

Key Messages

Samoa Third Voluntary National Review of the Sustainable Development Goals 2024

“Fostering social harmony, safety and freedom for all”

Samoa’s global ambitions remain focused and steadfast despite the socio-economic challenges that continue to impact our people driving us towards a policy direction that is centred on human development, empowering communities, building resilience and inspiring growth. As a small island developing state with unique challenges as a result of our vulnerabilities, we recognize the importance of collective action towards achieving our sustainable development goals. Our 2024 Voluntary National Review signals the continued commitment of the Government of Samoa to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at a pace commensurate with our prioritization, resource availability and active engagement of our communities. It must be acknowledged that the lack of progress on most of the targets in the region may mask many achievements and transformative actions taken at the national level

Over the years, Samoa continues to place emphasis on achieving the SDGs through a balancing of the strengths of our culture and society, transformative reforms, effective resource mobilisation and the careful management of our natural environment. We continue to align global SDG targets to our national development plan the Pathway for the Development of Samoa with the theme of theme **“Fostering social harmony, safety and freedom for all”** as well as integrate localized targets and map indicators into our national sector plans. Samoa’s approach in localizing SDGs takes into consideration its unique context and circumstances as a key design feature of our overall SDG implementation framework. .

Samoa’s VNR takes into consideration the High Level Political Forum theme for 2024 **“Reinforcing the 2030 Agenda and eradicating poverty in times of multiple crises: the effective delivery of sustainable, resilient and innovative solutions”**. It will build on the progress achieved since our last reports in 2016 and 2020, with an in-depth focus on Goals 1, 2, 13, 16, and 17

Challenges remain and exacerbated. Despite progress made in our development efforts with tangible improvements made in areas of poverty eradication and services delivery across the country, not all are benefitting equally. The global polycrisis continues to put a strain on our economy, exacerbated by our vulnerabilities as a small island developing state and the risks associated with climate change. Against that development tapestry it is important that we focus on enhanced coordination, prioritization and resourcing of our development goals in a way that fits our national context.

Our greatest challenge in measuring progress on SDGs remains within the limitations of relevant and available data to quantify our collective achievements against the SDG targets. Our approach will be to report based on our national indicators developed under the Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning Framework for our national development strategy as well as drawing on qualitative case studies.

Our efforts to combat the spread of COVID-19 involved a whole of government response resulting in an increase in public spending and reprioritization of resources to address our immediate health and emergency response needs. Health considerations were prioritized over the economy. The VNR will review the impacts of COVID-19 on Samoa's economy, its post-COVID recovery efforts, resultant impacts on SDG implementation and the valuable lessons learnt for a build back better recovery.

Climate change remains the single greatest threat to Samoa and the Pacific region and we continue to face several challenges due to our geographic location and vulnerability to environmental impacts spanning from extreme weather events and sea-level rise, to the loss of marine, biodiversity and natural disasters. Climate Change threats continue to have an enduring impact on our communities, their livelihoods, food security, health, and enhanced socioeconomic vulnerabilities. Hence the focus on Building resilience including that of climate and mitigation and adaptation efforts.

As a SIDS, Samoa continues its strong advocacy role in promoting peaceful, secure and inclusive societies and good governance in the Blue Pacific. The importance of maintaining peace and security within communities require efforts to address social inequalities such as: violence against women and children, and promoting meaningful community engagement in development efforts.. In parallel, Samoa contributes to ensuring the same conditions prevail in the Blue Pacific region to enhance resilience to the prevalent and growing geopolitical tensions. We will also reflect on how this evolving landscape impacts delivery of assistance from our development partners.

Samoa actively engages in fostering multi-stakeholder partnerships to help achieve our SDGs. The launch of the Government's District Development Program initiative promotes community led development across all socio-economic sectors with key interventions to address development challenges at the district level. The District Development Program initiative has the potential to be the catalyst for delivery and monitoring of vital support and sustainable development to all our grassroots communities and promotes ownership and active participation in decision making..

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