

Public Administration Sector Plan 2014-2018 Annual Review

Narrative Report



**Public Administration Sector Coordination Unit
Public Service Commission
Government of Samoa
August 2015**

Background

In February 2014, the Public Administration Sector Plan 2014-2018 (PASP) was launched by the Prime Minister and former Minister of the Public Service Commission, Hon. Tuilaepa Lufesolai Sailele Malielegaoi. An independent consultancy firm was contracted by the Government of Samoa to review the previous Public Administration Sector Plan 2007-2011 and develop a new Plan for the subsequent 5 year period.

The PASP 2014-2018 was developed according to the key findings of the review, and feedback gathered during the consultation process which involved some 200+ stakeholders. The Plan has 3 overarching goals, 10 strategies and 29 activities to be implemented within the 5 year period; it will be evaluated against 5 sector outcome indicators. The goals and strategies were based on key areas identified through the review that needed improvement, including:

- awareness and understanding of PASP;
- strengthening the whole of Government approach and coordination;
- developing an effective Monitoring and Evaluation framework;
- improving the quality of public service delivery;
- addressing the shortage of technical skills in the public service; and
- gaining public confidence in the integrity of the public sector.

Introduction

The vision for the PASP 2014-2018 states that by 2018, the Sector would have achieved a professional and competent Public Administration that provides quality and coordinated service delivery in a cost effective, efficient and transparent manner. By implementing all 29 activities, the sector hopes to accomplish the following:

- Improved quality of public service delivery;
- Improved human resource capacities; and
- Improved public sector integrity and culture.

In the Strategy for the Development of Samoa (SDS) 2012-2016, the Public Administration Sector (PAS) falls under Priority Area 1 (Economic Sector), Key Outcome 5 (Enabling Environment for business development), Strategic Area 6 (Raise the efficiency and effectiveness of public service to support the private sector and community). The 3 overarching goals for the PASP would contribute to the achievement of 8 indicators developed to monitor progress. The indicators specified for the Sector includes:

- Improved Scores in World Bank Governance Indicators;
- PASP Secretariat annual evaluation reports and Report of Review of Public Service publicly disseminated; and
- Score for Rule of law in World Bank Governance Indicators increases.

The Sector consists of the Public Service, constitutional bodies, statutory bodies, and State Owned Enterprises that are Public Beneficial bodies. The Public Administration Sector Coordination Unit (PASCU) provides secretariat services to ensure effective coordination and implementation of the Sector Plan. The Public Administration Sector Steering Committee exercises an oversight role on the implementation and monitoring of the Plan.

Progress Update – An Overview

Implementation of the Sector Plan is underway but there is scope for improvement and strengthening. Since the launch, 4 of the 29 activities had been completed or are near completion; 10 are in progress and 15 have yet to be implemented (i.e., 48% progress). *Refer to Appendix 1 for details of the 29 activities under the Sector Plan.*

Milestones

In 2014, the Public Service Commission carried out a Client Satisfaction Survey to help Government and service providers identify areas where improvements could be made. This was a key activity under Goal 1 aimed at improving the quality of public service delivery. The survey¹ highlighted the following:

- Government is “delivery focused” and “client focused”, with respondents thinking that Government employees are friendly; somewhat accommodating (try to be helpful), and try to provide a conducive environment for clients;
- Service delivery has improved dramatically if compared with previous years;
- The Samoan public service is on the right track, with respondents having positive views about the role of Government and its achievements;
- Ethics and professional standards of the public service are not understood by public servants themselves and the general public.

Furthermore, the survey highlighted the immediate need to address existing gaps with service delivery for several Government agencies; in particular, the Samoa Water Authority, the Electric Power Corporation, the National Health Services and the Ministry of Police. The survey report recommended an immediate, structured review to diagnose and address the problems with service delivery within the listed agencies. The diagnostic activity is now a priority for the new financial year.

Overview of activities in progress

The Sector has several activities in the pipeline to be implemented within the remaining 4 year period for the Plan.

This includes the current Public Service Function Analysis aimed at identifying and recommending to Cabinet an appropriate public service structure that is aligned to our national priorities, and would contribute to improved service delivery and a more cost-effective government. The first phase was completed in 2014 and focused on identifying, grouping and aligning agency functions. Phase 2 is currently in progress, and is expected to confirm and finalize all functions within Ministries/offices and Sectors; Phase 3 will look at the organization of functions within allocated agencies including a review of organizational structures to ensure effective and efficient performance and service delivery².

In addition, the Sector is developing a National Human Resource Development Plan which looks at identifying the long term human resource needs not only for the public sector but for the country as a whole, in the context of its long term development needs. Samoa’s development aspiration is articulated through its SDS 2012-2017; however, the document does not highlight the required skills

¹ Public Service Commission, Client Satisfaction Survey Report 2014

² Samoa Functional Analysis Framework, Samoa Public Service, Public Service Commission, March 2013

it needs to achieve its strategic goals. A draft NHRD Plan is in place pending approval based on the development of a National Employment Policy under the auspices of the Ministry of Commerce Industry and Labour. It is anticipated that the Policy would be completed by December 2015, with the NHRD Plan to be a significant part of its content.

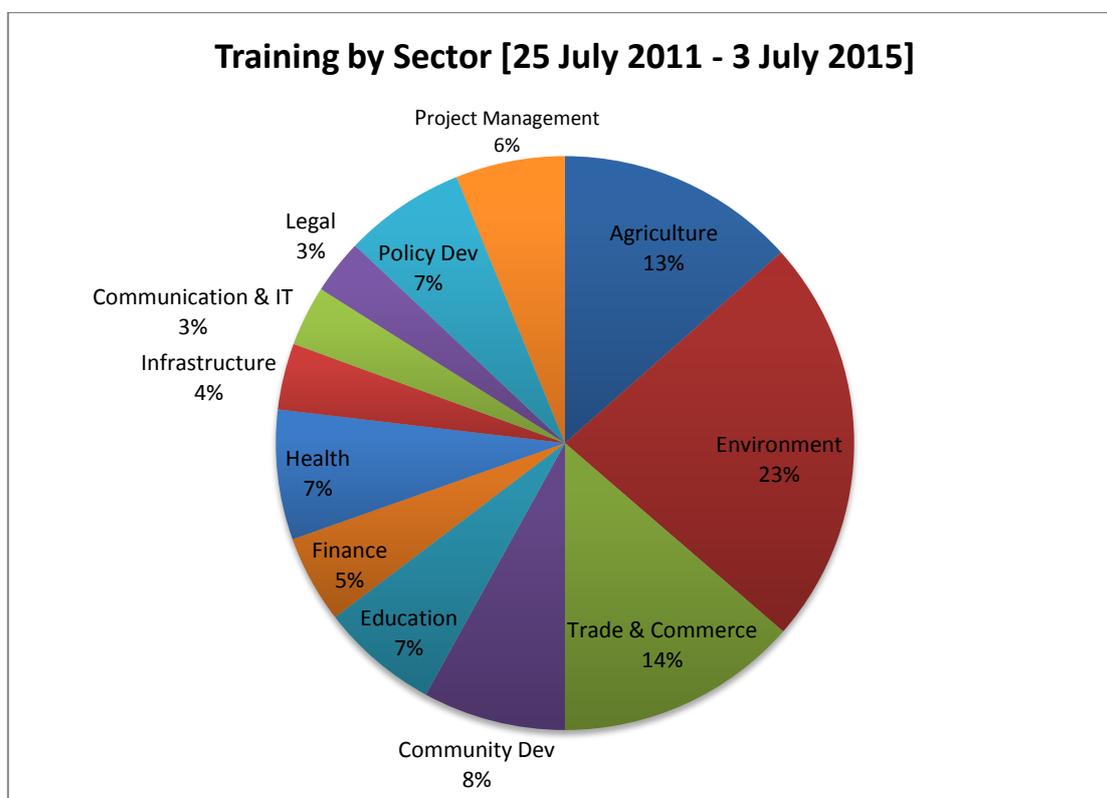


Figure 1: Training by Sector, July 2011-July 2015, STSC Database³

To illustrate, the Environment Sector (Priority Area 4 under the current SDS), received 23% of the 588 local and international capacity building and professional development opportunities from July 2011-July 2015⁴. It is anticipated that through the NHRDP, there would be a more strategic, whole-of-government reallocation of training opportunities according to skills that are urgently required under the SDS. In hindsight, it is expected that all HRD priorities in Workforce Plans submitted to the PSC would be aligned with the NHRDP, to assist Government with the realignment and re-profiling of all HRD opportunities.

Issues & Challenges

Whilst implementation is on track for some activities, the Sector continues to face several challenges going forward with more than half of the 29 activities. In essence, the issues hindering progress for the Sector are not unique and are experienced by other sectors. Some of which include:

- Limited data availability and collection;
- Weak to no linkages between the Public Administration Sector Coordination Unit (PASCU) and sector implementing agencies;
- Limited to no reporting on implementation progress; and

³ Data includes 14 Ministries, 2 constitutional bodies, 2 statutory bodies, and excludes the other 13 agencies under the Sector

⁴ Training Courses & Participants for Government Ministries only, STSC Database, accessed July 2015

- Weak collaboration between sector agencies (sector agencies working silos).

Financial constraints have affected the sector's ability to recruit technical consultants and advisors to undertake some activities that require specific skills not available or scarce in the public service. For instance, the Plan consists of several reviews and diagnostic studies that need to be undertaken; for the most part, Government agencies have been outsourcing this type of activity for several years to independent consultants and technical advisors, mainly from the private sector. While few agencies have slowly built their capacities and expertise in this area, some reviews under the Plan require external assistance. For example, reviewing all HRM policies to mainstream gender and the needs of vulnerable groups require a TA with a firm background in both areas. Supporting agencies such as the Public Service Commission would provide advice on HRM in general, as it is their core business, but the TA will provide targeted advice on how best to incorporate gender perspectives and the likes in HRM policies.

Ongoing Sector interactions

In consideration of the imminent need to improve the quality of service delivery and human resource capacities within the public sector, the PASCU is actively seeking partnerships with other agencies in the Sector and development partners to harness assistance with implementation. While there have been less than 5 interactions between the sector and development partners over the last quarter, it is anticipated that this number will increase as we move towards discussions on how best to fit some of the prioritized activities under their development programmes. It is also expected that the PASCU would play a bigger role in the promotion of the whole of government approach, breaking the silo practice seen with the way some agencies operate. For example, inter-sectoral information sharing is more rhetoric rather than a reality at the moment. Limited access to agency data prevents the PASCU from reporting on overall progress, performance against milestones, and the risks that issues and challenges present.

Conclusion

Overall, the sector has done well for its first 12 months of implementation against a backdrop of fiscal limitations, as well as diverse public expectations of Government service delivery. Given these challenges, including the aforementioned, simply designing ad hoc solutions is not enough. The sector would need to ensure that any new approach developed takes into account the emerging and anticipated challenges faced by implementing agencies, the PASCU and its associated networks.

The recommendations we propose in this report highlight a possible way forward, which would alleviate many of those challenges. But, as mentioned before, planning and designing solutions is not enough. The PASCU is now committed to work with those who can and are willing to make change happen to test and expand these ideas further.

Recommendations

In light of the discussion above, the PASCU proposes:

- Approval of task force approach to improve linkage and coordination between the operational arms of the sector (i.e., implementing agencies) and the Steering Committee. The proposal to establish 3 task forces resonates with the 'working group' structure

highlighted in the Sector Plan, and is expected to strengthen the coordination role of the PASCU;

- Developing standardized reporting templates for each of the 3 proposed task forces to provide regular updates on progress to date and other key areas. This will ensure the PASCU are prepared to provide relevant information to sector stakeholders on a timely basis, and to the general public who request the information at times;
- Sector agencies should collaborate together to produce shared analysis on key policy areas. The sector would benefit from better professional development of skills of policy teams and divisions within agencies, with particular focus on policy design, innovation, and implementation. At the same time, agencies should uphold the whole of government approach in doing so, to create space for effective discussions on emerging issues affecting the sector's performance;
- More resilient partnerships with other sectors to share knowledge, best practices, applied lessons learned, and resources (where applicable), to further strengthen existing processes and structures;
- Reconfirm whether sector activities are still relevant (i.e., whether there is still a need for some of the activities); if not, these should be removed from the Sector Plan.

APPENDIX 1:

Matrix Guide:					
Status Column					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planned activity – activity has not started, planned start/finish date not determined Planned activity with planned finish date – activity has not started, but scheduled finish date has been earmarked In progress – activity has started and is/or continuing [on track] Complete – activity completed/report submitted and approved 					
Linkage to SDS & PASP Outcome Column					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Description and linkage is provided for activities that have been completed or are in progress, as the outcomes could be determined at this stage 					
SDS Priority Area/Key Outcome	PASP Outcome	Strategies	Activities/Initiatives	Status	Linkage to SDS & PASP Outcomes
Goal 1: Improve the quality of Public Service Delivery					
Priority Area 1: Economic Sector Key Outcome 5: Enabling Environment for Business Development	1. Efficient and effective public service delivery 2 Improved client confidence in public service	1.1 Improve/Strengthen Whole of Government (WoG) coordination	1.1.1 Review of public sector governance arrangements undertaken by December 2013.	In progress: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft submission – One Public Sector-One Goal-One Rule – submitted to the PSC Minister February 2015; awaiting directive for way forward 	The initiative aims to provide a governance framework to establish “One Public Sector”, bringing those employed under the Public Service Act as well as employees belonging to Public Enterprises and Authorities under one overarching umbrella. It aims to establish one rule for people management for the whole Public Sector, addressing Government agencies operating in silos with human resource management issues. This ensures that all “Government” employees, adhere to the same rule, will be entitled to the same benefits, and are working to achieve the

					same aspiration the Government has for its people.
			1.1.2 Review of mechanisms for central agencies coordination to support WoG cohesion completed by 2014.	Planned activity	
		1.2 Strengthen policy research, development and coordination	1.2.1 Review of policy development capacity within Public sector completed by December 2013 & implemented on an annual basis	Planned activity	
			1.2.2 Scoping study for Public Sector Research Institute completed by 2014	Planned activity	
		1.3 Strengthen Whole of Government performance monitoring systems	1.3.1 Public Sector functional review completed by December 2013 and implemented on annual basis	Phase 1 Completed June 2016 (Phase 2) June 2017 (Phase 3)	Phase 1 was the Situational Analysis which identified all functions performed by individual organizations within the Public Service. This phase will identify gaps – that is, functions which are not being performed by government but must/should be, either due to constitutional or legal mandate or due to public demand/interest.
			1.3.2 Public Sector Planning and Performance Management Framework developed by June 2014 & implemented	Planned finish date – June 2016	

			1.3.3 Public Sector Performance Assessment and Improvement Systems (PASI) implemented by December 2013 and updated on an annual basis	Planned finish date – June 2016	
			1.3.4 Review of CEO and ACEO Performance contracts and agreed contractual performance indicator for monitoring efficiency and effectiveness completed by December 2013 & implemented on an annual basis.	In progress <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It has been an Annual Activity but it is also subject to directives from the Commission / Cabinet). Performance contracts have been reviewed and amended over the last 3 years (depending on the need and also considering policy changes). 	Ongoing reviews of performance contracts ensure that CEOs and ACEOs are aware of key emerging issues within Samoa's economic and social development that should be reflected in their performance agreements. This is the platform to reflect objectives and strategies in Sector Plans and the Government's SDS to ensure they are accountable for the results whether achieved or otherwise.
		1.4 Improve public awareness of government functions and roles	1.4.1 Public education and awareness campaign of government functions and roles developed by December 2013 and implemented on an annual basis.	Planned finish date – June 2016	
			1.4.2 Review of mechanisms for public service information dissemination and feedback undertaken by December 2013 & implemented on annual basis.	In progress	1 information centre established within PSC for the public to access Ministry services (those available online) and legislations. This would improve accessibility to information and awareness

					of government functions.
			1.4.3 Annual promotion of Public Service Day and Public Service Excellence Awards	In progress – Public Service Day planned for September 2015	The initiative is part of government efforts to promote awareness on its core business and to celebrate the people working to deliver government services each year. The addition of a Public Service Symposium to coincide with this is an important platform to share views and experiences with various stakeholders including the private sector and community, on issues pertinent to the development of this country. A public service communiqué is expected to be released annually as a product of the Public Service Symposium.
			1.4.4 Development of survey to gauge public feedback on public service delivery completed by December 2013 and implemented on an annual basis.	Completed	Survey highlighted that the government is on track with its service delivery. It also highlighted agencies with gaps and problems with the quality of their service delivery. This will be another activity for FY2015/2016, to raise the quality of service in the public sector.

		1.5 Improve Public Service delivery mechanisms	1.5.1 Review of service delivery mechanisms for priority problem areas completed by June 2014. Implementation to follow.	In progress	This is a sub-activity of 1.4.4. It will focus on the prioritized agencies identified through the survey needing improvements to their service delivery. The review team will undertake a diagnostic study in the selected agency to identify the root/cause of the problem and work with the staff to develop ways to improve the service and fix the problems.
			1.5.2 Activities for client focus direct services are identified and streamlined by December 2014 & implemented	Planned activity	
			1.5.3 Activities for indirect client service e.g. Regulation, monitoring and quality standards are identified by December 2013 & implemented	Planned activity	
<i>Goal 2: Improve Human Resources Capabilities</i>					
Priority Area 1: Economic Sector	3. Enhanced human resource capacities	2.1 Improve Human Resources Development (HRD)	2.1.1 Workforce plan across whole public sector are completed by June 2013 and implemented on annual basis	In progress	WPs are submitted to PSC every 3 years (with the exception of those who have 4 year plans); to date 10 Ministries have submitted their WP, with 4 remaining. Workforce planning is a significant exercise that encourages Ministries to think strategically about their HR needs, in order to achieve organizational goals. Having the right people with the right skills would ensure government is able to provide the
Key Outcome 5: Enabling Environment for Business	4. Enhanced human resource management				

Development	practices				highest quality of service to its citizens (through professional and competent public servants).
			2.1.2 Review and consolidate HRD systems (including processes) under PSC to be completed by December 2013.	Planned activity	
			2.1.3 Develop a National HRD / National Skills Plan by June 2014.	In progress – planned finish date: February 2016	Draft NHRD Plan developed and was presented to the CEO group at their annual forum on 21 May 2015. The NHRDP is expected to highlight the required skills the country needs to meet its strategic aspirations identified under the SDS 2012-2016 and subsequent plans thereafter.
			2.1.4 Leadership Development Programme for Public Sector is developed by December 2013 and implemented on annual basis	In progress	Draft Executive Development Strategy developed presented at the CEO Forum 21 May 2015. The Strategy will provide strategic direction for professional development of current and future leaders.
			2.1.5 HR development programmes are established by December 2014 and implemented on an annual basis	In progress	The Human Resource Development Services team continue to develop training programmes for the public service. There is ongoing work to institutionalize training programmes within the public service instead of having programmes funded externally. HR development programmes contribute to the professional development of public servants which

					should translate to strengthened and improved service delivery.
		2.2 Improve Human Resources Management (HRM)	2.2.1 Review of HRM framework is completed by June 2014	<p>In progress (i.e., Teacher framework)</p> <p>Planned finish date: April 2016 (work level standards for senior executives)</p> <p>Planned finish date: June 2016 (review of Job Classification System)</p> <p>Planned finish date: June 2016 (job level standards)</p>	<p>Ongoing work with review of Teachers Salary and Career Progression Framework</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Framework currently being rolled out in collaboration with the MESCC – consultations carried out in both Upolu and Savaii • Framework implemented in 3 phases – Phase 1 began in Jan 2015 • Performance appraisals for principals to be done after 3 years – any increase will be based on the results of the reviews.
			2.2.2 HRM Policy Strategy for Whole of Government is developed by June 2014	Planned activity	This work will be part of the ‘One Public Sector-One Goal-One Rule’ initiative. The framework will ensure that all agencies adhere to a set of standard whole-of-government HRM policies.
		2.3 Provide consistent public financing of Human Resources Development and Management	2.3.1 PSIF funding continues for the next five years and reassessment of its location and relevance to PASP is completed by December 2013	<p>In progress –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussions with NZAP and AusAID show that there is an existing design for Phase 2 pending for further discussion upon 	

				completion of ongoing work	
			2.3.2 Review existing policies/systems and processes to ensure consistent funding of HRM &HRD is completed by December 2013	Planned activity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • However, objectives of this activity are in line with current developments under the HRD division to institutionalise training programmes within the public service rather than being funded externally through development partner support – this would ensure sustainability of programme for Samoa. 	
Goal 3: Improve Public Sector Integrity and Culture					
Priority Area 1: Economic Sector Key Outcome 5: Enabling Environment	5. Ethical public service/sector	3.1 Ensure consistent and relevant integrity standards applied across the whole Public Sector including the mainstreaming of	3.1.1 Review of existing integrity standards completed by January 2014 and used to formulate integrity standards for the Public Sector	Planned activity – planned finish date: June 2016	Under this activity, Government plans to develop a Harassment Policy and conduct an anti-corruption scoping study for the Public Sector. This would ensure Samoa has an ethical public service with a ‘client-focused’ culture.

for Business Development	gender equity and vulnerable group issues.	3.1.2 Develop a Policy and Action Plan to mainstream gender and vulnerable groups' needs into all Public Sector HRM Policies and Practices by December 2014.	Planned activity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> awaiting result of proposal submitted to the Ministry of Women Community & Social Development Gender Programme funded under the DFAT Gender Programme 	
	3.2. Ensure Integrity standards are upheld	3.2.1 Awareness and education program for unified Public Sector Integrity Standards is developed by June 2014 and implemented on annual basis.	Planned activity (but objectives could be achieved through other activities)	
		3.2.2 Unified Integrity Standards for the whole Public Sector are enforced by December 2014 onwards.	Planned activity	
		3.3.3 Scoping study for an Integrity Standards /Anti-Corruption Agency to be completed by January 2015 and recommendations to be implemented accordingly.	Planned activity	