and de-duplication** to ensure data relevance.
- Weekly backup and sorting processes for secure data management

4.4.1 Capturing, Sharing, and Disseminating Lessons Learned

Capturing:

Grantees are trained to document challenges, breakthroughs, and local innovations throughout the project cycle. These include field diaries, impact logs, photos, and testimonials. The National Coordinator (NC) complements this with technical reports, community interviews, and social media briefs.

Knowledge Products:

- Flyers, brochures, leaflets
- Radio broadcasts and documentaries
- Technical papers and conference abstracts
- Grantee-led storytelling (e.g. short videos, photo essays)
- Demonstration sites for peer learning

Sharing Knowledge:

- GEF SGP booths at national exhibitions (e.g. Environment Day, Oceans Day)
- Peer-to-peer learning during site visits, stakeholder workshops, and community exchanges
- National-level **Knowledge Fair**, scheduled in OP8 Year 3, to showcase cross-sector replication models.

Dissemination:

- Physical and digital distribution via the SGP office, UNDP Country Office, and line ministries
- Publications available in **Tongan and English**, targeting both technical audiences and community groups.
- Grantee pages and the **GEF SGP Tonga portal** host downloadable versions of key resources

4.4.2 Influencing Policy at Local, Regional, and National Levels

Under OP8, KM is not just about learning — it's about **shifting systems**.

- Policy briefs informed by grantee data will be channelled into NDC, NBSAP, and JNAP II reviews.
- Civil society will co-author submissions to government committees and **Parliamentary Standing Committees** on biodiversity, chemicals, and disaster management.
- CSO-led evidence will back demand for improved land-use legislation and gender inclusion frameworks.
- The **Civil Society Forum of Tonga** will coordinate advocacy events, using project outcomes as catalysts for change.

4.4.3 Replication and Up-Scaling Good Practices

GEF SGP Tonga will upscale and replicate innovations through:

- Systematic **documentation of success cases** and packaging them for other CSOs and outer island communities
- Support for **grantee cross-visits**, enabling peer-to-peer mentorship.
- Engaging **donor agencies and private foundations** to co-fund the scale-up of proven models
- Training CSOs to develop **standalone funding proposals** based on their SGP success.
- Anchoring projects in **district and national development plans** to ensure buy-in and sustainability.

By prioritising community ownership of knowledge, OP8 will transform local insights into global models and build an archive of environmental leadership rooted in Tongan values.

5. COMMUNICATION PLAN

The GEF SGP Tonga communication strategy under OP8 is designed to improve **public understanding** of global environmental issues and their direct connection to Tonga's **sustainable development priorities**. It also supports **visibility, advocacy, knowledge exchange**, and **resource mobilization** — across local, national, and regional platforms.

Core objectives:

- Promote understanding of GEF SGP's contributions to **livelihoods, biodiversity, climate resilience, and inclusion**.
- Elevate community voices through **storytelling, media engagement, and public events**.
- Position GEF SGP as a **national and international model** of localized environmental action.

- Strengthen donor, government, and CSO confidence through **strategic branding and outreach**.

Communication Channels:

- **Mass Media:** radio, television, national newspapers (for key event visibility and interviews)
- **Social media:** SGP Tonga Facebook page, sponsored posts, short videos from grantees
- **Print and Visual Products:** brochures, posters, newsletters, fact sheets, case studies
- **Events and Fairs:** National Environment Days, Climate Weeks, Women's Day, and OP8 Knowledge Fair
- **Sponsorships:** strategic co-branding efforts such as the 2024 Heilala Pageant sponsorship, which featured the Deep-Sea Mining theme and reached **20,000+ viewers**

Branding and Visibility: All SGP OP8-funded materials will carry **GEF SGP and UNDP logos**, along with the **thematic branding** of the specific project focus (e.g. biodiversity, climate, waste). The goal is to establish **visual identity and recognition**, both within Tonga and across regional networks.

Messaging Approach:

- Emphasis on **local relevance** and use of the **Tongan language** where appropriate
- Story-first narrative to showcase human impact, inclusive participation, and community ownership.
- Data-backed storytelling that aligns with international conventions and SDG reporting.
- Regular updates to stakeholders on project outcomes and lessons via a dedicated **email digest** and web portal (in progress)

In OP8, communication will remain a **strategic driver**, not just for visibility, but for system-wide behaviour change, trust-building, and momentum toward Tonga's environmental future.

By combining traditional and modern approaches, the communication plan will ensure that GEF SGP Tonga is not only seen — but heard, felt, and understood across the Kingdom and beyond.

6. RESOURCE MOBILIZATION AND PARTNERSHIP PLAN

GEF SGP Tonga will build on its strong legacy of co-financing and cost-sharing to broaden its **resource base** and **amplify OP8 outcomes**. With support from both **GEF core** and **STAR funds**, the programme will pursue new strategic partnerships and deepen existing ones, spanning multilateral agencies, regional institutions, private foundations, and community-driven platforms.

Core Resource Streams Under OP8:

- **GEF Core Allocation:** USD 456,818
- **GEF STAR Funds:** USD 536,000
- **Additional funds (to be mobilized):** through co-financing, bilateral partnerships, and in-kind contributions.

Ongoing Co-Financing Practices:

- Shared rent and utilities with the **Commonwealth Youth Programme, Oxfam Deep Sea Project, FALE Project, and CSFT**
- In-kind technical support from ministries, CSOs, and outer island coordinators
- Grantee contributions via labour, materials, and venue use (averaging **25% in-kind, 1% cash**)
- Bilateral partnership contributions to joint initiatives (e.g. radio/TV messaging and international exchange funding)

Targeted Resource Partners for OP8:

Type	Organization / Initiative	Engagement Focus
Bilateral	DFAT SAP, MFAT NZ, ADB	Climate adaptation, youth resilience, gender equity
Multilateral	UNDP FALE, IFAD TRIP III, EU Energy Support	Climate finance, rural livelihoods, energy access
Foundations & NGOs	Bread for the World, Greenpeace Aotearoa, Oxfam Int'l	Ocean protection, humanitarian disaster response, advocacy
Regional	IUCN, SPC, KIWA, Pacific R2R	Biodiversity corridors, landscape restoration, and agroecology
Private Sector	Tourism firms, Heilala Cosmetics, Tonga Skills	CSR support for climate-smart MSMEs, promotional partnerships

Resource Mobilization Priorities:

- **Joint concept notes** and co-branded proposals with other GEF Implementing Agencies
- **Grant pipelines** from GCF, LDCF, Adaptation Fund, Kiwa and others
- **South–South exchanges** and shared fundraising events with CSOs in the region
- **Technical partnerships** to convert SGP field evidence into scalable investment models.

By tapping into both **cash and technical capital**, Tonga's GEF SGP OP8 will maximise its reach, ensuring durable, community-centred gains across its landscapes and seascapes.

a) Secured and planned cash and in-kind co-financing

Tonga's GEF SGP OP8 portfolio will continue leveraging diverse streams of co-financing — both cash and in-kind — to augment its grant-making, scale up innovation, and build sustainable partnerships. Secured and planned contributions include:

- **Shared office costs and infrastructure:** Co-located facilities and shared utilities with Commonwealth Youth Programme, Oxfam (Deep Sea Project), FALE, and CSFT.
- **In-kind technical support:** Consistent engagement from line ministries (MEIDECC, MAFF, Fisheries, Internal Affairs) on proposal screening, M&E, and NSC governance.
- **Community contributions:** Grantees provide an average of **25% in-kind** and **1% cash** toward approved projects, in the form of labour, materials, venues, and local logistics.
- **Event-based sponsorships:** Successes such as the Miss Heilala 2024 sponsorship demonstrate new fundraising and visibility channels.
- **UNDP Country Office support:** Ongoing access to reporting and visibility platforms, and joint positioning with country program missions.

The total estimated contribution from non-GEF sources — including in-kind, technical services, and co-hosted activities — is projected to exceed **USD 250,000 over OP8**, contingent on successful proposal execution and partner renewal.

b) Co-financing opportunities

Building on lessons from OP6 and OP7, the GEF SGP Tonga will explore multi-tiered co-financing strategies to support inclusive, community-centred environmental impact. Planned engagement includes:

Multilateral and Bilateral Agencies

- *DFAT SAP, MFAT NZ, ADB Resilience Programme, IFAD TRIP III, EU Energy Support*: for climate adaptation, resilient livelihoods, sustainable agriculture, and energy access.
- *UNDP FALe and UNDP Pacific*: for integrated national planning, governance strengthening, and showcasing OP8 alignment with SDGs and CPD outputs.

Regional and Global Networks

- *Kiwa Initiative* (with IUCN and SPC): for restoration and resilience financing across small island states.
- *Green Climate Fund (GCF) and Adaptation Fund*: for technical assistance on readiness and direct access applications through CSFT and MEIDECC.
- *Global Network for Disaster Reduction (GNDR)*: for community-led risk governance and women-led DRR models (Frontliners and 4CA programs).

Private Sector and Foundations

- *Bread for the World*: co-investment in ocean advocacy and deep-sea mining bans.
- *Greenpeace Australia Pacific, Heilala Cosmetics, local tourism firms*: for CSR-aligned biodiversity projects and storytelling campaigns.
- *Tonga Skills*: for technical training, green skills development, and enterprise incubation.

Strategic Focus Areas:

- Joint funding and concept development under GEF-8 Integrated Programs
- Targeted co-financing for OP8 Knowledge Fairs, gender equity accelerators, and island-group innovation labs
- Continued engagement with **GEF Implementing Agencies**, UN Resident Coordinators, and development partners to create a co-investment roadmap.

7. PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

a) Strategic Partnerships with National Government Agencies

GEF SGP Tonga recognizes that robust collaboration with national government agencies is essential to scale impact, reduce duplication, and embed environmental stewardship across national systems. During OP8, the program will:

- Enlist technical support (cash/in-kind) from **district technical departments** (e.g. Fisheries, Environment, Agriculture, Forestry) during project scoping, implementation, and M&E

- Involve **district and outer island extension officers** as resource persons and technical advisors in grantee activities.
- Include political leaders and civil servants in project launch events, baseline assessments, and knowledge fairs.
- Work with CSOs to align their proposals with **existing government programs** (e.g. JNAP II, ADB Resilience Plan, MACBIO, and GEF SAP-linked activities)
- Share project results through existing **government planning and M&E systems**, strengthening joint reporting to UNFCCC, UNCCD, CBD, and SDGs

These collaborations will also promote visibility, harmonized messaging, and equitable resourcing of projects beyond the GEF envelope.

b) Partnerships with Bilateral and Multilateral Agencies

GEF SGP Tonga will expand collaboration with bilateral and multilateral partners through:

- **Joint programming and co-funding** with DFAT SAP, ADB, IFAD, EU, MFAT NZ, and others aligned with environmental, gender, or resilience goals.
- **Observer or advisor roles** for donor staff on the NSC to improve alignment and mutual understanding.
- **Pooled resources and project designs** with agencies delivering grants or technical assistance to communities in agriculture, renewable energy, and ecosystem restoration.
- Soliciting **UNDP CO support** to broker partnerships and access trust funds (e.g. GCF, Adaptation Fund, LDCF)

Examples of high-potential joint action areas:

- CBA Phase 3 with **DFAT**
- Ridge-to-Reef and climate adaptation funds under the **UNDP umbrella**
- CSO inclusion frameworks through **Pacific Regional NGOs** and **UN system platforms**

c) Partnerships with the Private Sector

GEF SGP Tonga will continue to foster win-win collaboration with private enterprises, particularly those committed to **sustainability, social equity, or heritage promotion**. Planned actions include:

- Hosting exhibitions and awareness events in collaboration with **private media outlets, tourism operators, and product exporters**
- Showcasing case studies for companies aligned with SGP goals (e.g. Heilala Cosmetics and native biodiversity, travel companies and ecotourism)
- Featuring **private sector “green champions”** as media ambassadors, funders, or mentorship partners
- Inviting private actors to **sponsor storytelling, green skills workshops, or award initiatives**.
- Designating **observer roles on the NSC** for companies engaged in biodiversity-friendly innovation or climate-smart product development.

By weaving private actors into SGP's grassroots ecosystem, the country program will bolster resource efficiency, innovation, and community reach across all island groups.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN

Tonga's geographic isolation, environmental exposure, and small economy present several risks that could impact the delivery of OP8 outcomes. GEF SGP Tonga has identified key risks and defined mitigation strategies to ensure that project implementation remains agile and adaptive.

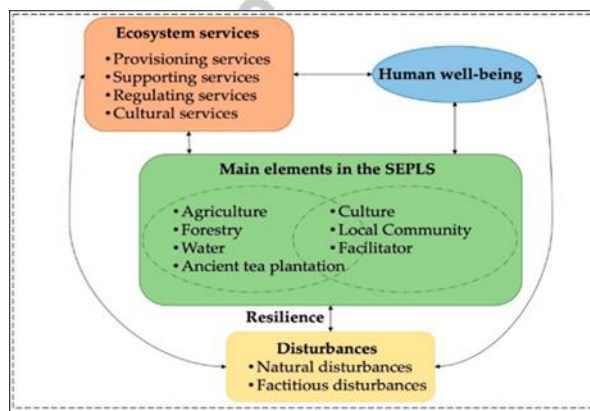
Table 3. Description of risks identified in OP8.

Describe the identified risk	Degree of risk (low, medium, high)	Probability of risk (low, medium, high)	Risk mitigation measures foreseen
Natural Disasters (cyclones, tsunamis)	High	Medium to High	Pre-position resources; ensure project sites integrate disaster resilience infrastructure; build in recovery time and early warning systems
Pandemics or public health emergencies	Low to Medium	Low to Medium	Promote health preparedness, vaccination awareness, and contingency virtual delivery options
Delays in fund disbursement	High	Medium	Adjust project timelines; communicate clearly with grantees; avoid premature starts before fund confirmation
Government transitions or policy shifts	Low	Low	Strengthen civil servant engagement; embed GEF SGP indicators in ongoing policy frameworks
Staff turnover in GEF SGP coordination	High	Low	Maintain a documented handover process; engage secondary staff with cross-training and backups

These mitigation strategies are supported by a participatory monitoring framework, NSC oversight, and quarterly scenario reviews. The country program remains committed to adapting swiftly while upholding accountability and community ownership.

9. MONITORING AND EVALUATION PLAN

GEF SGP Tonga's OP8 Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) framework will adhere to the GEF M&E Policy (2023–2024), emphasizing participatory, adaptive, and results-based tracking at the **project, country programme, and landscape/seascape** levels. It draws on a Theory of



Change (ToC) that guides decision-making and rapid learning cycles grounded in community realities.

Using the ToC as a planning framework, the National Steering Committee (NSC) will work through the following steps to prioritize and monitor OP8 landscapes and seascapes:

1. **Analyse** the specific context of the proposed OP8 priority.
2. **Explore** underlying assumptions affecting community and environmental outcomes.
3. **Frame hypotheses** for intended environmental and social change.
4. **Assess evidence** through rapid learning cycles informed by small grants implementation.

In line with the principles of adaptive management and the SGP M&E Strategy, Tonga's country team will, throughout OP8:

- Monitor progress toward landscape/seascape-level goals using agreed-upon indicators.
- Adapt management strategies in response to contextual changes or evolving community needs.

To support this, each grantee will be required to:

- Report regularly on OP8 indicators outlined in the Results Framework
- Identify and reflect on implementation challenges to contribute to programme-level learning and course correction.
- Participate in midterm and final evaluations that integrate both quantitative and qualitative indicators.

All indicators used will follow **SMART criteria**, ensuring that they are:

- **Specific:** clearly defined and easy to understand
- **Measurable:** quantifiable with appropriate accuracy and consistency
- **Achievable:** realistic within the project timeframes and resource envelopes
- **Relevant:** directly linked to the programme's goals and stakeholder interests
- **Time-bound:** structured to enable regular performance tracking over time.

By applying this M&E framework rigorously and inclusively, GEF SGP Tonga will ensure that OP8 remains **evidence-driven, adaptive, and accountable to communities and ecosystems** alike.

9.1 Monitoring approaches at project and country levels

At the Project Level:

- Every project will incorporate a tailored M&E plan aligned with the **OP8 Results Framework** and SMART indicators.
- Baseline data must be collected at the design phase; where needed, grantees may budget for an initial baseline survey.
- Projects will submit:
 - ✓ **Progress and Financial Reports** every six months
 - ✓ A **Final Project Report** and independent evaluation (where relevant)
 - ✓ Outputs and outcome evidence: photos, stories, data sets, financial receipts

Participatory M&E:

- Grantees must conduct stakeholder analyses and ensure representation from **women, youth, and persons with disabilities** in planning, monitoring, and feedback loops.

- Project committees (finance, procurement, implementation, training) are encouraged for transparent reporting and accountability.

At the Country Programme Level:

- The National Coordinator (NC) and NSC will facilitate:
 - ✓ **Quarterly progress reviews** by island group or thematic cluster
 - ✓ **Annual Country Programme Review**, ideally timed with the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR)
 - ✓ **South-South exchanges** to validate and reflect on emerging lessons.
- All data will be uploaded to the **SGP Global Database** and shared with MEIDECC, UNDP CO, and the GEF Secretariat.

Inclusivity and Ethics:

- SGP M&E will uphold free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC) and follow a “do no harm” principle, respecting land, ocean, and cultural custodianship.
- Gender equity, disability access, and intergenerational participation will be tracked and embedded throughout the M&E cycle.

Table 4. M&E Plan at the Country Programme level

M&E Activity	Purpose	Responsible Parties	Budget Source	Timing
Country Programme Strategy elaboration	Framework for action including identification of community projects	NC, NSC, country stakeholders, grantees	A SGP planning grant to engage consultants may be used to update OP8 CPS	At start of OP8
As part of NSC meetings, ongoing review of project results and analysis. This includes an Annual CPS Review	Assess effectiveness of projects, country portfolio; learning; adaptive management	NC, NSC, UNDP Country Office. Final deliberations shared/ analysed with CPMT colleagues	Staff time, Country Operating Budget	At least one annual CPS review to ensure OP8 CPS is on track to achieve its results and make timely and evidence-based modifications to CPS as may be needed ²

² It is recommended that the Annual CPS review is done close to AMR submissions for both processes to benefit from each other (suggested timeframe is May- July). Note that OP8 CPS will be regarded as a dynamic document and can be updated by the SGP country team and NSC on a periodic basis to reflect any necessary adjustments to ensure maximum impact.

M&E Activity	Purpose	Responsible Parties	Budget Source	Timing
Annual Monitoring Report Survey ³	Enable efficient reporting to CPMT and GEF. It serves as the primary tools to record and analytically present results to donors	NC/PA in close collaboration with NSC. CPMT provides technical guidance, support and receives final country submission for further action	Staff time	Once per year in June- July
Country Portfolio Review	Methodological results capture of the portfolio at a given point to note impact level change as well as broader adoption. The goal is to support reporting to stakeholders, learning, and support to strategic development/ implementation of CPS	NC, NSC	SGP planning grant to engage consultants may be used to undertake previous operational cycles impact review and utilize lessons for both OP8 CPS development and its implementation. Global technical M&E support can be expected	Once per operational phase
SGP Database	Ensure recording of all Project and Country Programme inputs in SGP database	NCs, PAs,	Staff time	Throughout the operational phase. Ensure quality assurance and completion of data prior to the annual monitoring cycle (May- June of every year)
Audit	Ensure compliance with	External/independent auditors.	Global Operating	Annually for selected countries on a risk-

³ Timely and quality country level submissions to Annual Monitoring Process are mandatory. As a Global Programme, it enables aggregated reporting by CPMT to GEF, UNDP and other stakeholders.

M&E Activity	Purpose	Responsible Parties	Budget Source	Timing
	project implementation/ management standards and norms	NC/ PA to provide requisite support.	Budget	assessment basis

9.2 CPS Results Framework

The table below (Table 5) presents Tonga's **Results Framework for OP8**, aligned with core indicators from the GEF and customized to the country programme's strategic initiatives. These targets are what each project will be measured against.

Table 5: Results Framework of SGP OP8 Country Programme Strategy

Alignment with SDGs 1 – No poverty 2 – Zero Hunger 3 – Good Health & Wellbeing 5 – Gender Equality 6 – Clean Water & Sanitation 7 – Affordable & Clean Energy 8 – Decent Work & Economic Growth 10– Reduced Inequalities 11– Sustainable Cities & Communities 12 – Responsible Consumption & Production 13 – Climate Action 14 – Life Below Water 15 – Life on Land 16 – Peace, Justice & Strong Institutions 17 – Partnerships for the Goals
Synergy with UNDP Country Programme Document (CPD): ✂ Output 1.1- Scaled-up action on climate change adaptation and mitigation across sectors which is funded and implemented. ✂ OUTPUT 1.2. Governance systems are risk-informed to manage and finance disasters and shocks. ✂ Output 1.3- Solutions developed at national and sub-national levels for sustainable management of natural resources ecosystem services and waste. ✂ OUTPUT 2.1. Policies and programmes in place to support the complementary strategies of improving livelihoods opportunities and social protection for those at risk of being left behind. ✂ Output 2.2- Green/blue economic policies in place to support private sector initiatives that create sustainable and environmentally friendly jobs and entrepreneurial opportunities for women and youth. ✂ OUTPUT 2.3. Gender-sensitive mechanisms in place to accelerate achievement of the SDGs and monitor progress. ✂ Output 3.1- Increased voice and more inclusive participation by women youth and marginalized groups in national and sub-national decision-making bodies that are more representative. ✂ Output 3.2- Increased transparency and accountability in governance institutions and formal and informal

decision-making processes ✂ OUTPUT 3.3. State-society relationships are more resilient to stressors and are inclusive in relation to women, youth, and people with disabilities		
OP8 SGP Programme Goal: Engage local CSOs/CBOs in landscape-seascape approaches across the world, providing them access to knowledge and information, capacitating them through learning-by-doing, skills development, and delivering technical and grant assistance for interventions that enhance wellbeing and socioeconomic conditions and generate global environmental benefits.		
1 OP8 SGP CPS Strategic Initiatives	2 CPS Indicators and Targets	3 Means of Verification
<u>Strategic Initiative 1:</u> Community-based conservation of threatened ecosystems and species <i>MCPD Outcome 3 & SDG 13, 14 & 15</i>	100 hectares of landscapes under improved practices (excluding protected areas) (GEF core indicator 4.1 and 4.3) 100 hectares of marine protected areas created or under improved management (GEF core indicator 2) 100 hectares of marine habitat under improved practices (GEF core indicator 5)	Individual project reporting by SGP country teams (as part of midterm and final Progress reports) Baseline assessment comparison variables (use of conceptual models and partner data as appropriate) Annual Monitoring Report (AMR), SGP global database Country Programme Review
<u>Strategic Initiative 2:</u> Sustainable agriculture and fisheries, and food security <i>MCPD Outcome 1 & SDG 1, 12, 15</i>	100 hectares of land and ecosystems under restoration (GEF core indicator 3.1) 20 (number of) partnerships to advance sustainable agriculture and fisheries and/or food security (such as diversification, sustainable intensification, sustainable fisheries management, agroecological farming practices, climate-smart agriculture, certification programmes, local sourcing initiatives, waste reduction and circular economy, etc.)	Individual project reporting by SGP country teams (as part of midterm and final Progress reports) Annual Monitoring Report (AMR), SGP global database Country Programme Review Socio-ecological resilience indicators for production landscapes (SEPLs)

<u>Strategic Initiative 3:</u> Low-carbon energy access co-benefits <i>MCPD Outcome 3 & SDG 7, 13</i>	0.001 tons of greenhouse gas emissions mitigated/avoided (GEF core indicator 6) 100kW increase in installed renewable energy capacity from community-scale systems (e.g., biomass, micro-hydro, solar, etc.) 5 (number of) locally adapted solutions promoting low-carbon technologies (such as new/modified biogas technology, locally developed energy-efficient stoves, innovative uses of solar/wind energy, etc.)	Individual project reporting by SGP country teams (as part of midterm and final Progress reports) Annual Monitoring Report (AMR), SGP global database Country Programme Strategy Review (NSC inputs)
<u>Strategic Initiative 4:</u> Local to global coalitions for chemicals and waste management <i>MCPD Outcome 3 & SDG 3, 6, 12</i>	2 (number of) policy recommendations or advocacy initiatives related to land-based pollution as a result of the SGP project 3 (number of) local to global coalitions for chemicals and waste management strengthened and/or established	Individual project reporting by SGP country teams (as part of midterm and final Progress reports) Strategic partnership with IPEN and Mercury GOLD country partners Annual Monitoring Report (AMR), global database Country Programme Review
<u>Strategic Initiative 5:</u> Catalysing sustainable urban solutions <i>MCPD Outcome 1 & 3</i> <i>SDGs 11, 13, 12</i>	5 (number of) community-based sustainable solutions in urban landscapes (e.g., transport, biodiversity conservation, chemical and waste management, energy efficiency, watershed protection, etc.) 5 (number of) projects with targeted urban solutions focus	Individual project reporting by SGP country teams Annual Monitoring Report (AMR), SGP global database Country Programme Review
<u>Strategic Initiative 6:</u> CSO-Government-Private Sector Policy and Planning Dialogue Platforms	10 (number of) CSO-government-private sector dialogues formed or strengthened 10 (number of) high-level policy changes associated with increased community participation in multi-	Individual project reporting by SGP country teams Annual Monitoring Report (AMR), global database

MCPD Outcome 2 & SDGs 16 & 17	stakeholder dialogue platforms 5,000 (number of) representatives from social inclusion groups (Indigenous Peoples, women, youth, persons with disability, farmers, other marginalized groups) meaningfully engaged in multi-stakeholder dialogue platforms	Country Programme Review
<u>Strategic Initiative 7:</u> Enhancing social inclusion MCPD Outcome 2 & SDG 5, 10, 16	10,000 (number of) people benefitting from GEF-financed investments disaggregated by sex (GEF core indicator 11) 10 (number of) projects with focused interventions promoting gender equality and women's empowerment 10 (number of) projects that demonstrate models of engaging (a) Indigenous Peoples, (b) youth, and (c) persons with disabilities. 10 (number of) grants with targeted support for 1) women or women groups; 2) youth or youth-led groups; 3) Indigenous Peoples' groups USD 525,000 (amount of grant funding) of the total grant portfolio accessed by 1) women or women groups; 2) youth or youth-led groups; 3) indigenous peoples' groups	Individual project reporting by SGP country teams Annual Monitoring Report (AMR), SGP global database Country Programme Review
<u>Strategic Initiative 8:</u> Monitoring and Evaluation and Knowledge Management Cross-cutting across all MCPD Outcomes & SDGs 17 (especially 17.6, 17.9, 17.16)	20 (number of) projects with meetings involving local CSOs/CBOs or communities to monitor project results, assess impacts, and identify lessons learned 5 (number of) knowledge exchange/sharing events with participation of local communities 1 (number of) online knowledge repositories developed as a result of the SGP project 1 (number of) country/cross-country impact reviews conducted with evidence of SGP impact and lessons learned.	Individual project reporting by SGP country teams Annual Monitoring Report (AMR), SGP global database Country Programme Review

	10 (number of) South-South exchanges between communities, NGOs/CSOs, or other partners within or across countries to transfer knowledge, replicate technology, tools, or approaches on global environmental issues	
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SGP The GEF
Small Grants
Programme



10. NATIONAL STEERING COMMITTEE ENDORSEMENT

Note: The signatures of NSC members are required as endorsement of the complete final CPS duly reviewed and agreed at the National Steering Committee meeting.

NSC members involved in OP8 CPS development, review and endorsement	Signatures
Siotame Drew Havea	
Vanessa Lolohea	
Pelenatita Kara	
Manaia Halafihi	
Lupe Matoto	
Taaniela Kula	
Vailala Matoto	
Ashley Fua	
Olive Mafi	
Ungatea Kata	



and the Pacific. Building on the global momentum towards locally led adaptation (LLA), the main goal of this new phase of CBA funding is to further enhance the capacities of local communities across priority landscapes/seascapes by building their social and ecological resilience to climate change.

CBA Phase 3 Goal:

Climate resilience is built in the Asia and Pacific regions through inclusive community-based and locally led adaptation.

CBA Phase 3 Outcomes:

The goal of the CBA programme will be supported by three programme-level outcomes:

1. Socio-economic and climate resilience is enhanced in select landscapes/seascapes through implementation of locally driven CBA solutions.
2. Local communities and CSOs are capacitated for effective CBA and LLA implementation, knowledge sharing, and policy representation at national levels.
3. CBA solutions and innovations are replicated, scaled up and mainstreamed at the local and national levels.
4. CBA and LLA approaches integrate principles of 'leaving no one behind' with an emphasis of inclusion of women and girls, Indigenous Peoples, youth, and persons with disabilities.

Climate impacts

Background

In 2022, SGP entered a third phase of partnership with the Government of Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade to fund the Community-Based Adaptation Programme (CBA) in Southeast Asia and the Pacific. Building on the global momentum towards locally led adaptation (LLA), the main goal of this new phase of CBA funding is to further enhance the capacities of local communities across priority landscapes/seascapes by building their social and ecological resilience to climate change.

CBA Phase 3 Goal:

Climate resilience is built in the Asia and Pacific regions through inclusive community-based and locally led adaptation.

CBA Phase 3 Outcomes:

The goal of the CBA programme will be supported by three programme-level outcomes:

1. Socio-economic and climate resilience is enhanced in select landscapes/seascapes through the implementation of locally driven CBA solutions.
2. Local communities and CSOs are capacitated for effective CBA and LLA implementation, knowledge sharing, and policy representation at the national level.
3. CBA solutions and innovations are replicated, scaled up and mainstreamed at the local and national levels.



4. CBA and LLA approaches integrate principles of 'leaving no one behind' with an emphasis of inclusion of women and girls, Indigenous Peoples, youth, and persons with disabilities.

Climate impacts

Climate change continues to be one of the greatest threats to our world and to humanity. Local communities and Small Island Developing States (SIDS) are least responsible for climate change, yet they bear the brunt of climate change and its impacts. Drought and rising temperatures, excessive precipitation and flooding, sea level rise and saltwater intrusion, coastal erosion, loss of agricultural crops, degradation of coral reefs due to bleaching, increased instances of pests and diseases, and unpredictable storms and weather events are just some of the challenges experienced by Tonga, as well as other Pacific Islands. These variations in climate not only affect our environment and resilience of natural ecosystems, but also reverberate across every sector of the economy and society, including economic stability, agriculture and food security, water access and sanitation, health and well-being, education, tourism, and livelihoods.

Tonga is the second most vulnerable country in the World (World Risk Report, 2016). This is due to the combination of several factors, such as extreme exposure coupled with its scattered geographical locations as well as its geological characteristics. Tonga is situated in the subduction zone where the Australian and Pacific Tectonic plates meet and where most seismic activities occur. Tonga is also vulnerable to earthquakes and the resultant tsunami waves due to its location within the Ring of Fire. Last year's eruption of the Hunga Tonga Hunga Ha'apai is an apt demonstration of how vulnerable Tonga is. As a tropical island, Tonga frequently experiences tropical cyclones caused by the interplay of various factors, including rising warm seawater temperature and the South Pacific Convergence Zone, El Nino, and La Nina.

In Tonga, adapting to the adverse impacts of climate change focuses on coping with the impacts of an increase in temperature and a rise in sea level. Adapting to the impacts of these two phenomena is regarded as a priority for two reasons. According to the Tonga National Determined Contribution (2020), there is high confidence in the available scientific evidence that these two phenomena are a direct manifestation of climate change in Tonga. Due to a lack of historical and hard data, there is considerable uncertainty about the relationship between climate change and other phenomena, including changes in rainfall patterns, the occurrence of droughts, and the occurrence of tropical cyclones. Second, there are feasible measures available to respond to the impact of increasing temperatures and rising sea levels on a national scale. There are no effective measures to respond to other phenomena, such as ocean acidification, on a national scale.

Historically, the following are key observed climate trends in Tonga.



- (i) Air temperature varied throughout the Kingdom, with mean annual temperature varying from 27 °C in the two Niuaus to 24 °C in Tongatapu, with records showing an increase of 0.32 °C/decade since 1980.
- (ii) Sea temperature remains relatively constant between 1993 and 2015. In Nukualofa, monitoring stations detected a slight increase of 0.004 C/yr in the past 22 years
- (iii) Rainfall is seasonal, with a third of its annual rainfall occurring from November to April. From 1947 to 2017, there was an annual variability with an overall increasing trend. This increase might also be an effect of the northward movement of the South Pacific Convergence Zone (SPCZ) (TMS Report 2017 & TNC Report 2018)
- (iv) El Nino-Southern Oscillation is associated with large yearly changes with high risks of drought, flood, tropical cyclone, bleaching of coral, with significant impacts on agriculture, ecosystems, water resources, health, and disaster management.
- (v) In 2015, after accounting for the inverted barometric pressure effect and vertical movement in the observation platform, the net sea trend for Tonga was +7.3 mm per year in comparison to the global average of 3.2 mm/yr (IPPC 2015)

Thereby, building resilience of local communities to climate shocks and disasters is not only an ethical imperative but can also have positive impacts on the environment, the economy, and well-being, as well as reduce inequalities and contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of Agenda 2030. Not only are climate-resilient communities better able to cope with climate change impacts, but this improved resilience is also applicable to other shocks and stressors, such as pandemics, and economic and social crises. This enhanced resilience is vital for vulnerable and marginalized local actors and communities in particular women, youth, persons with disabilities and Indigenous Peoples.

Alignment with national climate priorities

To accelerate national development in Tonga, an integrated and inclusive approach was utilised as reflected in the Tonga Strategic Development Framework (TSDF) 2015-2025, the Second Joint National Action Plan (JNAP II), as well as in the UN 2030 SDGs, which were unanimously adopted in September 2015. JNAP 1 was instrumental in the establishment of the 2035 Climate Change Policy for Tonga, thus integrating the main thematic focuses to streamline resilience into all government regulatory frameworks and policies. With a core objective of a Resilience Tonga by 2035, coordination at all levels has been emphasised as a key driver to achieving the key objective of the policy.

Climate Change impacts pose a threat to our natural resource base, which is limited to small islands, reefs, and the deep ocean. According to the Tonga Strategic Development Framework (TSDF 2015-2025), the average disaster losses from cyclones, earthquakes and tsunami is estimated by the World Bank to be equivalent to 4.4 per cent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP)

Collaboration between the government and CSOs has been noted to be crucial to a resilient Tonga. It was understood that they are interrelated and interconnected, and therefore should be tackled in such a way as to:



1. Ensure unified and multi-stakeholder approaches to addressing key Climate challenges, thus ensuring that no one is left behind.
2. Reduce the potential risk of further marginalization of certain CSOs/CBOs/NGOs, thus ensuring that the most vulnerable are not prejudiced by geographical locations, gender orientations or denominations.
3. Increase the ability to engage, have access and form collaborations for technical and financial support and partnerships by maximizing synergies whilst minimizing trade-offs and duplication.

Tonga submitted its second Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC - the heart of the Paris Agreement) in 2020 with a stipulation to achieve a lot of its Climate Change ambitions by 2035. Civil society's reliance on fossil fuel alternatives has been further enhanced by increasing the local capacity to produce clean energy through small-scale community-level action. During this new CBA phase, there is also a significant opportunity to upward-spiral sustainable management and development of Tonga's natural resources as per the Long-Term Outcome (LTO) in Tonga Strategic Development Framework (2015-2025) as well as international and regional conventions.

TSDF II identified key risks for Tonga in relation to Climate Impacts

- (i) Worsening equality
- (ii) Increase anti-migration sentiment in those countries to which most of the Tongan diaspora migrated.
- (iii) Geopolitical instability
- (iv) Server cut back in development assistance, both budget and capital.
- (v) Failure to maintain recent reduction in NCD risk factors.

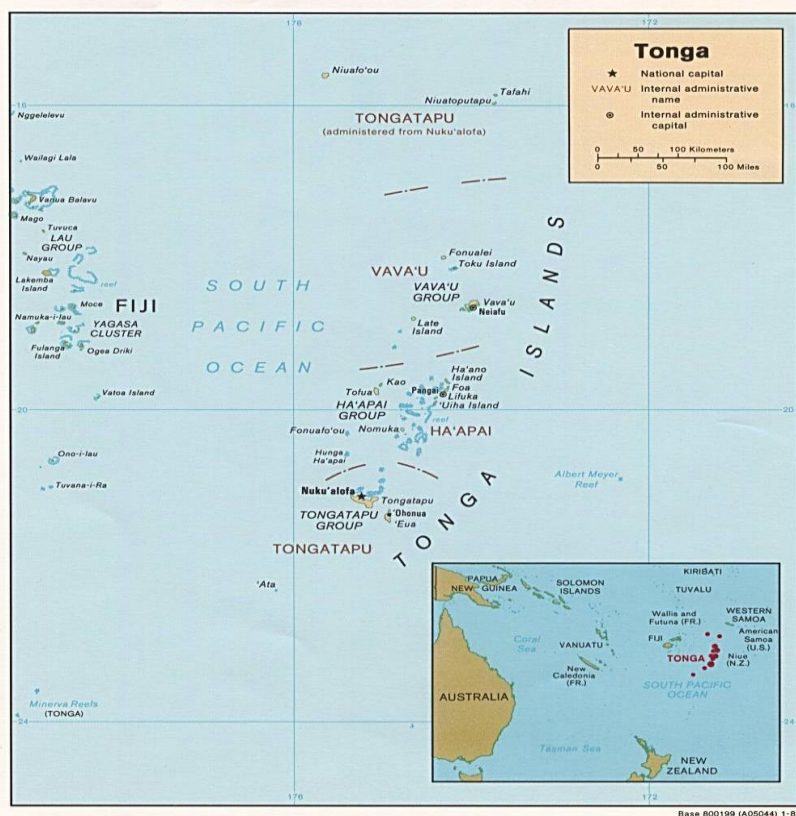
These identified risks are important, and they are amplified in awareness and capacity-building initiatives to ensure that the message is filtered to communities as well as horizontally transferred to other line ministries and entities.

Rural communities make up 75% of Tonga's population, and they are a powerful force to mobilise when attempting to achieve national objectives. They rely heavily on the environment which surrounds them, and through increasing meaningful civil society ownership and involvement within environmental protection and conservation practices, the potential for environmental and socio-economic development can be enhanced. Whilst there has been a significant improvement throughout the past years, there remains the opportunity to strengthen coordination and to develop new partnerships between civil society, NGOs, the private sector, government ministries, and donor agencies – a cross-cutting factor in development with the potential to ensure policy making becomes increasingly inclusive and representative. Through improved dialogue, results, and outcomes from SGP projects can be effectively utilized to inform national planning and decision making, with CBA creating an enabling environment at the community level to work in partnership with the Government of Samoa. As well as this, CBA grant-

making has the potential to fill the funding gap from OP6 to improve knowledge management and south-south cooperation, promoting the exchange of knowledge and best practices which can be replicated and upscaled throughout the SSRP, Pacific region and SIDS across the globe.

Geographic focus

Geographical zoning of assistance through GEF SGP has been a key feature of the Tongan program. It allows cost saving and maximised utilisation of human and economic resources, due to the geographically scattered features of the Kingdom. It also allows cross-pollination of lessons learnt between communities with similar features, such as between coral and volcanic islands across Tonga. However, although the NSC has endorsed OP7 Country Strategies with this feature in mind, it was also mindful of the importance of leaving no one behind and giving access to marginalised communities in the outer islands of Tonga.



The CBA Program will adopt an Island Group strategy, aligning itself with government policies targeting enhanced development opportunities in the various sectors in the Island Groups, with the exception of the two Niuas, Vava'u, 'Eua, Ha'apai and Tongatapu. Both grant-making and capacity-building activities will predominantly target the main island groups.

The justification of the geographic focus also takes into consideration the critical opportunity to implement conservation activities to protect the rich marine and terrestrial biodiversity and

endemism of its coastal, inshore, and offshore and forest ecosystems in the Island Groups as well as align SGP Outcomes better with those reflecting priorities of other significant national biodiversity-related policies and processes including the Tonga NBSAP.



There is also an increasing recognition of the active participation of GEF SGP in the region's conservation initiative thus providing an opportune window for GEF SGP to take lead in some of the regional conservation initiatives and capitalizing in the wide network of stakeholders provided by the NHI of the Civil Society Forum of Tonga, as the umbrella NGO for the Kingdom

The SGP's Island group policy also presents a timely opportunity to synergize efforts of the SGP with various conservation partners already active in the Island Groups. The coming on board of the ADB Climate Resilience Project provided another milestone in using a geographical focus to project-specific, based on regional best practices for maximising conservation output. This will allow SGP to build on site-specific successes and lessons as well as maximize on replication and mainstreaming opportunities available through the active conservation network working in the Island groups. The successful establishment of the Coastal Communities SMA (OP 4) will also create an excellent opportunity for SGP to replicate the initiative in other island groups as it has done so in OP5 & OP6, as well as provide follow-on support at the district level for implementation of SGP interventions targeting District-based threats under the various GEF thematic areas.

The increasing amount of donor-funded conservation initiatives of ABD Climate Resilience Project, the IUCN BIORAP project, the R2R Fanga'uta Stewardship Management Plan Project, the FAO R2R Biogas and Land Degradation Project, the Climate Change Green Fund has really shifted the national focus to emphasizing the importance of Climate Proofing, Climate Resilience but also the importance of safeguarding our environment. This also put an emphasis on the need for collective effort. GEF-7 would not work in silos but in synergy with other partners and in recognition of the community effort and experiences.

The SGP Island group Strategy also considers the relative vulnerability of natural resources (marine and terrestrial) that continue to be threatened, in the face of development initiatives that are anticipated in the short-term future. This is coupled by the fact that government monitoring structures and frameworks in the Island groups may not be fully established to support the rate of growth and development mandated by most of the donor-funded projects. SGP presented a good opportunity to implement community-based initiatives to create community empowerment and mobilise rural-based communities in the Island Groups to take the lead in sustainable resource management at the local level, as well as generating national and global environmental benefits.

CBA program should continue to pursue a more engaging and collaborative partnership with the Local Government Offices and the Planning Officers in identifying priority areas at the Island Group and District level, as well as creating synergy in planning, implementation, and monitoring processes. GEF OP 4 has initiated weaving a result-based modality in its project delivery, and given the gradual but visible recognition of the achievement of the SGP, it will maintain its delivery through the SGP national network and traditional partners. This will also include Provincial & District Offices, NGOs,



CBOs, academia, and relevant government agencies mandated in areas of Agriculture, Forestry, Sustainable Land Use, Climate Change, International Waters and POPS.

Social Inclusion and Gender Mainstreaming

Tonga's last Census in 2016 showed that Women contributed roughly 51% of the population, but unfortunately, men lead in all the areas that are economically active. Moreover, women contribute 26.8 % of all unemployment compared to men, 7.6%. (Tonga Statistics Department, 2016). This is an area where the CBA program can help balance the differences, given the number of women who are out there that can benefit from engaging in economically viable activities to make a living as well as contribute to addressing the adverse impact of climate change, especially in Food security, family health and their livelihood.

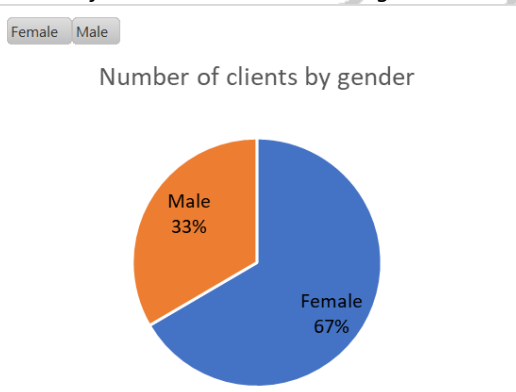
An area where we can provide opportunities for women's economic empowerment, as well as giving women the opportunity to participate in resource management and resource conservation, is the agricultural and fishery Sector. CBA can support the implementation of the Fishery and Agricultural Sector plans in order to achieve their respective output whilst contributing to national climate objectives.

Women can engage in agricultural production to offset our national trade deficit by growing locally produced food and meat that can be sold locally at a cheaper price. They can also participate in policy dialogue and negotiation, especially in regulating the current PAC Trade Agreement, especially when it comes to preferential treatment and protection of local products. On the other side of the coin, we also look at the dietary composition of Tongans, which gives rise to diabetes, High Blood Pressure and cardiovascular disease as leading causes of death in Tonga (Tonga Fishery Sector Plan 2016). This all pointed to high consumption of processed and fatty food, which are imported from overseas.

Support from CBA projects for women replanting projects of Mulberry (for tapa) and Pandanus (for Mats) can support women in the community to earn alternative livelihoods as well as empowering them economically, whilst at the same time contributing to our national GDP. Tonga Agricultural Sector Plan (2015) gave due recognition to women's contribution to the agricultural sector, which has gone unrecognised in the past. Women's contribution through the manufacturing and trading of tapa and weavings has never been recorded, but it's assumed to contribute a lot to the national GDP (p27) and is considered one of the main areas for development under the plan. This is ideally CBA-able and can improve the Carbon sink as well as help curb climate impacts.

Tonga Skills has implemented nearly 200 training sessions in its 3-year tenure, with over 3000 people trained, and more than 60% of whom were women. Over 80% of all participants interviewed during M&E confirmed an increase in their economic livelihood as a result of the training they received from Tonga Skills. One of Tonga Skills' major objectives is to ensure that the environment is protected, and our resources are replanted and conserved.



Reporting Period:	May 2019						
Overall totals							
Total number of clients ⁴ 2665 Total number of clients who are people with disabilities. 67	Gender breakdown <i>Pie chart from six. # clients attending skills activities by gender</i>  <table border="1"> <caption>Number of clients by gender</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Gender</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Female</td> <td>67%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Male</td> <td>33%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Gender	Percentage	Female	67%	Male	33%
Gender	Percentage						
Female	67%						
Male	33%						

Source: Tonga Skill Monthly Dashboard, May 2019.

Tonga's Energy Road Map (TERM) is the guiding document for actions and development partner support for the energy sector. The objective is "to lay out a least cost approach and implementation plan to reduce Tonga's vulnerability to oil price shocks and achieve an increase in quality access to modern energy services in a financially and environmentally sustainable manner". The TERM specifies the least cost and cost recovery approaches, and minimizing local social and physical environmental impacts by aligning efforts with global goals on climate change. According to Tonga Community Development Trust (2016) research at 'Atata Island (one of the GEF OP4 grantee) into the use of energy in communities, women are the most affected where energy is concerned. Tonga Skills Project also confirmed the same issue whilst monitoring at four (4) islands in the Ha'apai Groups, where women were the main caretakers of the village Solar Systems. Whilst more than 90% of the community's main power is generated by Tonga Power Limited, a government subsidiary company, most in the outer islands still depend on solar. Unfortunately, the high maintenance of the solar systems and lack of maintenance skills amongst the locals have deemed a lot of the solar projects ineffective in the outer islands. Therefore, women have reverted to the use of local woods for cooking and lamps for light. Fishing activities are also affected as less time is spent at sea because of the fuel needed for the boat.

A replantation of coastal vegetation and reforestation of lost medicinal species will support the generation of wood trees for women in communities, so they would not have to rely entirely on Solar systems. This would be an intervention point of entry for GEF 07. This will support the land degradation objective of the GEF by providing buffers for sea level rise as well as acting as a carbon sink for Climate Change. Re-vegetating coastal areas can support both agro-forestry and biodiversity, as some of the birds can return when there are more coastal trees. This was some of the findings from an environmental survey done for one of the R2R Integrated Coastal Water Management Project, that once the coastal forestation has been stripped by human activities, some of the local birds are lost, as well as the natural seeding process that is often stimulated by bird droppings.



Integration of CBA data into National Gender Depository will be another area for integration since SPC has already established the GEWDWS publication, it would be worthwhile contributing GEF SGP O7 gender data to this national publication, as it is both gender-oriented and regionally recognised.

To address gender considerations, CBA programme can ensure that the following actions are executed:

- ✦ Include Gender during the Consultation for the GEF Country Program Strategies
- ✦ Include gender analysis in the Project Proposal Guidelines and one of the Criteria for Selection of Projects for funding.
- ✦ Increase the capacity of CSOs in gender analysis by incorporating it in training programs.
- ✦ Encourage flexibility strategies for both men and women to attend training by setting convenient dates, times, and non-residential workshops.
- ✦ Give priority to project proposals submitted by women's groups.
- ✦ Encourage active participation of both women and men in project design, implementation, and in monitoring and evaluation (gender disaggregated data)
- ✦ Inclusion of women in CSO leadership committees
- ✦ All project Proposal templates will capture Gender data, including the number of beneficiaries, and how the project will be proposed to address gender issues.
- ✦ All grantees will be trained on how to capture data, including that on gender.
- ✦ All project governance bodies must include at least 50% women unless stipulated by the law.
- ✦ All project baseline data will be included in a database housed by the NHI.
- ✦ The Monitoring and Evaluation Report must include tools that will track progress against Gender indicators.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Donor-funded projects are funds that have been given to a particular country to support its development endeavour, so governance is critical to ensuring that the funds end up supporting what was originally requested for that specific development space; hence, having the rule of law is critical to ensuring good governance, which M&E is a tool of. The rule of law refers to a principle of governance in which all persons, institutions, and entities, public and private, including the State itself, are accountable to laws that are publicly promulgated, equally enforced, and independently adjudicated, and which are consistent with international human rights norms and standards. It requires, as well, measures to ensure adherence to the principles of supremacy of law, equality before the law, accountability to the law, fairness in the application of the law, separation of powers, participation in decision-making, legal certainty, avoidance of arbitrariness and procedural and legal transparency.

The importance of Monitoring and Evaluation can never be emphasized enough, especially as they not only reflect whether your programs have the best indicators. They need to call for specific, measurable, qualitative, and quantitative data. Reporting on progress towards indicators should go beyond the limitations which indicators sometimes contain. It should provide the monitoring body and the public with all the information they might need in the context of each indicator.

Tonga CBA programme will endeavour to streamline, advocate, and practice these principles of governance in the implementation plan. There are already good practices that have been learnt in previous years of CBA work, but aligning strategy with the National Strategic Framework of Monitoring and Evaluation will lend more credibility to



its work, as well as allowing easy synergy between our programming and the work of the government and other implementing partners.

Collection of Baseline Data

The grantees will collect baseline data at the time of project design. In cases where grantees are unable to collect the baseline data, a budget for a baseline survey should be included in the project concept grant. Grantees will continue to collect information throughout the project as specified in the M&E plan and will be encouraged to continue even after the external funding is used up as part of sustained environment management approach.

Grantees will be required to prepare Project Progress and Financial Reports at least every six months, depending on the nature of the project, before each fund disbursement request. The Project Progress Report will include a page of the project M&E plan with cumulative results of indicators of progress and impacts. The National Coordinator will enter the data into the SGP database. In addition to the progress reports, the grantees will submit work plans as annexes to their request for the subsequent disbursement of funds.

The National Coordinator, with/or part of the NSC, will endeavour to visit each project at least once every six months to monitor project progress, verify information provided in the reports, provide feedback, and give technical advice as required.

The grantees will be advised to conduct internal mid-term project evaluations for projects to assess overall project progress, improve implementation, and make necessary adjustments for the remaining period of the project.

At the end of the project, a final evaluation of the project, included in the budget of each project, will be conducted. The final evaluation will include some external evaluators, and a report will be produced. In addition, grantees will submit a Final Project Report and a Final Financial Report.

Participation of Local Stakeholders in Monitoring and Evaluation

At the time of project preparation, the CSO will conduct a stakeholder analysis and the identified stakeholders will be invited to participate in problem identification, analysis of the causes and effects of the problems, and identification of possible solutions. The process will be participatory including community members, local leaders, NGO members, government staff, and other identified stakeholders.

The project objectives will be identified in relation to the effects of the identified core problems (the problem tree will be used to form an objectives tree with a hierarchy of objectives). The activities which contribute to the achievement of each objective will be identified. The outputs resulting from the activities will be stated and targets will be set.

The CSO will guide the project preparation process. A participatory M&E system will be developed as part of the process. The stakeholders/participants will identify the indicators of progress and impact for each of the objectives. The need for a baseline survey will be emphasized, and participants will agree on when and how to conduct it. For each indicator, methods of data collection will be discussed and agreed upon. The responsibility for data collection will be allocated according to the type of project and the skills required. The frequency of data collection will depend on the nature of the project, but at least once before submitting the Progress Report to the GEF SGP office.

When the proponent is awarded a grant, the CSO will be advised to select project committees to ease administrative functions. The committees may include the Finance Committee, the Procurement Committee, the Implementation Committee (which is also responsible for M&E), and the Training and Information Committee. One



of these committees, e.g., the Implementation Committee, may be given the responsibility of aggregating the data, compiling the Progress Report, and producing other documents such as brochures, DVDs, and photographs of the project interventions. Furthermore, the Implementation Committee will be responsible for ensuring that the project M&E Plan is adhered to and that the quality of data collected is satisfactory. In addition to the GEF SGP office, the project Progress Reports will be shared with the identified stakeholders, especially local leaders at the district level and government staff. At least once every year, e.g., during the CSO annual general meeting, the Implementation Committee, together with the leaders of the CSO, will provide feedback to the community and other stakeholders on the contribution of the project to environmental conservation at the local and global levels with reference to the data in the project M&E form.

