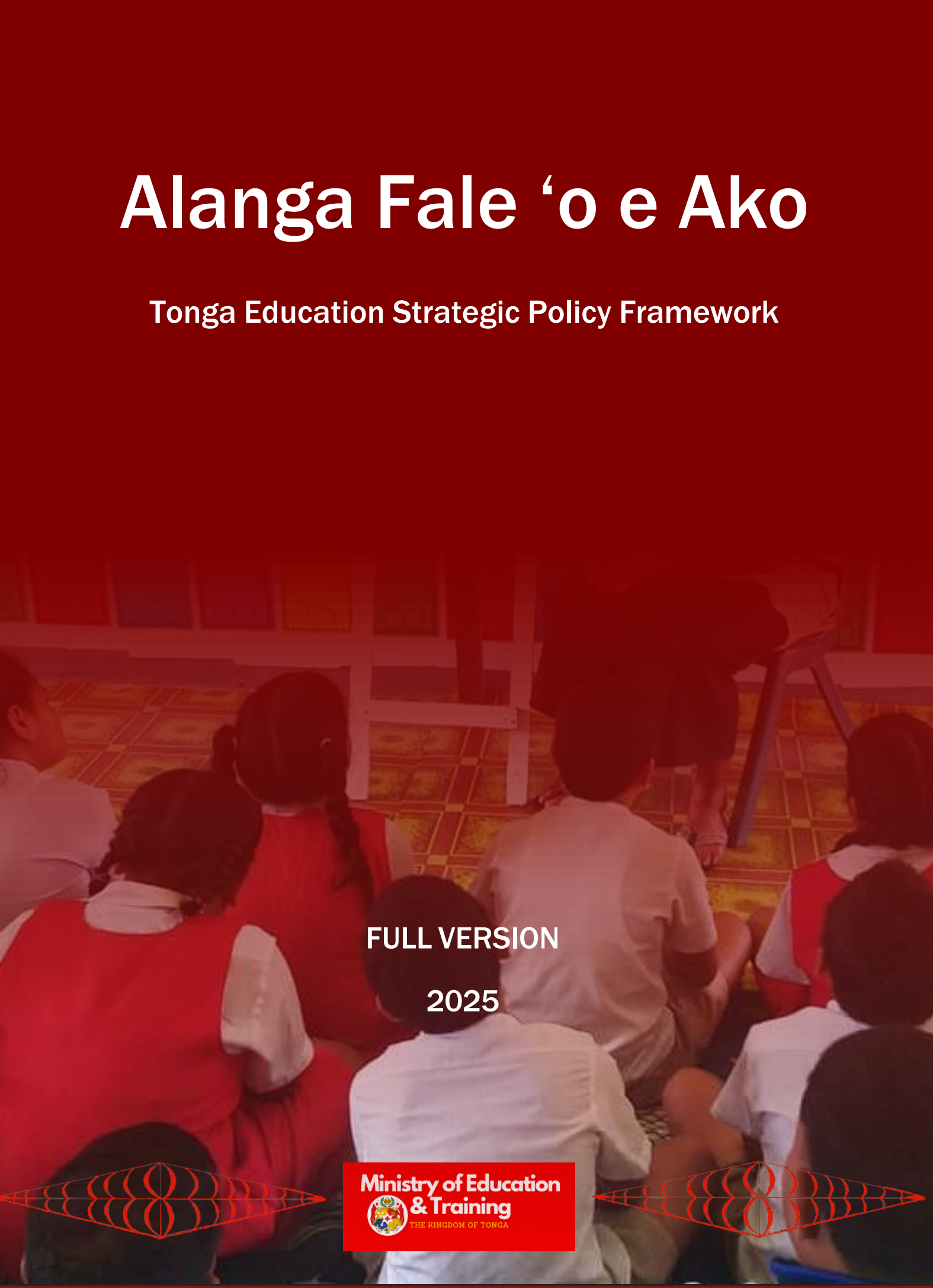
Alanga Fale ‘o e Ako

Tonga Education Strategic Policy Framework



FULL VERSION

2025

Ministry of Education & Training
THE KINGDOM OF TONGA

Message from the Minister of Education

Ke tau ngāue fakataha pea ke tākanga ʻetau fohé
We take responsibility for the education of our people through shared governance and united delivery as one

Tonga's Education Policy Framework 2025-2035 is presented as our collective hope for a better tomorrow. The new education policy framework was designed during a global pandemic and during recovery from a one-in-a-thousand-year natural phenomenon – the eruption of the Hunga Tonga-Hunga Haʻapai underwater volcano. These two events have reminded us of our vulnerabilities in the face of climate change and our connectedness to a global world. However, these events have also strengthened our resilience, our lotu, and our relationships with our Kainga here in Tonga and within the diaspora.

This new education policy framework was also designed as our educational institutions slowly re-opened for learning after four months of school closure due to the pandemic. As educational institutions reopen, teachers and children are returning to schools that now have new rules, as efforts continue to protect our children from the ongoing pandemic.

This document outlines our vision for education for the next ten years. The vision answers the key question: 'what kind of education do we want for our children in the next 10 years'? This vision is drawn from the voices of our parents, communities, teachers, and our students from all the island groups of this country. This document also outlines the key principles that we believe are necessary to drive the new education policy framework. These key principles are fundamental to guiding our journey ahead in uncertain times.

At the heart of this document are the key policy areas that will guide development in education over the next ten years. These key policy areas are strategically focused and targeted to suit our context, our needs, our resources, and our aspirations for our children.

The new education policy framework is aligned to the current Tonga Strategic Development Framework 2015-2025 and the current Government's priorities that are expressed through the Ministry's Corporate Plan 2022-2025. The new education policy framework is also aligned to the Pacific Regional Education Framework (PacREF) as well as to the global Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).

The new education policy framework was developed with assistance from the government of New Zealand, a long-standing partner in supporting Tonga's education.

To develop this new education policy framework, we took a co-design approach that involved all the education authorities in the design workshops, including the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Police. The draft policy was also shared widely for feedback from various stakeholders including the private sector, communities, and the public sector. Significant efforts have been made to develop a new education policy framework that is inclusive of all education systems and communities. This also means that other non-government education systems can see themselves in this policy and can align their respective education plans to the overarching national education policy framework.

This education policy framework also provides specific educational targets that we would like to achieve at the end of the 10-year period. To help us track our progress, the new education policy framework also outlines principles for monitoring and evaluating our journey towards the new educational targets. This also includes checkpoints along the way to re-evaluate the policy framework and to ensure that it is a living document.



Hon. Dr. 'Uhilamoelangi Fasi
Minister of Education and Training
June, 2025

Contents

Our Theory of Change and Compelling Cause..... 1
Linkages..... 4
Vision and Mission..... 6
Overarching Goals for Education..... 7
Principles to drive the TESPF..... 8
Strategic Policy Areas..... 10
Policy Area 1: Student Well-being..... 14
Policy Area 2: Education for Resilience and Sustainable Development..... 22
Policy Area 3: Equitable Access and Inclusive Education..... 42
Policy Area 4: Partnerships and Community Connectedness..... 52
Policy Area 5: Governance and Leadership..... 58
Operationalising the new education policy framework..... 66
Governance of the new education policy framework..... 71
Monitoring, Evaluation, Research and Learning..... 72
Resourcing the new education policy framework..... 73



List of Abbreviations & Acronyms

ADB	– Asian Development Bank
AI	– ‘Atenisi Institute
APTC	– Australia Pacific Technical Coalition
ATC	– ‘Ahopanilolo Technical College
CEO	– Chief Executive Officer
CThI	– Catholic Theological Institute
CTVS	– Certificate Technical Vocational Skills
CUP	– Christ’s University in the Pacific
DFL	– Distance and flexible learning
ECE	– Early Childhood Education
EMIS	– Educational Management Information System
EQAP	– Educational Quality & Assessment Programme, SPC
HAC	– Hango Agricultural College
IoE	– Institute of Education, USP
LEG	– Local Education Group
LIT	– Lavengamālie Institute of Technology
NGO	– Non-government organisations
MERL	– Monitoring, Evaluation, Research, and Learning
MET	– Ministry of Education and Training
MFAT	– Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, New Zealand
MTI	– Montfort Technical Institute
PacREF	– Pacific Regional Education Framework
PTA	– Parent Teacher Association
QSSCNAH	– Queen Sālote School of Nursing and Allied Health, Ministry of Health
SDGs	– Sustainable Development Goals
SPC	– Secretariat of the Pacific Community
SThC	– Sia‘atoutai Theological College
St. JBC	– St. Joseph’s Business College
TCDES	– Tonga Council of Directors of Education Systems
TIOE	– Tonga Institute of Education
TIHE	– Tonga Institute of Higher Education
TIST	– Tonga Institute of Science and Technology
TNQAB	– Tonga National Qualifications and Accreditation Board
TNU	– Tonga National University
TPC	– Tonga Police College, Ministry of Police
TTI	– Tupou Tertiary Institute
TVET	– Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UNESCO	– United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	– United Nations Children’s Fund
USP	– University of the South Pacific
WASH	– Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

Our Theory of Change and our Compelling Cause

Nearly 150 years ago, the founder of modern Tonga, Tupou I, gave our people a written Constitution, emancipated the common people from the rule of the chiefs and kings, and made education free and compulsory. His vision for Tonga and his people is demonstrated in the functions of the hand:
(1) Lotu (the Thumb, the most important finger on the hand – the Christian Faith:);
(2) Ako (the Pointing Finger – Education, learning, studying, pointing the way);
(3) Fakalakalaka (the Middle Finger – Progress, development, advancement):
(4) Tukufakaholo (The Ring Finger – Heritage, Culture and Traditions); and
(5) Tau'atāina (the Little Finger- Independence).
Tonga's national motto, "Ko e 'Otua mo Tonga Ko Hoku Tofi'a" encapsulates his vision and this was advanced through his guiding hands, the loving Tamai (Father) of Tonga, who cared for his people.

His desire was for Tonga to be a Christian sovereign state, whose people believed in God and lived Christian lives. He wanted his people to have education as their right, so that they would have the values, beliefs, knowledge and skills necessary to develop the country to the highest level for the benefit of all; to maintain and sustain its culture (including its languages); and to retain its independence as a sovereign state, and to protect the rights and freedoms of all individuals.

Since then, the country has strived to provide our people with an education that is aimed at achieving, strengthening, and sustaining these foundations of our society. Today, the voices of our people, as expressed through various forms of talatalanoa tell us that King Tupou I's vision for our nation and people is more pertinent than ever, in the midst of national, regional, and global challenges.

However, information collected at national and regional levels shows that despite heavy investments by the country and by development and donor partners, there remain significant issues to be addressed in order for education in Tonga to progress towards this vision as expected.

Issues of significance that this policy framework will need to address over its term include the following:

• The gross enrolment rate in early childhood education in Tonga remains below 50%, significantly less than in some other Pacific Island countries. This means that at least one in two children starting school will be encountering formal learning for the first time. Teaching in the early years of school needs to ensure that these children in particular quickly develop the strong foundations that will allow them to succeed throughout their subsequent learning journey.

• In terms of outcomes in primary education, the results from the 2018 Pacific Islands Literacy and Numeracy Assessment (PILNA) for year 6 students showed that only 47% of Tongan students were attaining the expected level of competency in literacy. This is one of the lowest results among Pacific Island countries, and the gender gap in favour of girls is the largest. Addressing this will require renewed efforts. The results in numeracy are much better with Tongan students performing among the best amongst Pacific nations, with 92% achieving expected proficiency.

• In secondary education, the net enrolment rate in senior secondary education is 62%, which indicates that significant numbers of young people are disengaging from secondary education before they have had a chance to attain the capabilities to enable them to successfully participate in a niche economy.

• Only 20% of Tongans aged over 25 have completed a post-secondary qualification, highlighting the challenge to continue to boost the overall skill capability of the population.

• In terms of teacher qualifications, over 90% of teachers in primary school are trained to teach. In secondary school, although 80% have a qualification in a subject that they teach, only 59% of teachers have received training in pedagogy.

These statistics point to the need for a new vision and mission on which to base meaningful interventions to address the educational challenges and problems facing our country today and in the next fifteen years. We need to ensure that we have processes and policies that create greater coherence across the system. Amongst other things, this can be achieved through:

• Inclusive decision-making processes and equitable sharing of human, financial, and materials resources across and within systems of education and districts.

• The engagement of wider community support for education through the effective use of communication connections to maintain and promote caring relationships within schools and systems, and with communities and the larger society.

• Policies to address the marginalisation of vulnerable groups, such as rural and outer islands' communities, and children with disabilities, and to address poor retention rates in upper secondary levels.

To create learning that provides sustainable access to education, engages our young people, and provides them with the skills and knowledge they require, we need to ensure that:

• The curriculum is relevant to the lives our young people will live, both within Tonga and potentially abroad.

• The assessment framework measures more of the educational outcomes that matter for future success.

• Policy makers and practitioners have the monitoring and evaluation tools and data to understand how well the system is performing overall and to monitor the progression

of each learner.

• Technology is used to a greater extent and in imaginative ways so as to support the connection of education with the reality of the Tongan, regional, and global contexts.

• Our education infrastructure is able to withstand natural and man-made disasters.

• There are ongoing efforts to raise the capability of teachers and leaders and make available more teachers with the attributes of the Faiako Ma'a Tonga.

Addressing these sorts of issues, which is the goal of this framework, will help to deliver a more effective, efficient and relevant education system which tackles current inequities and helps to build societal resilience and sustainability.

Our theory of change tells us that there must be an all-embracing vision and compelling mission that is authentically Tongan to drive education forward. Furthermore, if the desired outcomes of education are to be achieved – from the Vision, Mission, Goals, Principles, and Strategic Policy Areas – there must also be cogent logical links that connect the components of the new education policy framework 2025-203. The Strategic Policy and Cross-cutting Areas have been identified as the most important areas on which to focus in order to realise the education system's Vision, Mission and Goals. Within each Policy Area, logical connections are set out between the Policy Objectives, Policy Outcomes, Strategic Programmes, Outputs, and Targets.

The different components of each Policy Area are logically derived from the Policy Area itself and each Policy Area is derived, in turn, from the Vision and Mission, which are the results and summation of the evidence collected from our communities, education systems, best international practices, as well as national, regional, and global educational goals. This is our road map that we have collectively developed and committed ourselves to, which will guide us in the next ten years to meaningful outcomes for education for our children, our communities, and our country. This road map will underpin the development of the Ministry of Education and Training's corporate and annual plans, which will be instruments through which the detailed plan for implementing the framework is laid out.

In ten years' time, by faithfully following the road map we have collaboratively developed, approved, and implemented, we aspire to have achieved excellence in education that is based on our Vision and Mission: "Ko e 'Otua mo Tonga Ko Hoku Tofi'a" and founded on our collaborative work together. Our three overarching Goals for Education and five Strategic Policy Areas, Cross-cutting Areas, and their associated policy goals, objectives, outcomes, strategic programmes, outputs and targets will have been realised through the establishment of robust and dynamic reciprocal relationships and communications, dedicated partnerships and team work at all levels of education, and shared governance, leadership, and responsibilities. This, in turn, will have been driven by Tonga's Christian faith and the core values of mutual respect, humility, commitment, healthy relationships, inclusivity, transparency and accountability, collaboration, independence, and protection of the freedom of the individual amongst the members of the Ha'a of education. The desired result will be nurturing schools and communities, the inclusive and holistic development and wellness of all children, and communities which are independent, sustainable, and resilient.

We aspire to see our ECE centres, schools, and tertiary institutes being staffed by energetic, healthy, qualified and dedicated Christian teachers who see teaching as a vocation and a calling and not just a profession. We aim for adequate investments, effective monitoring, and timely maintenance of our education infrastructure to have satisfactorily ameliorated our country's vulnerability to climate change and other natural disasters, and to see our students benefitting from safe, secure, and clean learning environments. We anticipate that the curriculum at each level of learning will be relevant, appropriate, and will address the needs of all our children and communities. It will be supported by sound, flexible, and diversified pedagogy, teachers' and students' resources, and forms of assessment that are responsive, reliable, valid and systematic. We envision evaluation and monitoring mechanisms that serve as timely diagnostic tools to improve both individual and systemic performance, as well as providing accurate measurements of a student's strengths, talents, and abilities. We will witness and applaud the fact that the outcomes of education are highly satisfactory and consistent with the vision, mission and long-term goals of education for Tonga's young people.

At the end of 5 years (Phase 1), progress will be reviewed and this will serve to inform Phase 2 and subsequent phases. If we see desired shifts in students' learning and other outcomes occurring, the framework can be further extended.

Highly valuable lessons have been gained from the TEPF 2004-2019. The most salient beign that the design of a policy framework or education strategy for a whole-of-education system requires planning for sustainable education development from the very beginning. There are structures and processes which can be built into an entire education system to improve its sustainability. These include: leadership and governance; community and wide stakeholder participation; collaboration and partnership with national, regional and international agencies; and a strong culture of communication and openness to learning.

In the current context of a global pandemic and climate change, change is inevitable. Thus, the design of new education policy needs to reflect this changing world and Tonga's vision for educating her people within it. In this new policy framework for education, we have incorporated these valuable lessons into the design process and look forward to our collective journey with hope.

Theory of Change



DRIVERS FOR CHANGE

<50% ECE enrolment 47% literacy at Year 6 62% secondary enrolment 20% post- secondary graduates Teacher qualification gaps

CROSS-CUTTING ENABLERS

- Inclusivity
- Curriculum Reform
- Monitoring & Evaluation
- Resilience
- Technology

EQUITY & ACCESS

QUALITY & RELEVANCE

SYSTEM STRENGTHENING



Linkages to the
Tonga Strategic Development Framework II – 2015-2025

The new Tonga education strategic policy framework is designed to support the TSDF II national outcome of **more inclusive, sustainable, and empowering human development and gender equality.**

Further to this, the new education policy framework underpins the Ministry of Education and Training's strategic support for the following TSDF II Organisational outcomes:

2.1: Improved collaboration with, and support to, social and civil society organizations promoting the development of groups. The Ministry encourages greater involvement by all members of society through a wider range of community activities, social and sporting events, healthy lifestyles, and viable livelihoods in more inclusive and effective ways.

2.3: More appropriate social and cultural practices
The Ministry helps maintain the positive aspects of our Tongan identity while also promoting changes which are needed for further development of our democracy, and for more sustainable and inclusive institutions that are better able to interact with the opportunities and threats presented by the wider world.

2.4: Improved education and training providing lifelong learning
The Ministry encourages life-long learning of both academic and vocational knowledge and skills by all people, to better equip us to make active use of the opportunities in the community, the domestic economy, and overseas.

4.4: More reliable, safe, and affordable buildings and other structures
The Ministry is taking greater account of local conditions, thereby helping to lower construction, maintenance, and operating costs, increase resilience to disaster, improve the quality of services provided, and facilitate increased access.

4.5: Improved use of research and development focusing on priority needs, based on stronger foresight
The Ministry helps to solve technical and other constraints to facilitate more rapid improvements to our institutions and better use of our resources and environment so that we may progress more rapidly and be more resilient in the face of future risks.
(Ministry of Education and Training Corporate Plan 2022-2025)

Further to this, the new education strategic policy framework is also aligned to the current government's identified priority areas, namely:

Establishment of the Tonga National University
Implementation of the Skills and Employment Tonga
Subsidies to ECEs and Primary Schools
Review of the School Curriculum
Safer Schools Infrastructure
(MET Corporate Plan 2022-2025)

Linkages

Linkages to the
Pacific Regional Education Framework (PacREF) 2018-2030

The new education policy framework is fully aligned to the PacREF 2018-2030 and takes full advantage of all the regional support offered through the PacREF. Tonga's activities requested through the PacREF phases have been integrated into relevant policy areas and detailed under relevant programmes and components. Throughout the policy framework we indicate linkages to the PacREF and signal the support that Tonga will need from the PacREF and associated implementing agencies.

Linkages to the
Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The new education strategic policy framework is also designed to support Tonga's aspirations towards progressing the SDGs and SDG4 in particular. The indicators and targets presented for each Policy Area are drawn from the SDG 4, and intended for the Ministry of Education to further draw down in the implementation plan of this policy framework.

Linkages to the
2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent

While the 2050 strategy for the Blue Pacific continent is still in its development phase, there are fundamental principles which we agree with and support. This includes the recognition that climate change and the global pandemic will impact our economic future, our well-being, and the sustainability of our cultures. We also recognise that sustainable development of our country hinges on social, economic, and cultural development in ways that improve the livelihoods and well-being of our people. We also recognise that our future is one of frequent and unpredictable change. We know that our resilience will need to be strengthened more than ever to navigate into the future. In agreement with the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent, we need to strengthen our regional identity as Pacific peoples, and to strengthen our ties to our diaspora communities. We are guardians of the Blue Pacific continent, and we must protect our environment so that our children may continue to enjoy their inheritance.

The new Tonga Education Strategic Policy Framework is based on the principles of sustainability, resilience, mutual respect and collaboration.

These are the foundational principles that we hope will also define Tonga's identity as a Pacific nation.

Kaveinga Akó
Vision for education 2035

Ko e ako fungani ‘oku kanoloto ai ‘a e “**Ko e ‘Otua mo Tonga ko hotau tofi‘a”** ‘aki ‘a ‘etau kafa taha.

Excellence in education that is based on the moto “God and Tonga are our inheritance” and is founded on our working together.

Tonga’s new vision for education is drawn from the collective voices of our communities, who wanted a future that is based on our Lotu (our faith), Fonua (culture, people, land), and Ako (education). The new vision reflects all three key concepts requested by our communities.

The new vision is drawn from His Majesty Tupou I’s vision of education, as expressed in the term “ako fungani”, referring to excellence in education, and draws also on the motto of our country that was also given by his Majesty Tupou I: “Ko e ‘Otua mo Tonga ko hoku Tofi’a” (God and Tonga are my inheritance). This statement focuses on two key principles that have come to define our identity as a people – our faith in God, and our connectedness to the land and the people that make up ‘Tonga’.

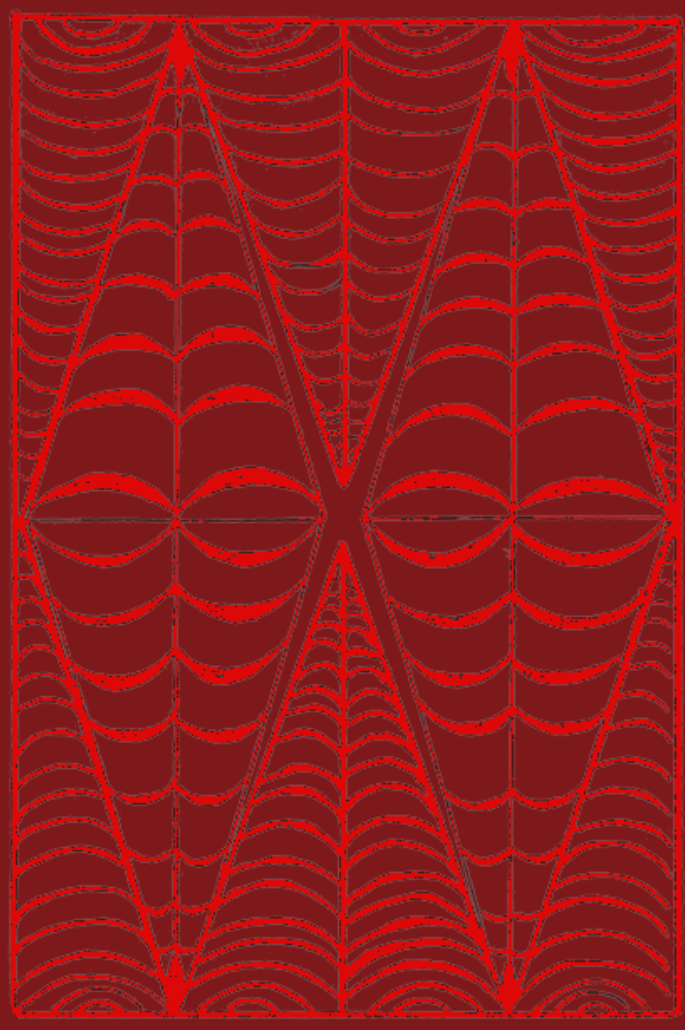
The vision statement also recognises that collaboration and solidarity are vital to progressing this vision. This is expressed in the term “‘etau kafa taha” which is a metaphoric term based on the sinnet that is used to tie our woven cloth mats – the most recognised artefact for a Tongan and a sign of respect for others.

We have used this term “‘etau kafa taha” to speak to the value of working together, of collaboration, and strengthening our solidarity. We recognise that the challenges of our time, climate change, and the global pandemic, require us to strengthen our relationships and to work together.

Fekau
Mission

Ke tau ngāue fakataha ke teu‘i ‘a e kakai ‘o e fonuá ke nau a‘usia ‘a ‘enau ngaahi taumu‘a fisifisimu‘á.

That we work together to prepare the people of our country, that they may achieve their aspirations.



Taumu‘a ‘o e Ako
Overarching Goals for Education

1. Ako ‘okú ne poupou‘i ‘a e mo‘ui fakapotopotó
   An education that is of quality and that is relevant to our way of life, and which will therefore promote the resilience and sustainability of our people

2. Vahevahe taau ‘a e ngaahi faingamālie akó
   That we share resources and ensure equitable access to education

3. Ngāue fakataha pea ke tākanga ‘etau fohé
   That we all take responsibility for the education of our people through shared governance, leadership, and delivery as one

The goals for education in the years to come are in support of the new education vision for Tonga.

The first goal of education is in response to the existential threat of climate change to our planet and the survival of our people and our way of life. It will prioritise transforming our education system so that it will be relevant to our way of life and our adaptations to climate change, and will be based on the core principles of resilience and sustainability. Our resilience is drawn from our lotu (faith) and our kāinga (families, clans, community, culture and relationships). Our sustainability is founded in our philosophy of “mo‘ui fakapotopoto”, living in harmony with people and nature. This philosophy calls on us to take only what is needed, to use resources wisely, to invest in the future, and to work together for the common good. This philosophy is demonstrated through a life that is holistic and which encompasses spiritual, physical, emotional, and mental well-being. Such a life can be promoted by living sustainably and in harmony with people and the environment. Our philosophy of mo‘ui fakapotopoto affirms our interconnectedness with people, nature, our past, and our future – it is our Tongan ecological perspective.

The second goal of education is a direct response to our effort to improve equitable access to education. Our geographical spread, with 171 islands and 45 inhabited island communities, means that the inclusiveness and equity of educational services is an ongoing challenge. With the second goal we are re-committing to improving equity by strengthening measures for inclusiveness across the education sector. The second goal of education also recognises that there are inequities in our education systems, and that currently not all learners can access quality education services.

The third goal of education is based on collaboration and solidarity – working together. This goal is a response to several on-going challenges faced by small Pacific countries like ours. We recognise that we have finite resources, we have a population that has been hovering around the 100,000 mark for the last 15 years, and that we have a long history of a fragmented education sector. When we collectively consider the state of our economy, our stagnant resident population numbers, and our history, we recognise the challenges of delivering an improved education system. The need to collaborate and strengthen our solidarity is more important than ever before. Some of our challenges such as climate change are global, but some of our challenges are also local. The third goal speaks to our collective commitment to strengthen our ‘social contract’ for working together in improving our education sector.

Principles to drive the new TESPF

The following principles have been selected to drive the implementation of the new education policy framework.

These principles were identified from the voices of the communities, teachers, and school leaders.

These principles are based on our lotu (faith) and our fonua (culture).



Tui faka-Kalisitiane
Our communities and parents have affirmed that our Christian faith remains relevant to how we teach and lead our education institutions.

Faka'apa'apa
Our communities and parents have affirmed that respect, as a core value of Tongan culture, is still relevant today. Respect is foundational to collaboration and building relationships across the education sector. Respect is also foundational to ensuring transparency and accountability in the education system.

Lototō
Humility is one of the core values for Tongans which remains highly relevant to teaching and leading in our education sector. Humility is critical for teaching and learning, for accepting new ways of being, and for transformation.

Mamahi'i me'a
Loyalty and commitment are critical to teaching and leading education. This core value is fundamental to the sustainability and the implementation of the new policy framework. We will need people who are committed to leading the new policy framework.

Feveitokai'aki
Reciprocity is one of the core values for Tongans and is foundational to building a culture of collaboration and solidarity. This core value requires mutual recognition of different education systems' strengths and differences and their equally important contributions to the education sector overall.





Strategic Policy Areas

The following strategic Policy Areas have been identified from the consultation process that listened to the voices of our communities, our teachers, and our students and was informed by our analysis of education, identification of key areas of concern for our education system, and our understanding of the evidence on effective policy.

The following strategic Policy Areas are in support of our overall education goals and our vision for the future of our people. The Policy Areas apply to all sub-sectors of the education sector, including: Early Childhood Education; Primary school; Secondary school; and Higher Education.

The strategic Policy Areas also encourage communities, NGOs, and Churches that offer non-formal and informal education to support relevant policy areas. While each Policy Area is focused on a specific set of objectives, together they will complement each other to advance the overall goals of the education system.

The five policies are interdependent, and collectively will work together to complement one another, seeking to bring about beter teaching, and more inclusive and equitable policies.

Within each Policy Area, programmes are presented and represent what we believe are priorities.

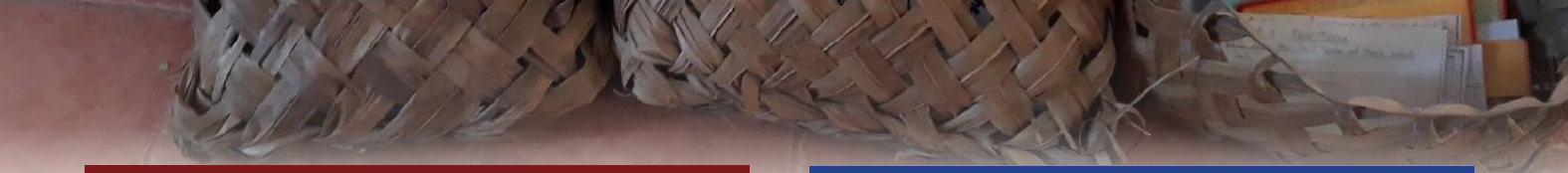
PA 1: Fatutama: *Student well-being*

Our communities and our teachers strongly advocate for an education system that is based on our philosophy of "Tangata kakato". It is an integrated approach to education, where we recognise the well-being of our students as foundational to learning and living productive lives.

As such, under this Policy Area 1, we will prioritise the health of our students, their mental and emotional well-being, their spiritual and cultural well-being, and their responsibilities to our environment/planet.

We believe that by prioritising our students in this policy framework, we center the Tongan student in our education. With this Policy Area we focus on strengthening Loto'i Tonga – spirit of a Tongan. With a strong sense of identity instilled in our students, we build them up so that regardless of where they live in the world, they may continue to thrive as Tongans.

Policy Area 1 supports the Education Goal 1, relating to Quality and Relevance.



PA 2: Ako ‘oku fālute ai e mo‘ui fakapotopotó: *Education for resilience and sustainable development*

This Policy Area aims to re-engineer our education system to support the resilience and sustainability of our people through our students. Policy Area 2 sets out to provide the kind of education that supports learners to become “tangata kakato”, possessing the necessary skills to live in a changing world.

This Policy Area will support a systematic approach to improving Literacy and Numeracy levels and will have a strong focus on sustained continuing professional development for our teachers and supporting the instructional leadership of our school principals. The Policy Area will guide the current review of the new curriculum to produce a framework that is inclusive, holistic and provides a range of pathways (vocational, technical, and academic) for diverse groups of learners.

The Policy Area will also guide the new assessment framework with a focus on assessment for learning, diagnostic approaches to assessment, and strengthening school-based assessment. Teachers will be supported to use appropriate technology for improving data monitoring and reporting, and improving school management and administration. Lessons from the global pandemic experience have prompted careful consideration of how to strengthen the resilience of our education system and delivery of curriculum for a geographically spread country, via more flexible learning approaches which also enable parents to participate in their children’s learning.

Under this Policy Area, there will also be dedicated support for Higher Education in our country. This will include supporting transition from secondary school level to university as well as to vocational and technical institutions.

Policy Area 2 supports the Education Goal 1, relating to Quality and Relevance.

PA 3: Vahevahe Taau mo e Ako kau kātoá: *Equitable access and Inclusive Education*

One of the clear messages from our communities is the need to improve equitable access for our rural and remote island contexts. This also includes the need to recognise the right of Niuafo‘ou students to learn their language, culture, and history in their own island context.

This Policy Area will work to improve access to education in the Motu districts and Niuafo‘ou and Niuatoputapu, which are the most remote. This Policy Area will also draw attention to Special Education and providing appropriate resources to support children with disabilities across all sub-sectors.

Policy Area 3 also recognizes the growing disparity between the participation and achievement of our girls and boys, with girls generally outperforming boys. In addition, this Policy Area will also support Adult Education in recognizing that learning is lifelong, and that learning occurs in our communities, in our churches, and at different times of our lives. This will include further development of an open schooling approach for re-entry into the formal education system.

Under this Policy Area, we are taking a broader interpretation of ‘Inclusive education’ to address the systematic inequities (by location, gender, language, disabilities, and wealth) that we observe in our education system.

Policy Area 3 supports the Education Goal 3, relating to Inclusion and Equity.



PA 4: Fonua mo Kāinga: *Partnerships and Community Connectedness*

This Policy Area recognises that "ko 'api 'a e 'uluaki 'apiakó" – home is the first school. It recognises that it takes a village to raise a child. This Policy Area also recognises that parents and communities are often silent donors in the development of our schools and in the learning of our children.

Policy Area 4 will support a stronger connection between schools and their communities, churches, and parents. The Policy Area will also recognise the role of NGOs (Non-Governmental Organisations) in informal education and explore opportunities for closer collaboration with the education sector.

One of the key messages from the consultation was the lack of dialogue between industry and the education sector. This Policy Area will support structures and spaces for improving dialogue between the education sector, the private sector, and communities, and creating strong partnerships.

This Policy Area will also outline the way we wish to engage with development agencies, such as USP, SPC, APTC and international agencies such as UNESCO, UNICEF, ADB, and World Bank. Policy Area 4 will also outline the way we wish to engage with development partners who have supported our education journey, including the governments of New Zealand, Australia, Japan, and China. We will willingly explore partnerships that will ensure wider participation and will ensure improved benefits and sustainability.

Policy Area 4 supports the Education Goal 4 relating to Governance and Leadership.

PA 5: Tākanga 'etau fohé: *Governance and Leadership of Education*

One of the key messages from consultation with teachers and the community was concern for the overall governance of our education sector. This Policy Area will focus on improving the governance of the education sector at all levels and within education systems.

Policy Area 5 will look specifically at allocation of resources to disadvantaged populations including non-government education systems. This policy area will also look at the education expenditure per student by level of education and source of funding. It will need to do so whilst fully recognising the economic status of our country and the importance of finding ways to share the responsibilities of governance and support the growth of our education sector as a whole.

One of the key lessons from the previous education policy framework was the need for a robust and shared monitoring and evaluation system to support the growth of the education sector. This will include strengthening the process for sector-wide educational planning and reporting.

We believe that by working closely together with the non-government education systems is essential. By improving the relationship between the Ministry of Education and Training and the non-government education systems, as well as with communities and key stakeholders, we will better recognise the contribution that all are making and will continue to make to our education system, and will thus ease the load on the Ministry by sharing the responsibility for educating our people for the kinds of futures to which we aspire.

Policy Area 5 supports the Education Goal 4 relating to Governance and Leadership.


LIBRARY CORNER
WOMEN LIKE TO WORK
Sleepytime Kittens
Joanne Partis
NGOUE
TULI PUAKA
PŌKISI MO E PUSI
KULI
Fluent
Average

Policy Area 1

Fatutama: *Student well-being*

This Policy Area 1 will support Education Goal 1 of a more relevant and quality education. Policy Area 1 is specifically focused on supporting our Tongan student's well-being and nurturing them as "tangata kakato" holistic individuals.

The term "fatutama" refers to the Tongan perspective that when raising a child in the right way, they will likely follow the right path. We have a concern with the declining participation rate at secondary school level and the increasing out-of-school rate that we see at secondary school level. The social issues of drug abuse, misinformation and social problems associated with the use of social media are real everyday challenges for our students.

Further to this, are the challenges of climate change and the need to build the resilience of our students to deal with natural disasters. As our students face these challenges, it is more important than ever to equip them with the social and moral capacities to work together and to help make wise decisions.

This Policy Area calls on the support of parents, communities, churches and NGOs to collaborate with schools to achieve the objectives of this policy goal. Policy Area 1, we believe, will go towards strengthening students' moral and social resilience. This policy area applies to all sub-sectors from ECE, to Primary, Secondary, and to Higher Education.

Policy Goal

Ke teuteu'i 'a e fānau ako Tongá ke hoko ko e **tangata kakato** ke nau lava 'o a'usia 'a e lelei taha 'o 'enau lavame'á. *To educate Tongan students so that they may become holistic individuals who can achieve the best that they can be.*

Policy Objective

To achieve the policy goal, we have agreed on the following policy objectives:

1. Loto'i Tongá – ke fakatupulekina a e loto'i Tongá 'oku kanoloto ai 'a e tui faka-Kalisitiané pea mo e faa'i kaveikoulá. *Spirit of a Tongan – to develop a powerful sense of identity that is based on our Christian faith and our Tongan values.*

2. Sino mo'ui lelei – ke fakatupulekina 'a e sino mo'ui leleí. *To develop and encourage healthy and physically active young people.*

3. 'Atamai fakapotopoto – ke fakatupulekina ha 'atamai mo ha to'onga mo'ui 'oku fakapotopoto. *To develop and encourage students who embody the principles of mo'ui fakapotopoto/ a life that is lived in harmony with people and the planet, thereby encouraging a sustainable way of life.*

4. Nofo melino – ke fakatupulekina 'a e mo'ui 'a 'etau fānaú 'i he 'enau nofo melino 'i ha māmani 'oku fetuituiaki ai 'a e ngaahi tui kehekehé mo feliuliuaki foki. *To encourage students, as global citizens, to live peacefully in a world that is diverse and changing.*

Fatutama: *Student well-being*

Policy Outcomes

At the completion of the 10 years, we hope to achieve the following policy outcomes:

1. Ko ‘etau fānaú kuo nau ‘ilo ko hai kinautolu, pea ‘oku fakava‘e ‘a honau loto‘i Tongá ‘aki ‘a e tui fakakalisitiané pea mo e faa‘i kaveikoula ‘a e Tongá. *Our students enjoy a strong sense of identity that is based on Christian faith and Tongan core values and that they are confident in knowing who they are in the world.*

2. Ko ‘etau fānaú kuo nau ma‘u ha mo‘ui lelei, ‘i he sino, laumālie pea mo e loto. *Our students are physically, emotionally, and spiritually healthy.*

3. Ko ‘etau fānau kuo na‘u ma‘u ‘a e mo‘ui fakapotopotó ‘o hā sino ia ‘i he ‘enau hoko ‘o ‘aonga ki honau fāmilí, kāingá pea mo e fonuá - ‘o mo‘ui ma‘a Tonga. *Our students can live in harmony with their communities and the planet. Our students can contribute sustainably and positively to their families, their communities and to our country.*

4. Ko ‘etau fānaú kuo nau ma‘u ‘a e taukei ke nau lava ‘o mo‘ui ‘i ha feitu‘u pē ‘i Tonga pe ‘i tu‘a Tonga (muli). *Our students have the necessary skills sets to live and thrive in a global world either in Tonga or anywhere in the world.*

Policy Targets

This policy goal is intended to make a difference to the following indicators and targets:

This policy goal is intended to make a difference in our efforts to meet the following SDG indicators and targets:

SDG 4.3.1 Participation rate of youth and adults in formal and non-formal education and training the previous 12 months, by gender..

SDG 4.7.1 Extent to which (i) global citizenship education and (ii) education for sustainable development, including gender equality and human rights, are mainstreamed at all levels in: (a) national education policies, (b) curricula, (c) teacher education, and (d) student assessment.

Student well-being indicators

To be developed for phase 2 of the framework.

This policy goal is intended to make a difference in our efforts to meet the following PacREF outcomes:

PacREF Policy Area 1: Quality and Relevance
Outcomes 1: Curriculum and programmes are embedded in the Pacific context that reflect Pacific values, cultures, traditional knowledge and skills that draw on the land that we live and exist upon and the ocean that surrounds and bind us all.
Outcomes 2: Learning is inclusive of cognitive and non-cognitive development.

PacREF Policy Area 3: Student outcomes and wellbeing
Outcomes 3: Programmes developed and implemented that strengthen cognitive, non-cognitive and social skills in young people, recognizing ‘Pacific literacies’, ensuring their readiness for the challenges and opportunities they will encounter in life.

Strategic initiatives phase 1: 2025-2030

The following policy programmes and components have been prioritised in order of importance of contribution to the policy objectives under Policy Area 1 Fatutama: Student well-being.

PROGRAMMES & COMPONENTS:

Programme 1: Loto'i Tonga moral education program

The Loto'i Tonga moral education program will specifically encourage improved outcomes for our students' identity and knowing who they are. As a country that continues to see increasing outward migration, it is critical that we embed in our students a strong sense of identity that will continue to define who they are in the global world. As a country facing the impact of climate change, our resilience is critical to being able to adapt and live in a changing world. Our resilience is rooted in our culture – our kāinga, and in our faith – our lotu. As such the first program under this policy speaks directly to strengthening the resilience of our students. Loto'i Tonga is a moral education program designed specifically for Tongan students and it is based on our Tongan ethics and our Christian faith. The Loto'i Tonga moral education program will focus on students' capacities for humility (lototō), collaboration and solidarity (ngāue fakataha), commitment (ngāue 'osikiavelenga), compassion and empathy (loto'ofa).

Loto'i Tonga moral education components:

1. Set up a working committee that will be tasked with developing a spiritual and cultural competency framework for our students, based on the Tongan ethics and Christian principles. Members of the working committee are to be drawn from representatives of all education systems, including school chaplains, tauhi fonua (cultural experts), punake (experts in performing arts) and other relevant groups. The committee will be tasked with reviewing existing moral education programs, Biblical Studies, and the Angafakafonua curriculum to design and develop the Loto'i Tonga spiritual and cultural competency framework. The Loto'i Tonga competency framework will be made available for peer review before it is offered to all education systems. The Loto'i Tonga moral competency framework will be the overarching guide for the revisions of the Biblical studies curriculum, the revisions of the Angafakafonua (Tonga Society and Culture) and other additional moral education programs. Each education system has the liberty to design their own Loto'i Tonga moral education program, but they are encouraged to align with the Loto'i Tonga moral competency framework.

Output 1: Loto'i Tonga moral education competency framework

2. Conduct an audit of the current Biblical Studies curriculum based on the Loto'i Tonga moral competency framework. Take what is relevant from the Biblical studies curriculum and adapt it to meet the Loto'i Tonga moral education competency framework. Co-design with the church community a holistic program for students that includes spiritual competency with an appropriate assessment framework, and professional development for teachers and school chaplains. Through a co-design approach, each mission school system can adjust the framework to fit their religious context. The new Loto'i Tonga moral education curriculum is to encourage practical application of Christian principles, moral ethics, and Tongan values, by supporting students engage in community-based learning, focusing on real life problems and supporting collaboration, co-constructing solutions and teamwork. Students will be encouraged to apply ethics to problem solve, make decisions, and think critically about social issues that they confront daily. Pilot, evaluate, refine and get ready to roll out the new moral education curriculum that is based on the community designed program for spiritual competency.

Output 2: Loto'i Tonga moral education programme at secondary school level

3. Conduct an audit of the Angafakafonua curriculum based on the Lotoʻi Tonga moral competency framework. With the communities, co-design a holistic program for students that includes cultural competency with an appropriate assessment framework, professional development for teachers and Punake and Tauhi fonua groups. The revised Angafakafonua curriculum must be written in the Tongan language for ECE, Primary, and Secondary school level. The revised Angafakafonua curriculum must be practical, with plenty of opportunities for students to carry out community-based projects that support cooperation and solidarity. Pilot, evaluate, refine and get ready for roll out the revised Angafakafonua curriculum that is based on the community designed program for cultural competency.
Output 3: Revised Angafakafonua curriculum at secondary school level

Programme 2: Sports and Better Health

The Sports and Better Health programme will specifically encourage improved outcomes for the physical and mental health of our students. As a country battling with non-communicable diseases, this program will strengthen the role of the education sector in providing more opportunities for active and healthy lifestyles. It will see the consolidation of existing sports, athletics, and health promoting programmes into a focused and comprehensive programme. The programme will also focus on improving equitable access to a range of sports and active lifestyles that suit our island environment. This programme will also promote sport as a means to a sustainable livelihood. This will include pathways in sport in which students can pursue a career. As such, it means a whole sport curriculum which links to national and regional sporting organisations but is also embedded in the Fatutama and Lotoʻi Tonga aspects.

Sports and Better Health components:
1. To set up a working committee to develop a Sports and Better Health Action Plan that will focus on improving students' mental well-being and physical health. The membership of the committee will be drawn from existing groups who are currently offering sports, health awareness, and counselling for students. The group will use existing work in sports development, Health Promoting Schools, Safer schools, WASH, the dental health program, the mental health program, the nutrition program, the anti-drugs and alcohol awareness program, anti-bullying, and violence free schools, and other related school programs. School principals, teachers and PTA together with the Ministry of Health and relevant government bodies are encouraged to work together to strengthen a whole school approach to promoting safer, cleaner and healthier schools. The action plan is to bring all relevant components and discrete activities into a unified encompassing action plan that will allow students access to a range of sports and health programs that can provide pathways for students to excel. The action plan will also make provisions for supporting students pursue careers in sports as a means of sustainable livelihood.
Output 1: Sports and Better Health Action Plan

2. Strengthen school sports by investing in existing school sports clubs and expanding the range of sports available for all schools at all levels. Conduct a review of the Movement and Fitness curriculum in accordance with the Sports and Better Health action plan. The revised curriculum will be highly performance based with a strong focus on practical application with students playing sports. This will include a whole sport curriculum, where students are encouraged to play and enjoy sports, but also pursue sports as a career as a player, umpire, referee, coach, trainer, physio, etc. The revised curriculum will have provisions for new sports, including water sports, relevant to island communities. The review is to include provisions for the resourcing of sports equipment in schools across all island provinces and will also include professional development for teachers and the support for tertiary institutions to offer courses related to sports development and public health. This will include supporting tertiary institutions and secondary schools build gyms and infrastructure to support sports, including netball courts, volleyball courts, etc. Sports clubs, coaches and trainers are encouraged to support teachers with implementing the Movement and Fitness

curriculum. The revision should also include a well-supported pathway from secondary school sports and athletics to club sports and national level club sports.
Output 2: Revised Movement and Fitness curriculum at secondary school level

3. Within the Sports and Better Health Action Plan, conduct the mapping of existing opportunities for student counseling and develop a student counselling and mental health program that is suited for a geographically spread context, including the assessment of its feasibility. The new counselling and mental health program should be tailored to fit our Tongan ethics and way of life. The new student counselling and mental health program includes fostering partnerships with churches, NGOs and relevant partners. Determine the level of support that should be catered for within schools, what level of support can be drawn from the churches and communities, and what level of support needs to be sourced from specialized NGOs working with counselling and mental health. Conduct a pilot of the student counselling and mental health program. Refine the program and roll it out to all schools. Continue to develop resources to support teachers and various sections of the community who are part of the support system for students. Gather evaluation data to support the development of possible indicators for Tongan students' well-being (as proposed for phase 2).
Output 3: Student counselling and mental health programme

Programme 3: 'Ofa Fonua learning through service

The 'Ofa Fonua learning through service program will support our students to live in harmony with their communities and the planet. The program supports students to contribute sustainably and positively to their families, communities, and country. It focuses on fostering our students' ecological understanding of humanity and their role as guardians of our fonua – our island environment and home. It will also encourage our students to collaborate, value service, and thereby learn to appreciate community and solidarity. In some boarding schools in Tonga, these values and 'work education' are already part of learning. This will be an opportunity to highlight and add value to existing non-formal learning through service. The program also fosters in students the values and skills that support sustainable livelihoods. The 'Ofa Fonua programme will be applied to all sub-sectors of the education system including ECE, Primary, Secondary, and Tertiary level. This programme will also be of interest to Churches and NGOs which are involved in non-formal education, such as Sunday school and Church youth programs, NGOs working with youth, women and disability groups.

'Ofa Fonua learning through service components:
1. To set up a working committee to draft the "'Ofa Fonua learning through service programme". The membership for the working committee will be drawn from the community, churches, tauhi fonua, parents and teachers. The working committee will use existing programmes that encourage students to volunteer, offer service and generally be involved in community activities, to help set a foundation for the proposed new program to build upon. The working committee will also be expected to develop an appropriate form of assessment to guide the implementation of the 'Ofa Fonua learning through service programme. The working committee is expected to include key stakeholders from the communities and NGOs that work in community development.
Output 1: Develop the 'Ofa Fonua learning through service programme

2. Focus on shared problems and project-based learning, giving students opportunities to study, research, work together and co-construct solutions to real problems. The 'Ofa Fonua programme will encourage a pedagogy of solidarity and collaboration and blur the walls between classrooms and community, to challenge students to think about knowledge creation and connect their learning to the real world. The programme will have a strong focus on ecological understanding of humanity that rebalances the way we relate to the planet and our island home. Foundational values to be encouraged within the 'Ofa Fonua programme are 'Ofa (compassion) and Lototō (humility). A key expected outcome of this programme is that students will improve their contribution as young stewards of our fonua – our land and ocean environment.

Fatutama: *Student well-being*

The ‘Ofa Fonua programme should be designed to offer opportunities for the students, of all ages, to demonstrate what they have learned through the Loto‘i Tonga moral education program. The programme is initially developed for Secondary school level. It will be piloted and evaluated, with an evaluation report used to refine the program before it is rolled out for secondary schools.

Output 2: Implement the ‘Ofa Fonua learning through service programme

Programme 4: Global citizenship education

The Global citizenship education programme will support our students with the necessary skills and knowledge that will allow them to live and thrive in a global society. We continue to see our people migrating overseas, for work and for further studies. It is highly likely that given current trends in migration, most of our young people will at one time or another be living overseas. We recognise that as Tongans we have our values and beliefs about who we are as a people and that in the global world, there are people who will have differing beliefs. It is critical that our education system supports our students to value diversity and respect others who may hold different beliefs. The Global citizenship education programme will also include our identity as Oceanic people- belonging to a rich and diverse region that is the Pacific. The Global citizenship education programme will work to foster intercultural education, and mutual respect for exchanges of knowledge and skills, based on values of reciprocity and respect.

Global citizenship education components:

1. Map the existing forms of global citizenship education programme that are being used in the various education systems. Identify strengths and weaknesses from existing programme and through research and co-design approaches with relevant stakeholders, including Tongans from the diaspora, revise and re-develop a comprehensive global citizenship education program. The new global citizenship education programme should be tailored and relevant to the life of a Tongan citizen living in the 21st century. The new Global citizenship education program should continue to encourage students to collaborate through nurturing relationships that are relevant and authentic. The new programme should also encourage students to engage in projects and problem-based learning, providing our students with opportunities for authentic and relevant intercultural engagement. This new Global citizenship education programme will initially be developed for secondary school level for the first phase.

Output 1: New global citizenship education programme is developed and implemented

2. A student exchange programme is developed as part of the new Global citizenship education programme. A key objective of the student exchange programme is to allow our Tongan students to value diversity, and respect different ways of living and seeing the world. It is also important that students learn to appreciate not only diversity, but also the need for global and regional solidarity when they realise that global issues are also part of their world. The student exchange programme is also to promote a pedagogy of solidarity, where students are encouraged to appreciate sharing of knowledge, and solutions and that they themselves have knowledge and skills worth sharing with others. Tongan students’ knowledge of the ocean, environment, sustainable livelihoods, reading weather patterns and other inherent skills that they have learned are valuable and they should be proud to share this traditional knowledge. Our Tongan students have something to offer the region, so this program should not be a one directional flow of information and knowledge. The values of reciprocity and respect will be a foundational guide for developing the student exchange programme. The student exchange programme will encourage Tongan schools to foster relationship with sister schools/brother schools in Tonga, the Pacific region, including schools in New Zealand and Australia. These can include virtual tours, virtual workshops and conferences, sharing of learning resources and other online activities. Similarly, Tongan schools can host students from the Pacific region and from New Zealand and Australia. The Ministry of Education and Training is to support all education systems in developing a student exchange programme tailored for each education system. There are already existing student exchange programs within some of the non-government education systems and are organised through their various churches. The Ministry of Education and Training can learn from these existing programmes

and work together with non-government educational institutions to further improve and expand the opportunities for other schools, particularly schools in remote island communities. This programme will initially be available for secondary school students during phase 1.
Output 2: A Student exchange programme is developed and implemented

Strategic initiatives phase 2: 2031-2035

The second phase of the new education policy framework will be further articulated as we near the end of phase 1, with details of the components and activities for phase 2 guided by the achievements and challenges of phase 1. As such, the components and activities listed here are based on assumptions about implementation of Phase 1 and resources available for Phase 2. These activities are likely to change as we make progress in the first phase.

PROGRAMMES & COMPONENTS:

Programme 1: Loto'i Tonga moral education program

1. Develop Loto'i Tonga moral education programme for Primary and ECE levels, guided by the Loto'i Tonga moral education competency framework. Pilot the programme, refine and roll out to schools.
Output 1: Loto'i Tonga moral education programme for ECE and Primary School levels

2. Work with Tertiary institutions to ensure that they offer Ethics/Moral Education programme or courses, and these courses are accessible for all students.
Output 2: Ethics courses/moral education programme are established in all tertiary institutions

3. Revise Angafakafonua curriculum for ECE and Primary school levels.
Output 3: Revised Angafakafonua curriculum for ECE and Primary school levels

4. Work with Tertiary institutions to ensure that Tongan language courses are developed and available for all students.
Output 4: Tongan language courses are available at Tertiary institutions in Tonga

5. Conduct a mapping exercise of all formal and non-formal programs for youth (delivered by various groups) in music, traditional performing arts, modern performing arts, arts, carving and any other expressions of artistic talents. Conduct a feasibility study into formalizing an education-based committee to oversee the further development of a Tonga schools arts festival (combining music, art, traditional and modern performing arts). The Tonga school arts festival is clearly linked to the revised Angafakafonua curriculum and Movement and Fitness curriculum and provides practical learning and application of knowledge from the Angafakafonua curriculum. The committee for Tonga Schools Arts will be responsible for drawing up plans for management and hosting of the Tonga Schools Arts festival on a regular basis.
Output 5: Establishment of the Tonga Schools Arts festival

Programme 2: Sports and Better Health

1. Update and further develop the Sports and Better Health Plan based on data gathered from monitoring and evaluation of the plan. Explore new sports and in particular water sports, like swimming, surfing and paddling and provide opportunities for students to participate in these sports. Ensure that a range of sports and health programmes are available to remote island communities.
Output 1: Updated Sports and Better Health Plan

2. Revise the Movement and Fitness curriculum for ECE and Primary School level.
Output 2: Revised Movement and Fitness curriculum for ECE and Primary School level

3. Work with Tertiary institutions to ensure that students have access to Sports and Health programmes.
Output 3: All tertiary institutions have a Sports and Health programme for their students.

4. Develop student well-being indicators based on evaluation data gathered from the implementation of the Student Counselling and better mental Health program throughout all schools.
Output 4: Student well-being indicators

Programme 3: 'Ofa Fonua learning through service

1. The working committee will continue to work with teachers and communities to develop appropriate resources, including professional development to support the delivery of the 'Ofa Fonua programme. The teaching and learning resources should be shared widely across the different education systems and across the sub-sectors.
Output 1: Learning resources to support 'Ofa Fonua learning through service

2. Expand the 'Ofa Fonua Learning through service programme to ECE and Primary school level.
Output 2: 'Ofa Fonua Learning through service programme for ECE and Primary level

3. The Ministry of Education works with Tertiary Institutions to develop their tailored programmes aligned to the objectives and guiding principles of the 'Ofa Fonua Learning through service programme.
Output 3: All tertiary institutions offer the Learning through service programme

Programme 4: Global citizenship education

1. Further development of the Global citizenship education programme for ECE and Primary school level. The programme is piloted before it is rolled out, ensuring appropriate resources and teacher professional development opportunities are given to teachers.
Output 1: Global citizenship education programme for ECE and Primary schools

2. Ministry of Education works with Tertiary Institutions to ensure that students have access to appropriate range of Global citizenship education programme.
Output 2: Tertiary institutions offer global citizenship courses and programme available for students

3. A teacher exchange programme is developed as part of the new Global citizenship education programme. A key objective of the teacher exchange programme is for teachers to learn about teaching diverse student groups. It is important that teachers are given opportunities to learn and share their experiences with other teachers from the Pacific region, including New Zealand and Australia. This teacher exchange programme can include hosting Tongan teachers from the diaspora who are keen to experience teaching in an island community. The programme can also include Tongan teachers from Tonga spending time observing and learning from another teacher either in another Pacific country or with Pasifika communities in New Zealand or Australia. To facilitate this teacher exchange programme it is important for the Ministry of Education and Training to work closely with Tongans in the diaspora as well as with hosting countries to provide a worthwhile learning experience for each teacher.
Output 3: A Teacher exchange programme

Policy Area 2

Ako fakapotopotó:
Education for resilience and sustainable development

This Policy Area will support Education Goal 1 on an education that is of quality and relevance. It focuses on supporting and promoting an education program that will help our students, communities, and country to achieve sustainability and resilience. Our people define education as the basis of sustainable livelihoods, which means that the purpose of our education is to equip our students with our values, beliefs, traditions, knowledge and skills (our Tongan "koloa"), which will enable them to live sustainable lives in the context of Tonga and, indeed, in any context beyond our shores, and to be resilient in the face of local and global present and future changes and challenges. This requires a rigorous, balanced curriculum that is relevant to the reality of students' lives as Tongans; a curiculum that promotes resilience and sustainability by providing opportunities for students to develop the intellectual, moral, cultural and creative competences needed to survive and thrive in a world with an increasingly uncertain future. The curriculum, therefore, should be based upon competency-based learning outcomes that provide clear directions for the knowledge, understanding and skills that students need to learn and be able to apply.

Further, our people tell us that we must teach our students to understand that they are custodians of our 'koloa' and have a responsibility to safeguard, maintain, promote and sustain it for the benefit of our people and future generations. Our people see material hardships as temporary states, which could be overcome, but they consider the erosion of our intangible "koloa", encapsulated in our national motto (Ko e 'Otua mo Tonga ko Hoku Tofi'a) as the ultimate 'poverty'. Our concept of "topono", which means to be satisfied and happy with 'enough', is pivotal to our efforts in teaching our students to live sustainable lives and achieve resilience. Thus, to achieve our policy goal, our education program is founded on our Tongan "koloa", and is embedded in our curriculum, assessment of learning, teacher education and professional development, use of technology for teaching and learning, and in higher education. This policy area applies to all sub-sectors, ECE, Primary, Secondary and Tertiary.



Ako fakapotopotó

Policy Goal

Ke moʻui fakapotopoto ʻa e fānau ako Tongá pea ke nau malava ke matuʻuaki ʻa e ngaahi feliuliuakí pea tuʻuloa ai ʻa e fonuá. *That our students are resilient and can live sustainable lives, ensuring a country that endures.*

Policy Objective

1. Ke tataki ʻe he ngaahi tefitoʻi tui ʻo e moʻui fakapotopotó ʻa e kakano ʻo e ngaahi lesoni akó/silapá, ʻo tautautefito ki he laukongá, tohí, mo e fai fiká. *A curriculum program that is based on the core principles of sustainable development and resilience, with a strong focus on improving literacy and numeracy – Student outcomes.*

2. Ke teuteuʻi pea poupoua ha founga akoʻi ʻa e kau faiakó ke maʻu ai ʻa e faiako maʻa Tonga ʻoku nofo loto ai ʻa e moʻui fakapotopotó. *A teacher education program that is based on the principles of faiako maʻa Tonga and the core principles of sustainable development and resilience - Teacher quality.*

3. Meʻa ngāue mo e founga ʻoku tau ngāueʻakí ke ne lava ʻo tala ʻa e ola ʻo e ako ʻoku ʻi ai ʻa e moʻui fakapotopotó. *An assessment programme that is holistic, inclusive, and able to support the learning of each student to achieve learning outcomes that are founded on sustainable development and resilience – Assessment for learning.*

4. Ngāue fakapotopoto ʻaki ʻo e tekinolosiá ki he founga faiako pea mo e ako ʻa e fanaú. *The wise use of education technology to support the teachers' monitoring and management of student learning – Educational technology.*

5. Ako māʻolunga ange ʻoku makatuʻunga he moʻui fakapotopotó mo e kafa taha ʻa e ngāué. *Higher education that is built on the principles of sustainable development, resilience, and partnerships – Higher education.*

6. Ako Fakatekinikale mo e Vokasio ke maʻu ʻa e ʻilo mo e taukei ke mateuteu ki he māmani ʻo e ngāué. *Technical and vocational training that is built on the principles of sustainable development, resilience, and partnerships that prepare students to acquire knowledge and skills for the world of work – TVET.*

7. Ako tokamuʻa ke teuteuʻi ʻa e longaʻi fānaú ki he ako lautohí. *Early childhood education that prepares young children for formal learning at primary school level.*

Policy Outcomes

At the completion of the 10 years, these outcomes are expected to have been achieved:

1. Student outcome- Kuo aʻusia ʻe he fānau ako kotoa ʻa e pōtoʻi ngāue ʻoku fiemaʻu ki he laukongá, tohí, fai fiká, mo e moʻui fakapotopotó. *Students have achieved the expected competency in literacy, numeracy, and sustainable livelihood skills.*

2. Teacher quality – Kuo maʻu ʻe he faiako kotoa ʻa e naunau ʻo e Faiako maʻa Tongá. *All teachers have acquired the atributes of the Faiako Maʻa Tongá and the core principles of sustainable development and resilience.*

3. Assessment for learning – Kuo lava ʻe heʻetau founga ʻsiví' ʻo fua ʻa e tuʻunga akó ʻo fakatatau ki he taumuʻa ʻo e moʻui ki he fakapotopotó pea mo e ako taautahá ʻo fakatatau ki heʻene aʻusiá. *Assessment*

is enabling our students' individual learning outcomes and the achievement of resilience and sustainable development.

4. Educational technology- Kuo lava 'o ngāue 'aonga mo fakapotopoto 'aki 'a e tekinolosiá ki ha ako 'oku tu'uloá. *Technology is used wisely to support our students in achieving sustainable livelihoods.*

5. Higher education – Kuo makatu'unga 'a e Ako Mā'olunga Angé he mo'ui fakapotopotó pea ngāue fepoupouaki 'a e ngaahi kupú kotoa. *Higher education is sustainable and resilient and all partners working together in mutual trust and respect.*

6. Technical, Vocational Education and Training (TVET) – Kuo ma'u 'a e 'ilo mo e taukei ngāue fe'unga ke ma'u ha ngāue fo'ou, pe ngāue lelei ange. *Relevant and quality training, built on the principles of sustainable development and resilience, resulting in new or improved jobs, beter opportunities and productivity.*

7. Early Childhood Education (ECE) – Kuo lava 'o teuteu'i 'a e longa'i fānaú 'i he ako tokamu'á, ke nau mateuteu ki he ako lautohi si'í. *ECE provides opportunities for children to prepare to enter primary school level.*

Policy Targets

This policy goal is aimed at raising achievements in the following SDG indicators and targets:

SDG 4.1.1 Proportion of children and young people (a) in Grade 2 or 3; (b) at the end of primary education; and (c) at the end of lower secondary education achieving at least a minimum proficiency level in (i) reading and (ii) mathematics, by gender.

SDG 4.2.1 Proportion of children under 5 years of age who are developmentally on track in health, learning and psychosocial well-being, by gender.

SDG 4.2.2 Participation rate in organised learning (one year before the official primary entry age), by gender.

SDG 4.3.1 Participation rate of youth and adults in formal and non-formal education and training in the previous 12 months, by gender.

SDG 4.4.1 Proportion of youth and adults with information and communications technology (ICT) skills, by type of skill.

SDG 4.5.1 Parity indices (female/male, rural/urban, bottom/top wealth quintiles and others such as disability status, indigenous peoples) for all education indicators that can be disaggregated.

SDG 4.6.1 Proportion of the population in a given age group achieving at least a fixed level of proficiency in functional (a) literacy and (b) numeracy skills, by gender.

SDG 4.7.1 Extent to which (i) global citizenship education and (ii) education for sustainable development, including gender equality and human rights, are mainstreamed at all levels in (a) national education policies, (b) curricula, (c) teacher education, and (d) student assessment.

SDG 4.a.1 Proportion of schools with access to: (a) electricity; (b) internet for pedagogical purposes; (c) computers for pedagogical purposes; (d) adapted infrastructure and materials for students with

disabilities; (e) basic drinking water; (f) single-sex basic sanitation facilities; and (g) basic handwashing facilities (as per WASH indicator definitions).

SDG 4.b.1 Volume of official development assistance flows for scholarships by sector and type of study.

SDG 4.c.1 Proportion of teachers in: (a) pre-primary education; (b) primary education; (c) lower secondary education; and (d) upper secondary education who have received at least the minimum organised teacher training (e.g. pedagogical training) pre-service or in-service required for teaching at the relevant level in a given country, by gender.

This policy goal is intended to make a difference in our efforts to meet the following PacREF outcomes:

Policy Area 1: Quality and Relevance
Outcome 1: Curriculum and programmes are embedded in the Pacific context that reflect Pacific values, cultures, traditional knowledge and skills that draw on the land that we live in and exist upon and the ocean that surrounds and binds us all.
Outcome 3: Curriculum and programmes, with appropriate pedagogy are inclusive, rights-based, promote gender equality, flexible and responsive to innovation and change and are adaptable to new learning opportunities.

Policy Area 2: Learning Pathways
Outcome 3: Our youngest learners (pre-schoolers) are prepared to engage in formal schooling.
Outcome 4: Linked pathways between levels of schooling and beyond.

Policy Area 3: Student Outcomes and Wellbeing
Outcome 1: Increased percentages of learners achieve expected levels of literacy and numeracy at all levels of education but particularly by the end of the primary cycle.
Outcome 2: Improved participation and success rates at all levels, especially in ECCE and secondary and TVET.

Policy Area 4: Teacher Professionalism
Outcome 1: All teachers and school leaders in the Pacific are qualified and skilled certified professionals who are able to demonstrate their competencies against approved standards.
Outcome 2: All teachers and school leaders are supported, through a range of modalities, in developing new skills and knowledge to create better outcomes for students.



Ako fakapotopotó

Strategic initiatives phase 1: 2025-2030

The following policy programmes and components are logically ordered in respect of the process of teaching and learning and with regards to their contributions toward the achievement of Policy Area 2: An education program that is focused on our resilience and our sustainability. However, the education system must also be inclusive in its contents, processes, pedagogy, assessment, and outcomes. It means that in the design, development, and implementation of any programme and component, all education systems and their communities must be included and actively participating at every level and in all aspects of the process.

PROGRAMMES & COMPONENTS:

Programme 1A: Curriculum & 1B: Literacy and Numeracy

Programme 1 comprises two sub-components: 1A: Curriculum and 1B: Literacy and Numeracy.

The curriculum is often said to be the soul of an education system. Due to its importance and centrality to the education process, a participatory approach to curriculum development should be adopted, which means that all education systems and their communities must be involved. In this regard, it is imperative that our curriculum is based on our vision of "Ko e ʻOtua mo Tonga Ko Hoku Tofiʻa", and the values, beliefs, traditions, knowledge, and skills implicit in the national motto. This requires a rigorous, balanced curriculum that is relevant to the reality of students' lives as Tongans; a curriculum that promotes resilience and sustainability by providing opportunities for students to develop the intellectual, moral, cultural and creative competences needed to survive and thrive in a world with an increasingly uncertain future. The curriculum, therefore, should be based upon competency-based learning outcomes that provide clear directions for the knowledge, understanding, and skills that students need to learn and be able to apply.

Further, our people tell us that we must teach our students to understand that they are custodians of our "koloa" and have a responsibility to safeguard, maintain, promote, and sustain it for the benefit of our people and future generations. Programme 1 supports the review of the curriculum to ensure inclusivity of participation and outcomes, resilience, and sustainable livelihoods by providing different pathways, such as technical and vocational education, and using different delivery mechanisms, such as distance and flexible learning (DFL) modes for all our students to realise their full potential and aspirations. A curriculum should support the development of all the capabilities of our young people, and its delivery should support different pathways for learners' aspirations, enabling education resilience and equitable access through distance and flexible learning.

Programme 1A: Curriculum component:

1. Curriculum Framework – The Ministry has commissioned a review of the Curriculum Framework and the development of a new framework. The Ministry will ensure that the new curriculum framework is founded on the overall goals and policy objectives of the new TESPF framework. The review will include an audit of all subject areas in the curriculum to confirm that they are underpinned by the values of our "lotu" and "Tonga" and are interwoven to include contents, processes, and outcomes. Where these are found to be absent, unclear, and inadequate, the review will recommend rewriting of these programmes. However, the following subject areas: Angafakafonua, Lea Faka-Tonga, Creative Technology, and Movement and Fitness. These are offered at present up to Form 5 and must be reviewed to ensure that they are inclusive and competency based, and that all students can access them through different modes of learning, participate in them meaningfully, and equitably benefit from them. The review will also include the design, development and piloting of a Niuafoʻou Language programme, initially, for the primary level. The full participation of all

education systems and their communities in all these activities is essential. To aid this process, the Ministry will reactivate the Curriculum Advisory Council and its members will be inclusive of all education systems. If necessary, a new terms of reference for the Council could be developed and approved and members of curriculum subject committees are to be selected from all education systems, based on merit and experience.

Output 1: A new inclusive Curriculum Framework; An audit of all subject areas from ECE to Post-secondary level; Revision of Angafakafonua, Lea Faka-Tonga, Creative Technology, and Movement and Fitness subjects; a pilot programme of the Niuafo'ou Language; a reconstituted and active National Curriculum Advisory Council; inclusive curriculum Subject Committees

2. Inclusive education – Adopt an Inclusive Education based approach to the new curriculum in academic, vocational, and technical subjects areas to cater for the different needs, aspirations, talents, and abilities of learners, which will provide them with different outcomes and different career and livelihood pathways. To operationalise our inclusive education approach a framework for implementing it needs to be designed, which will also outline what we mean by an inclusive education approach. Support for and expansion of the Certificate Technical Vocational Skills (CTVS) programme and other franchised programmes in secondary schools are also required to ensure a range of programmes are offered to provide seamless pathways to Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) providers. In addition to the CTVS programmes, TVET must be strengthened in secondary schools by reviewing the technical and vocational education and training curriculum and ensuring that appropriate and relevant programmes are designed and implemented in the outer islands, in particular, Niuafo'ou and Niuatoputapu. Complementary to this, TVET will also be strengthened in existing higher education institutions, such as Hango in 'Eua and Pouono in Vava'u. All these activities must be supported by trained teachers, appropriate and relevant curriculum, and adequate resources, tools and equipment to facilitate teaching and learning.

Output 2: A framework for an inclusive approach to education; expanded CTVS programmes; new inclusive technical and vocational education curriculum at the secondary level; inclusive and better resourced higher education TVET providers

3. Distance and Flexible Learning (DFL) approach – Shocks resulting from the impacts of natural disasters, such as the Hunga-Tonga and Hunga-Ha'apai volcanic eruption, and man-made disasters such as COVID-19, have exposed the vulnerability of our education system to sudden and unforeseen changes. To mitigate the effects of such events and ensure continuity and sustainability, a DFL approach is proposed for the delivery of the new curriculum, which will support the resilience of our education system by minimising shocks and learning loss. A DFL framework that is relevant and fit for our geographically spread context, and that also takes into account the special needs of our remote island settings must be designed to ensure inclusivity and equitability of access, participation and outcomes. All new curriculum materials must be based on the DFL design with options for print based mode, face to face teaching, on line learning, radio and audio learning, and blended mode learning. All DFL modes are to be made available based on location, existing infrastructure, and to ensure that students in remote island communities have access to several modes of learning.

Output 3: A DFL Framework; all new curriculum materials comply with DFL design

Programme 1B: Literacy and Numeracy component:

Programme 1B focuses specifically on improving literacy and numeracy achievements. Numerous programmes have been developed and implemented in the last decade to raise standards in literacy and numeracy, with varying levels of success. Key activities in both literacy and numeracy relate to professional development to ensure that participating parties all have the same understanding of effective practice. Every effort needs to be made to engage all parties in the process of literacy and numeracy teaching, learning, and the achievement of the desired competencies.

Ako fakapotopotó

1. The MET has also commissioned a review of the current Language Policy on the basis of which a new Language Policy is being developed, and is yet to be approved. This component ensures that the new Language Policy will support the overall goals of the new TESPF and the policy objectives under PA2. The current Language Policy was developed and approved after comprehensive consultations with all education stakeholders across Tonga, which included, among others, policy makers, teachers, students, parents, and communities, and it was also based on evidence from studies by the World Bank and other international agencies as well as international research literature, which strongly support the sole use of the mother-tongue, in this case Tongan, as the medium of instruction in the early years of formal schooling and to be used also as a tool for the acquisition of a second language, such as English. The Policy has two major goals: (1) balanced bilingualism or equilingualism and high competence in both the Tongan and English languages; and, (2) the maintenance and sustainability of the Tongan and Niuafo'ou languages and their associated cultures. There are, therefore, major implications for education in the early years of basic education for our children if the new Language Policy differs markedly from the current policy, possibly undermining the foundations on which the new TESPF is predicated. Awareness programmes in the media and various forums and communication channels for teachers and staff of the Ministry and for the public must be conducted to ensure that the new Language Policy and its components and the rationale behind it are fully understood. These are to be followed by in-depth quality professional development programmes for curriculum developers, teacher educators, and PD professionals on the new Language policy. Key issues around English as a second language and English as foreign language and the role of the mother-tongue in education and in the acquisition of a second or foreign language are to be included. The new language policy should also include the teaching of foreign languages, such as French, Japanese, and Chinese. Again, a participatory inclusive approach to professional development activities will be adopted. Key individuals involved in the implementation process of the new Language Policy in all education systems must be included in all PD activities. Schools with International curriculum, may seek exemption from the Ministryof Education in regards to the Language Policy.

Output 1: The new Language Policy is adopted and implemented; awareness programmes are conducted; PD programmes are implemented

2. Design and implement a Use of Response to Intervention approach to diagnose, design, implement, evaluate, and re-iterate targeted professional development in the areas of Literacy, Numeracy, Oral Language and Movement and Motor skills and targeted professional development for teachers and Instructional Leadership training for school principals. Technical expertise in the areas of numeracy and literacy may be required to assist the Curriculum Development Unit in this task. TORs will need to be developed, approved, and used to recruit the technical experts. In addition, the programme will include the collation, revival, production, and the setting up of a repository of literacy and numeracy learning, teaching, and assessment materials in the Tongan and Niuafo'ou languages through multi-media platforms. Useful resources include materials at the TIOE Resource Centre, the MET readers, Peace Corps Volunteer (PCV) readers, and University of the South Pacific- Institute of Education (USP-IOE) readers. Existing e-learning platforms such as the Hama and Waka Moana Learning Hub platforms can be utilised, but will require that all parties agree to freely share their expertise and resources for the benefit of all Tonga's children. A MOU could be developed and signed by all parties to formalise the agreement.

Output 2: Use of Response to Intervention approach is implemented; MOU for free sharing of e-learning resources is signed; e-learning platforms are in place

3. Pō Ako – Literacy and numeracy programmes have rarely made full use of community resources. The programme will strengthen existing literacy and numeracy programmes (pō ako) in partnership with schools, communities, and churches. It will require consultations and signed MOUs with these partners. However, the programmes are owned and managed by the communities themselves, which will provide supervision, and supplementary and remedial programmes, but with resource support from the TESPF in terms of equipment and some training for parents and community members in relevant areas of need. Additionally, a 'Student Service for Tutoring' approach that could be explored and used, if found appropriate. This involves a student

or group of students providing some form of community service in exchange for tutoring in their areas of need by community members. Such a programme will encourage interactions and engagement among the various members of a community and give our children a sense of connectedness, belonging, and well-being. It is also a way of informally transmitting the values of our 'lotu' and 'Tonga'. However, in such situations, MOU and agreements with communities should take into consideration the need for students to still have time to participate in other family and community activities including faith, cultural, and sport activities that take place after school. The Pō Ako activities should be approached with careful consideration for the holistic well-being of the student.

Output 3: Pō Ako formally in place, with signed MOUs; Student Service for Tutoring in place

Programme 2: Teacher Quality - Faiako ma'a Tonga

The teacher quality programme will assist all teachers in our education system at all levels from ECE to Tertiary to acquire the attributes of "Faiako ma'a Tonga", with the core values of our "lotu" and "Tonga". It will encourage the creation of a high quality teaching profession and support the design and implementation of professional staff development programmes and mechanisms to ensure continuous learning and development for members of the teaching profession. Such programmes are necessary, as our teachers are our best resources in education. Transforming our education system and ensuring its long-term sustainability and resilience cannot be achieved without the commitment of excellent teachers who have been prepared in their initial training to deliver the full curriculum in the most effective manner and with a priority focus on literacy and numeracy.

Teacher quality components:

1. Teaching Service Commission – The Education Act of 2013 requires that all teachers at all levels be registered before they are allowed to teach at any level, classroom, or school in Tonga. At present, the Ministry is managing the registration of teachers. However, in the long-term, and for reasons of inclusivity and sustainability, a study is proposed to explore the feasibility of establishing a Tonga Teaching Service Commission (TTSC), which would potentially not only be responsible for the registration of teachers but could also be responsible for their appointments, performance, and discipline, with the goal that all teachers' remuneration in the future would be paid from the public purse, ensuring the recognition of the importance of quality teachers in all schools and education systems, teaching as a profession, and equitable conditions of service for all teachers. At the same time, the autonomy of non-government education systems to protect and maintain their distinctive identifies must be recognised, but with mutually agreed accountability measures. The setup of the Teaching Service Commission could be achieved in partnership with the TNQAB to support with external validation and verification purposes. In Phase 1, a TOR is designed and approved and is used to recruit technical expertise to undertake the Study and make appropriate recommendations and depending on the outcomes of the Study, the TTSC could be established in Phase 2 with clearly identified goals and mandate.

Output 1: Proposal for design and implementation of a Teaching Service Commission agreed

2. Strengthen Teacher education institutions – There are many existing institutions in Tonga providing pre- and in-service training and short- and long-term professional development programs for teachers. This component is aimed at effectively developing, implementing, and monitoring plans that are comprehensive and inclusive of all education systems to improve not only their individual capacity and capability but also to coordinate their activities to align with the TEPF goals and objectives and to ensure cooperation and coherence within this important sub-sector of education. Each sub-component is intended to contribute singly and collectively with the other sub-components to the achievement of the overall purpose of this component, which is the strengthening, sustainability and resilience of PD programmes for the continuous improvements of the teaching profession.

Ako fakapotopotó

2.1 Strengthening all Teacher Training providers and their alliances, which at present, comprise the following institutions:

Tonga Government: Ministry of Education and Training: Tonga Institute of Education (TIOE); Tonga Institute of Higher Education (TIHE); Tonga Institute of Science and Technology (TIST); Tonga Maritime Polytechnic Institute (TMPI); Tonga National University (TNU – already established by legislation but expected to be operational in 2023).

Tonga Ministry of Health: Queen Sālote School of Nursing and Allied Health (QSSCNAH).

Tonga Ministry of Police: Tonga Police College (TPC).

Roman Catholic Church: ʻAhopanilolo Technical College (ATC); Montfort Technical Institute (MTI); St. Joseph's Business College (St.JBC); Catholic Theological Institute (CThI).

Free Wesleyan Church: Tupou Tertiary Institute (TTI); Siaʻatoutai Theological College (SThC); Hango Agricultural College (HAC, ʻEua);

Tokaikolo Christian Church: Christ's University in Pacific (CUP); Lavengamālie Institute of Technology (LIT).

Private: ʻAtenisi Institute (AI).

Regional: The University of the South Pacific (USP).

International: University of the Nations (UN).

2.2 Establishing a Professional Learning and Development department within the TIOE/TNU. Further strengthening of Professional Development Units across all systems, complete with targeted approaches to Professional Development, as key drivers for a whole of school focus on inclusive approaches to literacy and numeracy, teacher efficacy, and instructional leadership (coaching, mentoring, and induction). They will become the instruments through which sustainable professional development of all staff in the education sector is assured, by continually bringing them up to date with the latest research and best practices in areas pertinent to their own and our students' performance; and allowing them space in which to dialogue and share their own practices and experiences of what work best for them in their own contexts.

2.3 Establishing a Teaching and Learning laboratory within the Professional Learning and Development Department at the TIOE/TNU. The TIOE/TNU will work closely with all other teacher training providers, to share learnings from the teaching and learning laboratory. This will include the set up of model schools across Tonga for developing a range of pedagogical approaches to teaching the new curriculum using a range of DFL modes. The laboratory, among other things, is intended to provide space to explore and apply innovations in education that could address some of the long-standing challenges and issues in our education system and in our various contexts. This will allow for such innovations to be trialled in a safe and controlled environment to determine their efficacy and practicality before being implemented more widely.

2.4 Adapting the NZ Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) Inclusive Education program; building teacher capacity in Inclusive Education to suit Tonga's context, which will strengthen Tonga's capacity and capability in this area.

2.5 Utilising the opportunities presented by the PacREF for Teacher Professional Development including school leadership professional development and training.

Output 2: All plans for 2.1-2.5 are completed and implemented

3. Teacher qualifications – This component is aimed at developing and operationalizing plans for consolidating and strengthening the training and qualification of teachers, which has been identified in the consultations as a priority concern. This strengthening includes:

3.1 Secondary teachers with appropriate degrees in teaching subjects but with no teaching qualifications, and those needing both training and qualification in specialised subjects.

3.2 Support for teachers teaching in the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) subjects, and throughout all sub-sectors. Professional development for teachers in these areas will be an integral component of this program.

3.3 Secondary School Principals' qualification programme to grow leadership and management capacity and capability.

Ako fakapotopotó

Output 3: Training for secondary teachers in specialised subjects with complementary PD component is established; qualification programme for secondary school principals is established

4. Further review of the Faiako ma'a Tonga framework to be adjusted to accommodate the paradigm shift that is needed for teachers to be able to appropriately teach Loto'i Tonga, 'Ofa Fonua learning through service programme and Global citizenship. These are values that will demand of teachers a new approach to their teaching and its importance cannot be taken for granted. Pre-service training, in-service training and teacher registration will be key to making the shift in the Faiako ma'a Tonga. The review of the Faiako ma'a Tonga framework will also involve the development of a Faiako ma'a Tonga Teacher Competency Framework that should guide teacher professional development and teacher training.
Output 4: Revised Faiako ma'a Tonga framework and associated Faiako ma'a Tonga Teacher Competency Framework

Programme 3: Assessment for learning

Programme 3 focuses on the establishing of an assessment framework that will enable schools and teachers to obtain valid and reliable information on the performance of their students, which will assist schools to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of their support for individual students and the education system to have an overview of progress made. The assessment programme will take a balanced and holistic approach to assessment at the classroom, the school, and at the system level with a strong focus on what students have achieved and what they can do with what they have achieved. The framework will also encourage different forms of assessment and identification of desired outcomes to be measured and will not focus only on academic performance but the whole range of outcomes required for sustainable livelihoods and resilience at individual, community, and national levels. Assessment must also put educational value on the cultural and traditional knowledge systems that are referred to in Loto'i Tonga Moral Education programme.

Assessment for learning components:
1. A new National Assessment and Examinations Policy Framework for learning has been commissioned already and as with the new Curriculum Framework, it must align with the vision, policy areas, goals and objectives of the new TEPF and have the capability to measure its outcomes, which are inclusive of all skills (vocational, technical and academic). It should further develop STAT as a national tool for diagnostic purpose at classroom level for Literacy, Numeracy and community service. Further it must also focus on school-based/teacher continuing assessment, and assessment for learning to support students' progress, shifts in learning, and add value to students' learning. It must also investigate, scope out and develop more relevant competency assessment frameworks for cultural, spiritual and environmental programmes. It must also support and expand the Certificate in Technical and Vocational Studies (CTVS) programme in secondary schools to ensure that it continues to provide seamless pathways to TVET training providers.
Output 1: A new National Assessment and Examinations Policy Framework

2. Review and establish clear processes and mechanisms for the quality assurance and accreditation of our national secondary qualifications, in particular, the Tonga National Form 7 Certificate, to ensure that they achieve international accreditation and recognition. On-going professional development programmes must be provided for the Exams Unit and relevant stakeholders that design assessment instruments, and must include training in specialised areas including psychometrics and reporting of assessment data.
Output 2: accreditation and international recognition for the Tonga National Form 7 Certificate; PD programmes for Exams Unit

3. Provide capacity development for teachers, school leaders and MET Personnel including Assessment Officers from all other education systems. The professional development in assessment should be clearly articulated in a work plan that is continually reviewed.

Output 3: Work plan for continuing professional development for teachers, school leaders, MET officers, and Assessment officers from all education systems

4. Application of results, by providing up to date feedback and reporting mechanisms should be in place to ensure reporting is worthwhile. The MET Assessment Unit will continue to provide structured processes for sharing feedback, reporting assessment results for classroom assessment, high-stake examinations and large-scale assessments. The reporting mechanism in place should also be continually developed to use appropriate technology for reporting of classroom assessment as well as examinations.
Output 4: Regulation for reporting assessment results, classroom assessment, high-stake examinations and large-scale assessments

5. Governance and administration of assessment should be continually support. This will include improvement in the administration, governance and clear roles and responsibilities for all key stakeholders.
Output 5: Clear regulations and guidelines for the governance and administration of assessment

Programme 4: Education technology

Technology is an important tool to support our reforms in education and in building sustainability and resilience in our system. Our teachers will be encouraged to use technology for accountability, management, and monitoring purposes. The volcanic eruptions and COVID-19 have taught us that we must learn to cope with unexpected changes, be they natural or man-made disasters. Technology must be used wisely to ensure continuity and quality assurance in our education system. However, technology is expensive and ever-changing but we could overcome these challenges by working together and building partnerships across the sector that could help us improve equitable access to educational technology.

Education technology components:
1. Education technology is to be used to encourage teachers' accountability by strengthening them through targeted PD programmes to improve their pedagogy, the assessment and quality assurance systems, and the processes that are required to increase the use of EMIS for improvements in reporting, monitoring and management of students' performance across all systems and in the remote island schools. Leaders of education, education officers, teachers, and communities could be supported also through increasing their access to on-line materials, and sharing of resources and information, and the development and dissemination of their own created resources. Our students and our communities would benefit from such services and from instant and continuous feedback on performance, and access to on-line materials and other services, and it would certainly facilitate support to each individual child. In the long-term, the better use of technology will enable our education system to capitalise on the full capabilities of the computer to assist us with the management, monitoring, and reporting of our students and education systems' performance and how to use the range of available technology for teaching and learning purposes more effectively.
Output 1: Improved the number of teachers using computers for reporting and monitoring of students' progress and achievements

2. Re-establishment the MET Centre for DFL- To build and enhance our students' and teachers' capability in technology, the centre for DFL at the MET must be re-established and merged with the current media/ radio unit and the e-learning Hama platform. A clear and comprehensive plan, then, for transitioning to a DFL system that is affordable, targeted, and location specific is required. The DFL plan will include a range of learning modes (face-to-face, on-line, print mode, radio, hybrid learning, etc.) and appropriate for each island context and available infrastructure must be available or created to support each mode of learning.
Output 2: DFL Centre is re-established and the DFL Plan is completed and implemented

3. Technology and internet access and associated equipment and accessories are costly, which has constrained access and equitable use. Partnerships for improving access to education technology must be established between MET and other education systems and the private sector to reduce costs of connectivity and widen access. Means must be found to ensure that all schools and islands are connected and MET will lead the negotiations for cheaper connections, for allocating a dedicated bandwidth for Education purposes, and for ensuring that schools have safe and secure access to the internet and to online learning resources including online libraries.

Output 3: Universal access and cheaper connectivity and dedicated bandwidth for Education

Programme 5: Higher Education

Higher education plays a major role in a country's development, particularly in relation to its human development needs, in important sectors, such as education, health, business, politics, economics, history, culture, public service, science, technology, administration and management through its research, teaching, and dissemination of knowledge. It is axiomatic that a highly-educated and skilled labour force is a major asset to any country and can accelerate a country's national and economic development. But it also has a key role to play in the continuous improvements of any education system. A higher education sector has developed slowly in our country over the years, which has culminated in the establishment of a national university. There are a number of active players in the field but their developments have been largely uncoordinated with limited engagements among them. All of them, even those institutions that enjoy government funding, are struggling with financial constraints, and competing with each other and with better endowed overseas institutions for the same limited number of students and qualified staff. To create those qualities in the education system envisioned in the policy goals and objectives of the TESPF, and to ensure that the higher education sector has the capability to support the continuous development and advancement of our country and its sustainability and resilience and to provide the kinds of support needed to enhance performance at the lower levels of education, it is critical that the higher education sector is strengthened by coordinating its activities through a formal mechanism, and providing it with secure and dedicated support and sustainable funding.

Higher Education components:

1. A mapping exercise is to be undertaken of the higher education sector. It will identify all the institutions in the sector and provide detailed accounts of their vision and goals; programmes and the qualifications they offer; number of students; number of staffs; number of courses and programmes accredited by TNQAB; management and administrative systems; financial status; location and geographical spread; prospects and plans for the future; and any other matters of interest. The exercise will assist in the creation of a coordinated mechanism for the sector. The EMIS Unit of MET could be tasked with this exercise, and it could be supported by MET's Higher Education Sector Division. The outcome would feed directly into the work on providing coordination for the sector.

Output 1: Mapping Exercise Report

2. A Feasibility Study for the creation of a Commission for Higher Education is to be undertaken. The Planning Unit of MET, assisted by its Finance Division, is tasked with the development, processing, and approval of an appropriate TOR and the recruitment of a suitable technical expert to undertake the Feasibility Study. The Commission could take on the responsibility for the coordination of the sector, to minimize duplication of efforts and wasting of scarce resources, and by encouraging the sharing of resources and best practices, and joint activities in teaching, research, and outreach community programmes. These activities could ensure equitable distribution of resources and outcomes, collective endeavors to achieve common goals, and, thereby, contributing significantly to national human resources development, resilience and sustainability. Its services could also include the establishment and administration of a special fund from the national budget to support individual institutions, irrespective of their management systems. The funding could be

part of the efforts to develop a single grant system to all education providers, which would be inclusive of all sub-sectors from ECE to higher education. It could also establish accreditation processes for the sub-sector, in partnership with TNQAB, to facilitate accreditation of institutions and their programmes. Depending on the outcomes of the Feasibility Study, the Commission for Higher Education could be established and operational in Phase 2.
Output 2: Feasibility Study for a Commission for Higher Education completed

3. A Higher Education Act, however, is required to give formal standing and appropriate powers to the Commission. The task of preparing and implementing the process of recruiting and appointing a legal expert to draft the Higher Education Act and its associated regulations appropriately belongs to the Planning Unit and Finance Division of MET. The provisions of the Act could include areas of managing and coordinating the sub-sector, sustainable funding and equitable sharing of resources, issues of access, research, and collaborations, and registration and accreditation of institutions and programmes.
Output 3: Higher Education Act and Regulations

4. Under the Higher Education Act, setup of the National Research Council. This will involve the review of TOR and confirmed membership of the National Research Council. One of the key tasks of the Research Council will be to vet and approve research permits and, in partnership with USP Tonga Campus, deposit of research studies towards the Kūkū kaunaka Collection.
Output 4: Establishment of the National Research Council

Programme 6: TVET

The provisions for Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) for students has been sufficiently supported by development partners and the Ministry of Education in recent years. This has seen the provision of TVET courses at secondary school level and improved pathways for students from secondary school level to TVET tertiary institutions. The TNQAB has also been supporting the accreditation of several TVET tertiary institutions and this has resulted in improved quality of delivery including better opportunities for students to enter the workforce. Recently, the Ministry of Education launched the TVET Framework, and a TVET Unit within the Ministry of Education has also been established to support the implementation of the TVET framework. The support from various donors, such as the Australia Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and World Bank have made contributions to improving access to TVET. However, there still remains work to be done in expanding the TVET programmes that are available and further developing TVET programmes to support sustainable livelihoods and a green economy. Further to this, while most TVET tertiary institutions are located on Tongatapu, there are very limited opportunities for TVET services available in the outer islands. This programme will see the expansion of TVET to the outer islands as well as promotion of TVET programmes that support sustainable livelihoods.

TVET components:
1. With the setup of the TVET Unit within the Ministry, there will be on going work to implement the TVET framework. The Ministry will continue to support the TVET Unit in implementing the TVET framework.
Output 1: Implementation plan for the TVET framework

2. Promotion of sustainable livelihoods and resilience in TVET programme is required, in particular, support for training providers in Agriculture and associated skills. This will include support for the Agriculture school at the Tonga Institute of Science and Technology (TIST/TNU), Hango Agriculture College, and USP's School of Agriculture through the USP Tonga Campus. The TVET Unit will work closely with these institutions to further develop Agriculture as a subject and livelihoods gained from agriculture. The TVET Unit is encouraged to work closely with NGOs as well as private sector farmers/growers to share skills and knowledge with

Agriculture students.
Output 2: Action Plan for supporting Agriculture training institutions

3. Promotion of sustainable livelihoods and resilience in TVET programmes and, in particular, livelihoods earned from the ocean. This can include a feasibility study on establishing a TVET institution focusing on fisheries, aqua farming, marine management and other knowledge and skills associated with earning livelihoods from the ocean. Through the TVET Unit, a feasibility study can be conducted on establishing a fisheries institute in partnership with other non-government education systems and/or the private sector.
Output 3: Feasibility study for establishing a Fisheries Institute

Programme 7: Early Childhood Education

Early Childhood Education (ECE) has been a community responsibility for a long-time, despite the development of an ECE Policy and the provision of pre- and in-service ECE education and training programmes for ECE teachers at TIOE. In fact, the only home-grown degree programme for teachers in Tonga is the one offered at TIOE for ECE teachers, and the programme is delivered entirely in the Tongan language, and is based on Tonga's values, culture, and epistemology, and delivered using Tongan-based pedagogy. These developments are based on the understanding that the ECE level of education is a critical foundation for any child's education and its impact, positive and otherwise, is long-term, especially for children from vulnerable backgrounds. The challenges that children from such backgrounds face in formal education, which often limit their success in the higher levels of education, are effectively minimised through full participation in quality ECE programmes. In other words, they are given the opportunity of a head start in formal schooling, and can compete with other children from more privileged backgrounds in the later stages of education on a level playing field. However, despite these proven benefits, the sub-sector has continued to be under-funded and under-resourced, and community-owned centres have continued to suffer from neglect over the years. The programme will focus, therefore, on activities that are aimed at strengthening the sub-sector and raising the quality of its services. It will also increase not only awareness of the importance of ECE for the long-term achievements of our children in formal schooling but it will include also a comprehensive survey of the ECE population for the next ten years, and an audit of the current ECE status, policy, curriculum, resources, and funding. Talanoa with communities will be essential to gain an understanding of their wishes and support, and continuing engagements in the sub-sector.

ECE components:
1. Provide professional development opportunities for ECE on an on-going basis. Provide teacher training opportunities for ECE teachers, through in-service programmes offered by various teacher training providers. With the on-going expansion of the ECE by the Ministry of Education, it is important to keep up to date with the training of ECE teachers.
Output 1: Professional Development and training plan for ECE teachers to follow closely with demand for ECE centres

2. Conduct a public awareness campaign on the importance of ECE and the benefits for our children, in both the short- and long-term, especially for the most vulnerable groups, such as rural communities and remote island groups. Radio and television media are appropriate and should reach most groups. However, our communities often prefer direct and face-to-face contacts. Talatalanoa with ECE providers and communities can supplement the public media to ascertain their wishes and aspirations for their children and the ECE sub-sector. It is also a way for PD providers to experience and better understand the contexts in which ECE centres operate and the environments in which our children first experience formal schooling. The feedback from these activities could inform the ECE curriculum development, ECE PD programmes, and distribution of funding and resources to all ECE providers and communities. Such approaches will ensure that quality,

relevant, and appropriate curricula and resources are made available equitably to all ECE centres for the benefit of all our children. Again, the MET ECE Unit can be responsible for these campaigns and talatalanoa, but the responsibility can be shared with the ECE Association. Ongoing Talatalanoa with MET officers and primary school teachers about the ECE and the pedagogy that supports ECE children's learning can be held.
Output 2: Public awareness campaign and talatalanoa conducted

3. Revise the existing ECE Policy and, under the leadership of the Ministry of Education, the ECE Unit is to work closely with communities and churches to support the development and set up of ECE centres that are sustainable and meet the revised service standards for schools. In an effort to share the cost of expansion to ECE, the Ministry of Education must work together with community development groups, churches, and parents to set up sustainable and quality ECE centres. The Ministry of Education must work harder to avoid duplication of services where there are already ECE centres, but to work with existing providers of ECE to strengthen existing centres. The revised ECE Policy needs to outline the process for providing ECE service, including resourcing, funding, and supervision of ECE centres. The ECE Policy can cover the provisions for teachers, including the supervision of teachers by principals and support for ECE teachers. The ECE policy should also include the provisions for classrooms and safe spaces for young children to play and learn. The expansion of ECE should not be at the cost of quality, nor the safety of children. The MET ECE Unit can be tasked with these activities, with the support of all ECE controlling authorities and through strong partnership with the communities.
Output 3: Revised ECE Policy

4. Review and coordinate the ECE curriculum to align it with the new TEPF, the new Curriculum Framework, the new Language Policy, and the new Assessment Framework. At present, different controlling authorities in education use their own curriculum, which do not necessarily meet the policy goals of the new TESPF. To give all children equal opportunities to participate and succeed in ECE and acquire the foundational skills for formal schooling, especially in the areas of emergent literacy and numeracy, there is an urgent need to bring coherence to the programmes and activities of the sub-sector. Through the monitored implementation of a core ECE curriculum, with specified clear outcomes and learning competencies, and the flexibility of added contextualised materials and resources to meet specific localised needs, all our children can be assured of acquiring the values, skills, and knowledge needed for long-term achievements in education and in life. The curriculum for ECE should also clearly articulate the transition from ECE to primary school level, and give the appropriate support for children to make the transition. The review can be part of the joint responsibility of the MET Curriculum Unit and ECE Unit, but with the support of non-government controlling authorities.
Output 4: Revised and developed ECE common core curriculum

5. Review the grant system and increase the grant to the ECE sub-sector. At present, an annual grant of $50 Pa'anga per head is made to ECE providers. The grant is inadequate to meet the needs of each child or the centres, and it only serves to further accentuate the inequalities in the provision and delivery of ECE services. Thus, the size of the grant does reflect the importance and value hitherto accorded to the ECE sub-sector. However, the review should be part of the effort to align all grants to schools at all levels and to provide a single grant system to all education providers, which would include community-owned and controlled educational services, and which is readily administered and managed, accounted for, and complied with. The new single grant system would ensure equitable and fair distribution of our scarce funding for education across all providers, and the availability and sustainability of quality resources for all sub-sectors of education. The development of a single grant system to education can be the responsibility of the MET Finance Unit, in consultation with non-government controlling authorities.
Output 4: Single grant system to all education providers

Strategic initiatives phase 2: 2031-2035

The second phase of the new education policy framework will be further articulated as we near the end of phase 1. The details of the components and activities for phase 2 will be guided by the achievements and challenges of phase 1. As such, the components and activities listed here are based on assumptions about implementation of Phase 1 and resources available for Phase 2. These activities are likely to change as we make progress in the first phase. In Phase 2, each programme is further developed to consolidate the gains achieved in Phase 1 and to refine the activities for sustainability and resilience.

PROGRAMMES & COMPONENTS:

Programme 1A: Curriculum

1. Audit and review of the remaining curriculum areas throughout all sub-sectors. This will include a special focus on the Science subjects throughout all levels. These will ensure that all subjects aligned with the vision articulated in the TEPF and values of our 'lotu' and Tonga are embedded in each subject area.
Output 1: Audit and review of curriculum completed

2. Strengthen the teaching and resourcing of the Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics through all levels, with a special focus on senior secondary level and in Higher Education. This will require dedicated resourcing and professional development for teachers to promote STEM programmes.
Output 2: Action Plan for promoting STEM programmes at senior secondary school level and at Tertiary level

3. Embed inclusive education approach in the curriculum. As with the audit and reviews in Phase I, Phase 2 will ensure that the inclusive approach is also embedded in the remaining subject areas.
Output 3: Inclusive education approach fully embedded in curriculum

4. Embed DFL approach in the curriculum. As with the audit and reviews in Phase I, Phase 2 will ensure that progress in the DFL approach is reviewed and further incorporated in the delivery of teaching and learning.
Output 4: DFL approach to delivery of teaching and learning is fully embedded in curriculum

5. Phase 2 will see the expansion and strengthening of Special education at the national and regional levels and by providing more resources in terms of specialist teachers, equipment, curriculum materials, and increasing community engagements.
Output 5: Expansion and strengthening of Special Education completed

Programme 1B: Literacy and Numeracy

1. The full implementation of the new Language Policy will be in Phase 2, which means the collation, revival, production and establishment of the repository of literacy and numeracy materials in the Tongan and Niuafo'ou languages through multi-media platforms, and refining the use of the Hama and Waka Moana Learning platforms. Partnership with media and publication institutions to design and produce high quality relevant teaching and learning resources for literacy and numeracy will be established.
Output 1: Language Policy fully implemented and full use of Hama and Waka Moana Learning Platforms

2. Targeted PLD for Literacy by full Use of Response to Intervention approach to diagnose, design, implement, evaluate, and re-iterate targeted PLD for Literacy. Targeted PLD for Instructional leadership will also be fully implemented.
Output 2: PLD for Teachers in Literacy and PLD for Instructional leadership in place

3. Targeted PLD for Numeracy by full Use of Response to Intervention approach to diagnose, design, implement, evaluate, and re-iterate targeted PLD for Numeracy. Targeted PLD for Instructional leadership.
Output 3: PLD for Teachers in Numeracy and PLD for Instructional leadership in place

4. Pō Ako by continuing to strengthen literacy and numeracy programmes in partnerships with schools, communities, and churches. On-going supervision of materials and management of Pō Ako to ensure that it serves as remedial and supplementary learning for students.
Output 4: Pō Ako strengthened and supported and owned by communities

Programme 2: Teacher quality

Teacher quality components

Teaching Service Commission

1. The Commission actively fosters relationships with international/regional teacher education institutions, and if, considered desirable, formalises relationships with MOUs.
Output 1: MOUs with regional and international teacher education institutions in place

2. The Commission facilitates and supports all teacher education institutions in Tonga towards full registration and accreditation with the Tonga National Qualifications and Accreditation Board (TNQAB).
Output 2: All teacher education institutions in Tonga are fully registered and accredited with TNQAB

Professional learning and development program

1. Re-orientating pre-service teacher training to be closely tied to school settings, increasing the length of the practicum period, and learning from expert teachers in the field and incorporating those lessons into the initial training program for teachers.
Output 1: Aligned and revised pre-service training programme for teachers

2. Further strengthening of the PD Unit into a Department within the TIOE/TNU.
Output 2: PD Department at TIOE/TNU is fully operational

3. Establishing the Teaching and Learning Laboratory as a recognised unit within the PD Department.
Output 3: Teaching and Learning Laboratory established within PD Unit

4. Further strengthening all PD Units within the education sector.
Output 4: PD Units within education authority strengthened

5. Evaluating and continually improving the whole school professional development programmes.
Output 5: School PD programmes continually evaluated for improvements

6. Initiating a Teacher Exchange Programme, with support from the Tonga Teaching Service Commission, with Australia, New Zealand, and other Pacific countries to strengthen teachers' professional experience and awareness of shared regional and international educational issues.
Output 6: Teacher Exchange Programme

Teacher qualification and training

1. Upgrading all primary school principals to a recognised school leadership qualification.
Output 1: All school principals have formal school leadership qualification

Programme 3: Assessment for learning

Assessment for learning components

1. Quality assurance and accreditation – Provide ongoing professional development for Exams Unit and relevant stakeholders that design assessment instruments, including training in specialised areas such as psychometrics and reporting of assessment data.

Output 1: On-going PD for Exams Unit and associated stakeholders

2. New National Assessment and Examinations Policy framework for learning – Implement relevant competency framework for cultural, spiritual and environmental programmes and continue to provide on-going support and expand the Certificate in Technical and Vocational Studies (CTVS) programme in secondary schools and ensure that it continues to provide seamless pathways to TVET training providers.

Output 2: New competency framework for cultural, spiritual, and environmental programmes

3. Improve management and administration of assessment programme by continuing with the improvements of the management and administration of assessment programme across the education sector; providing avenues for sharing of good practices across education systems, on what works for our children and improving reporting of exam results to schools in a timely manner and support PD Department with design of targeted professional development programmes for teachers based on the data.

Output 3: Improved management and administration of assessment programmes

Programme 4: Education Technology

Education technology components

1. Education Technology for teacher accountability through on-going strengthening of people, methods, systems, and process to improve the use of EMIS for improvement in reporting, monitoring and management across all systems and remote island schools. On-going work to ensure that all education systems are connected through to EMIS, thus, improving our data management, and reporting. On-going support for teachers, school leadership, education officers to access technology, use the computer for management and continuing PD for use in a range of technology for teaching and learning purposes.

Output 1: Better connections and access to and use of technology

2. Student and Teacher enhancing technology through embedding of the centre for DFL at the MET, and improving the current media/radio unit and the e-learning Hama platform. Review the implementation of the plan for enhancing, extending, and greater inclusion of DFL that is affordable, targeted, scaffold and location specific and assess value and efficacy of each learning modes (face-to-face, on-line, print, hybrid, and mixed mode, radio, other media forms) in its implementation in each island context and the availability of infrastructure to support each mode of learning.

Output 2: Centre for DFL embedded in MET and review of DFL plan

3. Review partnerships for improving access to education technology through MET collaborating with education systems, and the private sector work to reduce costs of connectivity and widen access and whether MET has succeeded in obtaining cheaper access and connectivity for education, and the supply of a dedicated bandwidth for Education, allowing schools safer access to the internet and to online learning resources including online libraries.

Output 3: Wider, more equitable and cheaper access and a dedicated bandwidth for education matters only

Ako fakapotopotó

Programme 5: Higher Education

Higher Education components
1. Establish Higher Education Commission and Higher Education Act.
Output 1: Higher Education Commission established and Higher Education Act in place

2. Develop regulations to accompany the Education Act.
Output 2: Regulations for the revised Education Act completed

3. Develop MOUs to encourage and facilitate partnerships with regional and international institutions to facilitate staff and students exchange programmes, and joint teaching and research activities in areas of mutual interests.
Output 3: MOUs with regional and international institutions to support partnerships

Programme 6: TVET

TVET components
1. Support Agriculture training providers achieve accreditation with TNQAB.
Output 1: Accredited national Agriculture training providers

2. Establish Fisheries Institute in partnership with MET and non-government education system and or private sector.
Output 2: established Fisheries Institute

Programme 7: ECE

ECE components
1. On-going professional development and training for ECE teachers.
Output 1: Number of trained ECE teachers

2. On-going strengthening of partnership with communities, private sector and non-government education system in supporting ECE centres.
Output 2: Number of partnerships with communities in operating ECE centres




MacGyver

Policy Area 3

Vahevahe taau mo e ako kau kātoá: Equitable access and Inclusive Education

Policy Area 3 will contribute to Education Goal 2 relating to Equity and Inclusion. This policy area is focused on strengthening multiple levels of the education sector to improve equitable access to education. It is based on the Tongan conceptualisation of 'inclusive education' as "Ako kau kātoa", which means an education system that is for everyone. Our conceptualisation of inclusive education extends beyond Special Education and disability, it refers to all students from ECE, Primary, Secondary, Tertiary and Adult Education.

In addition, Ako kau kātoa, also refers to working together, recognising that education is our collective responsibility. This policy area provides strategies to improve inclusive learning (language, gender) and equitable access to resources (by location). In particular, it supports the recognition of the Niuafo'ou language, a minority language, as part of the language education policy. Policy Area 3 also recognises that working towards a more inclusive education sector requires commitment and collaboration with all faith-based and government education systems. This Policy Area calls for solidarity and affirmation that every student, regardless of gender, location, disability, language, socio-economic status, religion, and age, has the right to quality education. We believe this Policy Area will support a more inclusive education sector and improve equitable access to education, as it applies to all sub-sectors, ECE, Primary, Secondary and Tertiary.

Policy Goal

Ke fakaivia 'a e potungāue ako kotoa pē ke ma'u 'e he tokotaha ako kotoa 'a e taumu'a 'o e mo'ui fakapotopotó. *To strengthen all education systems – faith-based and government – enabling all students to achieve the goals of resilient and sustainable lives.*

Policy Objectives

To achieve this policy goal, we have agreed on the following policy objectives:

1. Lea 'a e Tongá- ke fakafaingamālie 'a e ako 'o e lea Niuafo'oú 'i he ako ma'a e kāinga Niuafo'oú. *To develop and teach the minority language Niuafo'ou in Niuafo'ou for Niuafo'ou students.*

2. Ako 'a Motu- ke fakatupulekina pea poupoua 'a e vahevahe taau 'o e naunau akó mo e faingamālie ako ma'a e ngaahi apiako mei motú, ke lava 'o a'usia 'a e taumu'a 'o e ako mo'ui fakapotopotó. *Schools in the outer islands – to enable and sustain support of equitable provisions of resources for all education institutions and schools in remote and island communities.*

3. Tangata pe Fefine – ke fakatupulekina ha founga ako ke malava ai 'a e fānau tangatá pea mo e fānau fefiné 'o a'usia 'a e taumu'a 'o e ako mo'ui fakapotopotó. *Gender – to develop and encourage gender specific support to enable both male and female students to achieve the goals of resilient and sustainable lives.*

4. 'Apiako ako kau kātoá – ke fakatupulekina pea fakaivia 'a e 'apiako kotoa ke hoko ko e 'apiako ako kau kātoa. *Inclusive schools – work closely with all education systems to support and enable all education institutions and schools to be inclusive institutions/schools.*

5. 'Apiako 'oku malu – ke fakatupulekina pea fakaivia 'a e 'apiako kotoa ke ma'a, malu pea ke hoko ko e 'api hūfanga. *Nurturing schools - work closely with all education systems to support and enable all education institutions and schools to be cleaner, safer and more resilient.*

Vahevahe taau mo e ako kau kātoá

Policy Outcomes

At the completion of the 10 years, we hope to achieve the following policy outcomes:

1. Ko ‘etau fānau ako Niuafo‘oú kuo nau a‘usia ‘a e tu‘unga mā‘olunga ‘i hono ngāue‘aki ‘o e lea Niuafo‘oú. *Niuafo‘ou students living in Niuafo‘ou are competent in reading and writing in the the Niuafo‘ou language.*

2. Ko ‘etau fānau ako mei Motú kuo nau a‘usia ‘a e ako ‘oku vahevahe taau ai ‘a e faingamālie akó pea nau malava ‘o a‘usia ai ‘a ‘enau taumu‘a ki ha mo‘ui ‘oku fakapotopotó. *Our students from Motu have equitable access to quality education services that supports their goals of resilient and sustainable lives.*

3. Ko ‘etau fānau ako fefiné pea mo e tangatá kuo nau ma‘u ha faingamālie ako taau pea fakatupulekina ki he ‘enau taumu‘a ki ha mo‘ui ‘oku fakapotopotó. *Our students, male or female, have access to gender specific support programmes that enables equitable access to quality education services and support their goals of resilient and sustainable lives.*

4. Ko ‘etau fānau akó kuo nau ako ‘i ha ‘apiako ‘oku nofo loto ai ‘a e taumu‘a ‘o e ako kau kātoá, pea poupou‘i ai ke nau malava ‘o a‘usia ‘a ‘enau taumu‘a ki ha mo‘ui ‘oku fakapotopotó. *Our students are learning in educational institutions and schools that are inclusive in nature and all students are supported to achieve their goals of resilient and sustainable lives.*

5. Ko ‘etau fānau akó kuo nau ako ‘i ha ‘apiako ‘oku ma‘a, malu pea kuo hoko ko e ‘api hūfanga‘anga. *Our students are learning in educational institutions and schools that are cleaner, safer and are places of refuge, because they are resilient schools.*

Policy Targets

This policy goal is intended to make a difference to our efforts to meet the following SDG indicators and targets:

SDG 4.1.1 Proportion of children and young people (a) in Grade 2 or 3; (b) at the end of primary education; and (c) at the end of lower secondary education achieving at least a minimum proficiency level in (i) reading and (ii) mathematics, by gender.

SDG 4.3.1 Participation rate of youth and adults in formal and non-formal education and training the previous 12 months, by gender.

SDG 4.5.1 Parity indices (female/male, rural/urban, bottom/top wealth quintiles and others such as disability status, indigenous peoples and conflict-affected, as data become available) for all education indicators on this list that can be disaggregated.

SDG 4.6.1 Proportion of population in a given age group achieving at least a fixed level of proficiency in functional (a) literacy and (b) numeracy skills, by gender.

SDG 4.a.1 Proportion of schools with access to: (a) electricity; (b) internet for pedagogical purposes; (c) computers for pedagogical purposes; (d) adapted infrastructure and materials for students with disabilities; (e) basic drinking water; (f) single-sex basic sanitation facilities; and (g) basic handwashing facilities (as per WASH indicator definitions).

This policy goal is intended to make a difference in our efforts to meet the following PacREF outcomes:

Policy Area 1: Quality and Relevance
Outcomes 2: Learning is inclusive of cognitive and non-cognitive development.

Outcomes 3: Curriculum and programmes, with appropriate pedagogy are inclusive, rights-based, promote gender equality, flexible and responsive to innovation and change and are adaptable to new learning opportunities.

Outcomes 4: Quality learning environment that supports learning at all levels of education.

Policy Area 2: Learning Pathways
Outcomes 2: Our most vulnerable learners fully participate in a wide range of learning.

Strategic initiatives phase 1: 2025-2030

The following policy programmes and components have been prioritised in order of importance of contribution to the policy objectives under Policy Area 3: Vahevahe taau mo e ako kau kātoa: the education sector is inclusive and with improved equitable access.

PROGRAMMES & COMPONENTS:

Programme 1: Language Education

The new language education policy will signal a shift towards a language policy where Tonga and Niuafo'ou languages (for Niuafo'ou students) are the foundational languages of learning for all sub-sectors from ECE, Primary and lower secondary school level (form 4). The Niuafo'ou language, a minority indigenous language to the people of Niuafo'ou has never been formally recognised nor taught in the education system. We affirm that Niuafo'ou students have the right to learn and enjoy their indigenous language. The new language education policy will also broaden literacy from reading and writing, to encourage a range of understanding and forms of expressions – including oracy and Talanoa which concurs with our Tongan way of knowing and learning. In addition, the capacity to listen as in Fānongo and to listen with care, empathy and respect will be a focus for development. Further to this, is the recognition that there are other forms of communication, including Sign language and reading Braille that need to be reflected in the new language education programme.

Language education components:
1. Set up a working committee of Niuafo'ou language specialists and members from the Niuafo'ou community. The Niuafo'ou language working committee will work with the Curriculum Unit of the Ministry to draft the Niuafo'ou language curriculum for ECE, Primary and lower secondary. Niuafo'ou students, living in Niuafo'ou and 'Eua will be able to learn the Niuafo'ou language additional to learning the Tongan language and the English language as guided by the curriculum. The Niuafo'ou language working committee will be tasked with ensuring that the secondary school level Niuafo'ou language programme is connected to the current USP Tonga and Niuafo'ou language qualification. The working committee is encouraged to work collaboratively with the Niuafo'ou community to define the scope of the Niuafo'ou language curriculum, develop, pilot and roll out the Niuafo'ou language curriculum.
Output 1: Niuafo'ou language curriculum for ECE, Primary and lower secondary school levels

2. With the working committee for the Niuafo'ou language, support the ongoing training of teachers in the Niuafo'ou language. This will include franchise of the USP Tonga and Niuafo'ou Language Certificate to the Tonga Institute of Education and make available for all teachers who are of Niuafo'ou heritage and for Tonga language teachers. Members from the working committee of the Niuafo'ou language are encouraged to be part of the teaching of the Niuafo'ou language at the Tonga Institute of Education and providing continuing professional development for teachers of the Niuafo'ou language. Further to this, encourage community members in Niuafo'ou to teach the Niuafo'ou language in the school and at other non-formal setting, including Sunday school.
Output 2: Franchise of the USP Tonga and Niuafo'ou Language Certificate to the Tonga Institute of Education

3. Set up a working committee to work on developing programme for teaching Sign Language and reading Braille. This programme is to become part of the training and professional development for all teachers and therefore encourage close collaboration with teacher training providers, relevant NGOs and the various education systems' professional development units.
Output 3: Professional development programme for teachers in use of Sign Language and reading Braille

Programme 2: Motu schools

The Motu Schools programme is to address the inequity in provision of education services between urban main Island and rural, remote island communities. The term 'motu' refers to islands and the term is generally used to describe all the islands outside of Tongatapu. In this Haʻapai policy, Motu refers to 'Eua, the Haʻapai group, the Vavaʻu group, Niuatoputapu and Niuafoʻou. Each island province has its unique challenges with communication, access to travel and geographical location of other outlying islands as in the case of the Haʻapai group. It was very clear from the national consultation held that parents, communities and teachers asked for greater attention and provision of support for Motu schools. Composite and multi-grade classes are prevalent in Motu schools which presents its unique challenges for teachers. A key driver for this programme is to ensure that students at GPS Tongamamaʻo, Niufoʻou have equitable access to educational services as well as students at GPS Nuku'alofa on Tongatapu.

Motu Schools components:
1. Set up a unit within the MET that will focus specifically on improving access for Motu Schools, covering all government and faith based ECE, Primary and Secondary schools. The unit is to be under the leadership of a Deputy CEO that will also be responsible for Motu Schools and given appropriate levels of support to ensure implementation of the Motu Schools Policy.
Output 1: Establishment of Motu Schools Unit within the Ministry of Education

2. Set up a working committee within the Ministry with members from the faith-based education systems, relevant NGOs and government agencies to develop a policy for improving the provision of services for Motu schools. The working committee will be under the leadership of a newly established Ministry of Education and Training Deputy CEO for Motu Schools. The Motu Schools Policy should be based on consultation and with careful coordination with relevant government Ministries (such as Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Finance and Planning, etc.) and relevant Churches, NGOs (such as MORDI Tonga, Live and Learn, Tonga National Youth Congress, etc.) on ways to bring about multi-stakeholder support for Motu schools. The Motu Schools Policy is to encourage greater collaboration amongst different stakeholders and government agencies to provide resources necessary to ensure all Motu schools meet revised service standards for all schools. This will include meeting service standards for inclusive schools as well as for nurturing schools. The Motu Schools Policy will also consider the supply and deployment of teachers to Motu schools including the provisions for recruitment of teachers from Motu. Furthermore, the policy will consider working conditions for teachers working in Motu schools, such as housing, allowances and benefits. It will consider the supply and provision of teaching and learning materials for Motu schools and the timely delivery of these resources. Additionally, the policy will cover the provisions of DFL services for Motu schools and ensure that the appropriate level and mode of DFL is available for each Motu school.
Output 2: Motu Schools Policy

3. The Motu Schools Unit is tasked with drawing up an Action Plan for implementing the Motu Schools Policy. The Motu Schools Action Plan is financed through the MET and external support from communities, donors, government agencies and NGOs and Churches. A key task of the unit will be coordinating the necessary support to implement the Motu Schools Action Plan. The Motu Schools Action Plan will also consider provision of TVET at secondary school level and providing pathways for students from Motu to tertiary institutions in Tongatapu. It will be important to align the Motu action Plan to the TVET framework and support existing secondary schools to franchise specific TVET programmes to meet their island's needs. It will

also be appropriate to provide DLF support (print based, face to face, blended mode, remote learning, online learning) for each island province, depending on need and available infrastructural support.

Output 3: Motu Schools Action Plan

Programme 3: Gender and development

The gender programme is designed to address gender parity in the participation and achievement of girls and boys in education. Generally, girls outperform boys as shown in the PILNA results 2018. There are more female teachers in the education sector and predominantly women teachers at ECE and Primary school levels. However, the collection of data from across the education sector needs to be improved, including the disaggregation of data by age, gender and location. We need more research to better understand how our male and female students are participating throughout the different education sub-sectors. While recognising that our culture has defined views on gender with the place of women and men in our wider society, we should also affirm that all students, regardless of gender, have the right to quality education. This means that all education programme are accessible to all students, regardless of gender.

Gender and development components:

1. Conduct research into how boys and girls participate in the education system and specifically at lower secondary and senior secondary level. The research is to identify the barriers and enablers to boys' and girls' participation in the education system. The new gender study should build on existing literature, including any gender study conducted with Tongan population.

Output 1: Gender and development research study report

2. Findings from the gender research should be used to develop a holistic approach to gender and development that seeks to achieve gender equality for both men and women and that will support the overall goals of the new education policy. The approach should be articulated in an action plan including improvement in data collection, and ensuring data disaggregation by gender. The action plan should also include activities to address gender specific barriers including gender-based violence and discrimination. Furthermore, the action plan should include activities to support the review of the curriculum, assessment and introduced programmes under Policy Area 1. Additionally, the action plan should include support for teachers through professional development workshops raising awareness on gender specific practices that may enable greater participation in learning for all students, irrespective of gender. School principals are encouraged to include in their School Improvement Plans, activities that will see more male coaches support the teaching of Movement and Fitness and male church ministers teaching of Loto'i Tonga moral education programme.

Output 2: Gender and development action plan

Programme 4: Inclusive schools

The Inclusive Schools programme is designed to support the revised Inclusive Education Policy Ako kau kātoa. The revised policy captures the concept of ako kau kātoa, taking a broad and holistic approach to inclusive education, extending beyond disability, to include learning difficulties, gifted and talented, gender, age, ethnicity, linguistic, vulnerable students from violent home backgrounds and location. In the past education policy framework, there was minimal support given to Special Education, Inclusive Education, or Adult Education. In going forward, we will strengthen existing structures of Special Education and Adult Education so that they are strong in their own standing. We will progressively transform existing mainstream classrooms to become inclusive classrooms. We will carefully consider existing resources and work towards greater collaboration across all education systems and stakeholders to enable this transformation. This is a significant shift in provision of education services, and will require the support of parents, communities, government agencies, Ministry of Health, NGOs, Churches as well as development partners and donors.

Vahevahe taau mo e ako kau kātoá

Inclusive Schools components:

1. Tongan classrooms, from ECE, Primary, and Secondary to Tertiary level will progressively move towards inclusive classrooms. This shift towards inclusive classrooms will be reflected in the revised Inclusive Education Policy Ako kau kātoa. The revised policy will define for Tonga, an appropriate and context specific application of 'inclusive education'. The revised policy should articulate the role of Special Education schools and mainstream schools where inclusive classrooms will increasingly become the norm. The revised policy should clearly articulate the indicators for Inclusive Education in Tonga, covering five levels of implementation including government, Motu and Churches (island community), school, classroom and student. The revised policy is to also consider the preparation of teacher trainees and continuing professional development for teachers and school leaders. The continuing professional development for all teachers in Inclusive Education will be a core part of the professional development under PA 2. The revised policy is to also support PA 1 and PA 2 programmes to ensure inclusion is a principle that will run through all education programmes. The policy will also address the range of resources and learning supports required to make the policy a reality including a well resources action plan.

Output 1: revised Inclusive Education Ako kau kātoa policy

2. Leading Inclusive schools will be a critical component in realising the implementation of the revised Inclusive Education policy at school/institutional level. Educational leaders (school principals, Education Officers, Directors of Tertiary education institutions) are encouraged to incorporate into existing school improvement plans/work plans/strategic plans strategies to meet the needs of diverse learners. Leaders will be supported through workshops and training on school policy development, planning for Inclusive schools and data collection for monitoring and evaluation of plans. Leaders will also be supported through continuing professional development for instructional leadership including planning and managing professional development for teachers. The continuing professional development programme for educational leaders will also include fostering strong community connectedness, working with parents, Churches, government agencies, NGOs and community.

Output 2: Continuing Professional Development Programme for educational leaders in leading inclusive schools

3. The MET's Inclusive Education Unit will be tasked with drawing up an action plan specifically for progressing Special Education schools, as defined by the revised Inclusive Education Policy. The action plan should be based on valid and reliable data informing the plan of the status of Special Education schools in the country. Existing special education schools will be supported through targeted provision of equipment, infrastructure, learning resources including the supply of appropriately trained Special Education teachers. The resourcing of Special Education schools will also include improved access to medical services, therapy, diagnosis and offer support for parents and community. The action plan should also provide remedial programmes for students and provide opportunities for students who can cope, to transition to mainstream classrooms. A key task for the first phase is to build up existing Special Education schools and expand provision of special education schools to cover all of the Motu. Where there are no Special Education schools in the Motu, but there is a need for it, MET's Inclusive Education Unit is encouraged to work closely with the Motu Unit and relevant communities to set up Special Education classrooms within existing school infrastructure. Where necessary, education systems are strongly encouraged to co-share Special Education classrooms by contributing to the establishment and management of the special education classrooms. In addition, the action plan for Special Education will also consider widening access to TVET programmes to enable multiple pathways for young adults with disabilities to find productive and meaningful livelihoods.

Output 3: Special Education Action Plan

4. Set up a working committee to develop an Adult Education and Lifelong Learning Policy. The Adult Education and Lifelong Learning Policy should reflect the changing demands on our economy and labour mobility and the changing social landscape. The policy will promote Adult Education as an opportunity for

continual lifelong learning and supporting adults to re-skill and continually adapt to a changing labour market context. The policy should also provide an opportunity for adults to re-enter into the formal education system and provide Second Chance education. The policy for Adult Education should also support a closer working relationship between workforce and training institutions, with provisions for apprenticeship, training for the unemployed population and up-skilling for low-skilled labourers. The policy can bring together all non-formal education providers who are currently offering learning for adults, including the government, faith-based organizations, NGOs and industries into an integrated platform. The policy should be developed through a co-design approach with relevant stakeholders, particularly with the industries and training providers.

Output 4: Adult Education and Lifelong Learning Policy

5. The Ministry of Education to develop an action plan to implement the Adult Education and Lifelong Learning Policy. The action plan should be developed in close consultation with all providers of non-formal education and stakeholders identified from the Adult Education and Lifelong Learning Policy.

Output 5: Adult Education and Lifelong Learning Action Plan

Programme 5: Nurturing schools

The Nurturing schools programme is designed to transform our schools and educational institutions into clean, safe and resilient schools that can offer our students refuge. We know that not all schools meet the basic WASH requirements, with poor hygiene and sanitation. During the current global pandemic, we have recognised clearly the work that is needed to improve the basic services that schools must offer students. We also know that in our schools, there are daily forms of abuse, bullying, gender-based violence and physical punishment of students that continues. It is apparent that alcohol, tobacco and drugs are threatening the lives of young people. Furthermore, cybercrime, particularly cyber bullying affects our young people emotionally and mentally. Our schools and educational institutions can become nurturing schools and places where students can find refuge and safety. We also know that in times of cyclones, stronger school buildings can provide refuge for dislocated families. Most schools, including Primary Schools have access to land that can sustain vegetables and fruits. Most schools in Motu have access to the ccean, where students can learn to fish and swim. By creating nurturing schools, we can create learning environments that encourage students to be at school.

Nurturing Schools Components:

1. Review the current Ministry of Education minimum service standards and expand this to cover all schools and educational institutions including ECE and Tertiary institutions. The new revised service standards will promote cleaner and functional schools. Basic supply of clean drinking water, clean, functional and running toilets including supply of sanitation products for female students and accessibility for students with disabilities. The new revised service standards will comply with covid-19 restrictions and instructions (sick bay, masks, handwashing basins, soap etc.). Enforcing these requirements becomes part of the yearly inspection of all schools, tied to government funding and budget support.

Output 1: Revised service standards for all schools and educational institutions

2. Set up a working committee to develop a Child Protection Policy to create safer schools for all students. All educational institutions are drug, smoke and alcohol free. They are to comply with public laws for smoking in public places, alcohol consumption in public places and drug abuse. All educational institutions comply with Child Protection Policy and relevant legislations against any form of violence, abuse and bullying in schools. Enforcing these laws becomes part of the yearly inspection of all schools, tied to government funding and budget support.

Output 2: Child Protection Policy

3. Support schools to become Resilient Schools, by consolidating all current efforts to build resilient and safer schools into one action plan for Resilient Schools. The Resilient Schools action plan should encourage all education systems to draw up school disaster risk management plans. The school disaster risk management plans should include clear plans on evacuation procedures and protocols to follow in preparation for cyclones, tsunami, and natural disasters. The action plan for Resilient Schools should also promote sustainable use of energy with installation of solar panels, installation of water tanks, and planting of a range of trees. The action plan for Resilient Schools should also promote school gardens supported by community and NGOs to provide fruits and vegetables for students.
Output 3: Resilient Schools Action Plan

Strategic initiatives phase 2: 2031-2035

The second phase of the new education policy framework will be further articulated as we near the end of phase 1. The details of the Policy Area 3 components and activities for phase 2 will be guided by the achievements and challenges of phase 1. As such, the components and activities listed here are based on assumptions about implementation of Phase 1 and resources available for Phase 2. These activities are likely to change as we make progress in the first phase.

PROGRAMMES & COMPONENTS:

Programme 1: Language education

1. Ongoing monitoring of the implementation of the new Policy for Language Education. Key to the implementation of the new Policy is the continuing professional development for teachers and that this is based on targeted approaches driven by classroom data that is regularly collected.
Output 1: Continuing professional development programme for teachers in support of the Language policy

2. Ongoing monitoring of the implementation of the Niuafo'ou language curriculum for ECE, Primary and lower secondary. Continue to collect classroom data from Niuafo'ou classrooms and used to inform the monitoring and continuing professional development for teachers working in Niuafo'ou.
Output 2: Monitoring report on the implementation of the Niuafo'ou language curriculum for ECE, Primary and lower secondary

3. Ongoing monitoring of the implementation of the continuing professional development for teachers in the use of Sign language and Braille.
Output 3: Monitoring report on the implementation of the professional development programme for teachers in the use of the Sign language and Braille

4. Review of Lea Faka-Tonga for ECE and Primary curriculum.
Output 4: Revised Lea Faka-Tonga for ECE and Primary curriculum

5. Review of English as a Second language for Upper Primary curriculum.
Output 5: Revised English as a second language for upper primary curriculum

6. Ongoing monitoring of the expansion of teaching of foreign languages to Motu and across all secondary schools.
Output 6 Monitoring report on the expansion of the teaching of foreign languages to Motu and across all secondary schools

Vahevahe taau mo e ako kau kātoá

Programme 2: Motu schools

1. The Motu Schools Unit is sustained and further developed to meet the needs of Motu schools.
Output 1: Annual report of the Motu Schools Unit operations

2. Ongoing monitoring of the implementation of the Motu Schools Policy.
Output 2: Annual report of the implementation of the Motu Schools Policy

3. Ongoing monitoring and updating of the Motu Schools Action Plan.
Output 3: Updated Motu Schools Action Plan

Programme 3: Gender

1. Ongoing monitoring of the implementation of the Gender development Action Plan.
Output 1: Annual report on the implementation of the Gender development Action Plan

Programme 4: Inclusive schools

1. Ongoing monitoring of the implementation of the Inclusive Education Policy.
Output 1 Annual report on the implementation of the Inclusive Education Policy

2. Continuing professional development for school leaders in Inclusive Education.
Output 2 Annual report on the continuing professional development of school leaders in Inclusive Education

3. Ongoing monitoring of the implementation of the Special Education Action Plan.
Output 3 Annual report on the implementation of the Special Education Action Plan

4. Ongoing monitoring of the implementation of the Adult Education and Lifelong learning policy through an Action Plan.
Output 4 Annual report on the implementation of the Adult Education and Lifelong learning policy

Programme 5: Nurturing schools

1. Ongoing monitoring of the implementation of the revised service standards for all schools and educational institutions.
Output 1 Annual report on the implementation of the revised service standards for all schools and educational institutions

2. Ongoing monitoring and implementation of the Child Protection Policy.
Output 2 Annual report on the implementation of the Child Protection Policy

3. Ongoing monitoring and implementation of the Resilient Schools Action Plan.
Output 3 Annual report on the implementation of the Resilient Schools Action Plan



Policy Area 4

Fonua mo e Kāinga: Partnerships and Community Connectedness

This Policy Area is in support of the 3rd overall education goal for improved governance and leadership. Policy Area 4 is focused on strengthening the relationships between the education sector and the various communities that it serves and key partners that collectively carry the responsibility of educating our people. It is based on the Tongan saying that home is the first place of learning – "ko 'api 'a e 'uluaki 'apiakó". It recognises that it takes a village to raise a child and that parents, guardians and families have a critical role to play in education. This Policy Area is also based on a Tongan saying that "'oku tau 'alofi 'a e vaka 'o e akó" – that education is our collective responsibility. Policy Area 4 recognises and places value on the contributions from communities, development partners, donors and all sectors of society, towards education. This Policy Area is focused on strengthening relationships within the education sector, across the country, and with our development partners. It recognises that the challenges of the present and future require a stronger commitment to collaboration and solidarity. The act of collaboration, while admirable, is very challenging and requires sustained efforts from all stakeholders. Collaboration and willingness to work together is critical so that we can expand our capacity by sharing resources and reducing duplication of services. Collaboration is also critical as a way of sharing responsibilities and being accountable to one another. This Policy Area will apply to all sub-sectors, ECE, Primary, Secondary and Tertiary.

Policy Goal

Ko ha kāinga 'o e akó 'oku mālohi pea mo fepoupouaki ki ha ako 'oku ma'uma'uluta pea mo tu'uloa. *The education sector is strengthened, as all stakeholders are collaborating towards a coherent and sustainable education sector.*

Policy Objectives

To achieve the policy goal, we have agreed on the following policy objectives:

1. Kāinga 'o e akó[1] - ke fakaivia 'a e ngāue fakatahá, pea mo e fepoupouaki 'i he founga fetu'utaki 'oku maau, pea kakato 'a e 'ilo 'oku vahevahé. *To strengthen communication and collaboration within the education sector.*

2. Kāinga ofi 'o e akó[2] – ke tokonia 'a e fengāue'aki, fetu'utaki 'a e kāinga akó mo e kau mātu'á, tauhi fānaú, kāinga Tonga nofo mulí, kolisi tutukú, koló, mo e siasí ke ma'u ha kaha'u fakapotopoto 'o e tama ohí. *To strengthen communication and collaboration with parents, communities in Tonga and in diaspora, ex-students, churches and local development groups.*

3. Kāinga faingata'á[3] – ke fakaivia 'a e kāinga faingata'a 'o e akó 'i he 'enau fetu'utaki pea mo e potungāue fakapule'angá, pea mo e kautaha taautahá ke ngāue fakataha ki he poupoua 'a e akó. *Strengthen our partnership with the public sector, private sector, development agencies, donors, and parliamentarians to collaborate and support a coherent education sector.*

[1] Kāinga 'o e akó – education sector that includes all teachers, school leaders, education officers, government and faith-based education systems, ECE, Primary, Secondary and Tertiary).
[2] Kāinga ofi 'o e akó – parents, guardians, communities, churches, ex-students associations, diaspora communities, village development groups and kava clubs.
[3] Kāinga faingata'a – development partners, donors, government agencies, NGOs.

Fonua mo e Kāinga

Policy Outcomes

At the completion of the 10 years, we hope to achieve the following policy outcomes:

1. Kāinga ‘o e ako kuo tataki kinautolu ‘e he kau taki ‘oku nau fakapotopoto, fefaka‘apa‘apa‘aki pea ngāue fakataha ki he lelei fakalūkufua. *Educational leaders who are wise, resilient and through mutual respect, are leading towards a more collaborative education sector.*

2. Kāinga ofi ‘o e akó kuo nau ma‘u ha founga ngāue vaofi, pea fepoupouaki pea mo e kau faiakó, puleakó pea mo e potungāue akó. *There is a strong collaborative, accountable, transparent and mutually respecGul relationship between communities and the education sector.*

3. Kāinga faingata‘a ‘o e akó kuo ma‘u ha founga ngāue kuo vāofi, femahino‘aki pea fepoupouaki, ‘i he founga tau‘ātaina pea mo fefaka‘apa‘apa‘aki. *There is a strong collaborative partnership between the public sector, private sector, development agencies, donors, and parliamentarians that is based on support and mutual respect that affirms our sovereignty and authenticity.*

Policy Targets

This policy goal is intended to make a difference in our efforts to meet the following SDG indicators and targets:

SDG17.15.1* Numbers of constraints that are embodied in official development assistance or loan agreements, international investment agreements, regional trade agreements, etc.

SDG17.17.1 Amount of United States dollars committed to public-private and civil society partnerships.

This policy goal is intended to contribute to our efforts to meet the following PacREF outcomes:

PacREF Policy Area 1: Quality and Relevance
Outcome 4: Quality learning environment that supports learning at all levels of education.

Strategic initiatives phase 1: 2025-2030

The following policy programmes and components have been prioritised in order of importance of contribution to the policy objectives under Policy Area 4: Fonua mo e Kāinga: Partnerships and Community Connectedness.

PROGRAMMES & COMPONENTS:

Programme 1: Kāinga ‘o e Akó, Collaborative Education Sector

A stronger, more collaborative education sector is a critical element of the new education policy framework. Our limited capacity and resources, requires a much stronger, unified education sector to work together. The successful implementation of this new policy framework hinges on the collaboration of all education systems in order to ensure institutions at every level of education work together. This is a challenge for an education sector that historically has been characterised by significant fragmentation, poor coordination and lack of trust. This programme will require significant investment in educational leadership and creating platforms for open dialogue and robust communication strategies. The success of all other programmes within the Policy Area and the strategic initiatives under other Policy Areas will depend on this programme. Tonga’s

education sector needs to be stronger, more collaborative and committed to solidarity in implementing the new education policy framework.

Kāinga ‘o e akó: Collaborative Education Sector components:

1. The Action Plan will also include strengthening the internal relationships as Kāinga ‘o e Akó. A key to improving the relationship within the education sector is a strong Communication Strategy that is robust, regularly updated, reviewed and carefully implemented. The Communication Strategy, should be guided by principles of inclusion, equity, and humility, openness to learning and mutual respect. The communication strategy should also include setting up of annual national dialogue, Fono ‘a e Ako, for education development. The opportunity for dialogue, for sharing, for learning must be encouraged as a way to drive the new education policy framework.

Output 1: Education Sector Communication Strategy

2. Set up of annual national dialogue, Fono ‘a e Akó, under the leadership of the Ministry of Education and Training’s Policy, Planning and Research Unit. The annual national dialogue summit or Fono ‘a e Akó, is to provide a forum for all education authorities, development partners, communities and the private sector to hold open and constructive critical conversations about the status of education in Tonga. The Fono will also be an opportunity to share best practices across all education authorities, to share good stories as well as highlight new learnings that needs to take place. The Fono will become a critical feature to drive the direction of the new education policy framework.

Output 2: Annual national education summit, Fono ‘a e Akó

3. Strengthen the Teachers’ Association for subject areas by a review of current approaches to hosting and managing each subject area’s association. Under the leadership of the Ministry of Education and in collaboration with all education authorities, draw up a new Action Plan for bring all of the subject teacher associations under the Teaching Service Commission.. Under the new Teaching Service Commission a series of activities will be designed to strengthen collaboration, sharing of resources and skills across all the education authorities. The Teaching Service Commission, will include ECE teachers association, Primary teachers association, Secondary teachers association and a new Tertiary lecturers’ association. The association will focus on building the instructional skills, knowledge and research capacity of teachers and lecturers in their specialised areas.

Output 3: Teaching Service Commission expand to include subject teachers association

Programme 2: Kāinga ofi ‘o e Akó, Collaborative Communities

The role of parents, communities, diaspora communities, ex-students associations and village development groups have long been recognised as major contributors to our education sector. The funding support from our communities have largely been down played and not recognised in education sector reporting. For all of the faith based education authorities, the development of their infrastructures, staff salary, equipment, sports and school fees depend on the contributions of their communities. The Tongan diaspora communities also play an important role in supporting the development of our school infrastructures and provisions of scholarships. This programme will affirm the relationship with our communities and strengthen the existing relationships. One of the key concerns with this relationship, is the ‘return on investment’ for parents and communities, or the level of accountability in this relationship. There is a need to strengthen reporting and accountability mechanism so that parents and communities receive up to date, reliable and informative data on the learning of students.

Kāinga ofi ‘o e Akó, Collaborative Communities Components:

1. Strengthen the role of Parent Teacher Association (PTA) at school level and at education authority level.

This will include, the development of PTA Policy, by the Ministry of Education and Training, to provide guidance for how parents can support the running of schools in practical ways. Every, ECE, Primary and Secondary school will have a functional PTA, following the national PTA Policy. The Ministry of Education and Training will provide guidelines in line with the PTA Policy, and other necessary tools to support schools in the set up and management of school PTAs. School leaders and education authorities must recognise and be able to harness the influence that parents have in supporting schools achieve school goals. This includes, regular detailed reporting and communication from school to the PTA about students learning needs and progress. The relationship between schools and the PTA must also include the support for students learning, other than financial support for the school. As such, schools will be encouraged to foster deeper levels of collaboration and commitment to working together with the PTA. The national PTA policy will be the umbrella policy for supporting community partnerships with schools and education authorities. The national PTA policy will also serve as the overarching policy for guiding family, community, ex-students associations, and Tongan diaspora community partnership with schools.

Output 1: National PTA Policy

Programme 3: Kāinga faingataʻa ʻo e Akó, Collaborative Partnerships

Education in Tonga is supported by stakeholders that includes private sector (mainly businesses), NGOs, other government agencies and development partners. At present the relationship with development partners and donors are more obvious and receive greater attention. The relationship between the education sector and the private sector, NGOs and other government agencies are less clear, less obvious and at times non-existent. This programme will support clarifying the relationship between the education sector and the private sector, other government agencies and development partners.

Kāinga faingataʻa ʻo e Akó, Collaborative Partnerships Components:

1. The support from donor partners, long standing and new, as well as the technical assistances provided through implementing agencies, regional and international, all play a critical role in education development for Tonga. At present, there are good practices evident in aid development in Tonga. However, there are also ineffective and costly investments that do not reap the expected rewards. This programme will support the set up of Tonga's guideline for donor and implementing agency engagement. The key values of collaboration, mutual respect, transparency and openness to learning will guide the development of Tonga's guidelines for donor and implementing agency engagement. The Ministry of Education and Training will be tasked with working in collaboration with other education authorities, and donors and implementing agencies to develop Tonga's guidelines for aid in education development. The guidelines are to be based on sustainable development and respecting the sovereignty and ownership of Tonga data and intellectual property.

Output 1: Tonga's Guideline for Donor Partnership in Education

2. Relationships with the private sector and NGOs needs to be strengthened. Set up a working group within the Ministry of Education to develop an Action Plan that will strengthen the ties between the private sector, inclusive of the NGOs, and the education sector. The role of the private sector, mainly businesses, industry and the NGOs in education has traditionally been minimal. The private sector in Tonga is small and confined to businesses, churches and the NGOs. The churches are already involved in the education sector through their education authorities and therefore not considered as part of this programme. From the consultation with the communities, it was clear that there is a need for strengthening the relationship between education and the industries. As future employers of students, there is need to strengthen the communication line between education and the industries and input into decision making The NGOs, also offer non-formal training programme and often on relevant topics. This includes, Sports clubs, Music groups, Environment groups, Cultural groups and others that may not be formally registered as NGOs. However, like the industries, the NGOs do not have a clear connection or guidance for sustaining long term working relationship with the education sector. The action plan will include provision for regular feedback and consultation with

the private sector, industries to provide input towards curriculum development, TVET programme, work place internships, preparations for the workforce and other similar schemes. The action plan will also provide some guidance on the role of NGOs in non-formal training programme and in relation to the formal education sector. The support from NGOs will be helpful in supporting the programme under Policy Area 1 and 2.

Output 2: Action Plan for developing partnership between private sector and education sector

3. Relationship with government agencies, such as Ministry of Health, Ministry of Police, Ministry of Trade and Commerce and the Ministry of Internal Affairs are critical in supporting the education sector. Although, there is ongoing work with these government agencies, it is important to continually highlight the value of inter-government support for improving education and further articulate the scope of support from each government agency and in particular the sharing of data and resources. This is particularly important for Motu schools, as these government agencies can provide additional resources and in particular human resources for rural remote island communities. In collaboration with the relevant government agencies, the Ministry of Education and Training should develop an internal guideline to support communication and sharing of resources (where appropriate) amongst these government agencies.

Output 3: Internal guideline for inter-government communication and sharing of resources

Strategic initiatives phase 2: 2031-2035

The second phase of the new education policy framework will be further articulated as we near the end of Phase 1. The details of the Policy Area 4 components for phase 2 will be guided by the achievements and challenges of phase 1. As such, the components and activities listed here are based on assumptions about implementation of Phase 1 and the resources that will be available for Phase 2. These activities are likely to change as we make progress in the first phase.

PROGRAMMES & COMPONENTS:

Programme 1: Kāinga ‘o e Akó, Collaborative Education sector

1. Continue with the implementation and ongoing monitoring of the Education Sector Communication Strategy.

Output 1: Monitoring and evaluation of the Education Sector Communication Strategy

Programme 2: Kāinga ofi ‘o e Akó, Collaborative Communities

1. Guided by the National PTA Policy, and in collaboration with communities and PTA, the Ministry of Education and Training is tasked with developing a national standard for family-school partnership. The national standards for family-school partnership should raise awareness of the power of community and family involvement in education, thereby supporting the involvement of the PTA and wider communities in specific development programmes for schools. The wider community includes; ex-students association, community development groups and the Tongan diaspora communities. Key principles of inclusion, mutual respect, collaboration, accountability and power sharing should be encourage to form the national standards for family-school partnerships. The Ministry of Education and Training is tasked with the development of the national standards for family-school partnership and the implementation of these standards can be linked to the revised minimum service standards.

Output 1: National standards for family-school partnership

2. In collaboration with representatives of PTAs, education authorities and wider communities (ex-students associations, community development groups) develop an Action Plan for the development of the family,

community and school partnership. The Ministry of Education and Training will lead this work and through on going consultation and research, develop an Action Plan to further progress the implementation of the PTA Policy and the standards for family-school partnership.

Output 2: Family- School Partnership Action Plan

Programme 3: Kāinga faingata‘a ‘o e Akó, Collaborative Partnerships

Components

1. Ongoing monitoring the implementation of the Action Plan for partnership with private sector and education sector.

Output 1: Monitoring and evaluation report on the action plan for partnerships

2. Ongoing monitoring the implementation of the internal guideline for inter-government communication and sharing of resources.

Output 2: Monitoring and evaluation report on the action plan for communications and sharing of resources



Policy Area 5

Tākanga ‘o ‘etau fohé: Governance and Leadership

This policy area will support the Education Goal 3, in improving governance and leadership in the education sector. This policy is aimed at establishing a governance and leadership mechanism within the new TEPF that will ensure that it will be effectively executed and will achieve its policy goals, objectives and outcomes. The review of the previous TEPF tells us that the new Framework can be successfully realised only to the extent that stakeholders in the sector feel ownership of the Policy and are given the opportunity to participate fully in the process from the design to the implementation stage and right through to the monitoring and evaluation of outcomes, and it is not sufficient that they participate merely in the process. They must have a voice in decision-making that relates to the management and coordination of the process, and in particular, to the allocation of resources.

The process, therefore, that was used in the design of the new Policy was deliberately set up to be inclusive, which encompassed nation-wide consultations with all stakeholders, was geographically comprehensive, and involved among others, policy-makers, parents, teachers, students, administrators, and our communities. The consultations highlighted the critical importance of certain values, which became the guiding principles of the design process: our Christian faith, mutual respect, humility, sustainability, reciprocity, collaboration and inclusivity, transparency and accountability, and independence and sustainability. These principles confirm that the governance and leadership structure of the TEPF has to be inclusive and all education systems must have a voice in decision-making and in managing and controlling the process and outcomes. Such a robust governance and leadership structure would ensure sustainability and successful achievement of outcomes.

Policy Goal

Ke malu‘i, fakaivia pea fakahoko ‘a e tākanga ‘o ‘etau fohé/ ‘etau kafa tahá ‘i he vaka/fale ‘o e akó ke ma‘u ‘a e ola ‘o e akó fakalūkufua pea ke ma‘u ai ‘a e fakapotopoto ‘oku tu‘uloá.
To safeguard, strengthen and implement the governance and leadership of all education to enable the resilience and sustainability of our people.

Policy Objectives

To achieve the policy goal, we have agreed on the following policy objectives:

1. Ke malu‘i – safeguard and improve participation and representation in governance and leadership.

2. Ke fakaivia – promote sustainable and inclusive governance and leadership through shared information that is accurate and shared on a timely basis, and a strong communication strategy that is shared and owned by all.

3. Ke fakahoko – strengthen effective accountability for the implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the new policy framework.

4. Ke lava ‘o fua mo vakai‘i ‘a e olá – the creation of a robust education statistics data strategy, and an effective and efficient EMIS in MET, in order to enable a robust and accurate Monitoring, Evaluation, Research, and Learning system.

Tākanga ‘o ‘etau fohé

Policy Outcomes

At the completion of the 10 years, we hope to achieve the following policy outcomes:

1. Ke malu’i – There is improved participation and representation in sector governance and leadership.

2. Ke fakaivia – Empower sustainability and inclusiveness by ensuring all sector stakeholders have the resources and information to effectively participate in sector governance.

3. Ke fakahoko – There is effective sector oversight of the implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the new policy framework is.

4. Ke lava ‘o fua mo vakai‘i ‘a e olá – A robust education statistics data strategy is in place, EMIS has been strengthened and an effective Monitoring, Evaluation, Research and Learning system is established.

Policy Targets

The policy targets are intended to make a difference in the following targets and indicators:

SDG 16.6.1 Primary government expenditures as a percentage of original approved budget, disaggregated by sector (or by budget codes or similar).

SDG 17.18.1 Proportion of sustainable development indicators produced at the national level with full disaggregation when relevant to the target, in accordance with the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics.

Other targets to be developed to measure improvement in education statistics.

This policy goal is intended to make a difference in our efforts to meet the following PacREF outcomes:

Policy Area 1: Quality and Relevance
Outcome 4: Quality learning environment that supports learning at all levels of education.

Policy Area 2: Learning Pathways
Outcomes 1: An enabling policy environment, which is rights-based with appropriate resourcing, for increased school-based decision-making and flexibility in the facilitation of learning.
Outcome 2: Our most vulnerable learners fully participate in a wide range of learning.



Strategic initiatives phase 1: 2025-2030

The following policy programmes and components are aimed at achieving the policy objectives under Policy Area 5: Governance and Leadership.

PROGRAMMES & COMPONENTS:

Programme 1: Ke malu‘i - Improve participation

The review of the previous Policy found a number of key factors that contributed to non-implementation of programmes or ineffective implementation. One was lack of ownership and exclusion of almost all stakeholders, in particular, non-government education systems, from key decision-making processes, such as resources allocation, which resulted in feelings of powerlessness to effect changes that could make a difference in the education of our young people. However, another major factor is the political context. Despite the existence of a written Policy Framework, changes in policy directions and priorities occur whenever there is a change in national leadership in education. Such a feature has become a part of our new political process. This programme seeks to widen and improve participation in the governance and leadership of the education sector.

Ke malu‘i components:

1. Review the Education Act 2013 Part IV Section 16 – Section 22 on the Advisory Council. The review of the Education 2013 will strengthen the Advisory Council as a legal mandated self-governing body, so as to enable the Council to provide independent counsel to the Minister and the Ministry of Education and Training. This will include strengthening of the Advisory Council members, secretariat, and regulations of the Advisory Council as an independent legal body within the legal framework of the Education Act. The review of the Education Act 2013 is to strengthen the transparency of decision making processes that pertain to education development and the implementation of the new education policy framework. The review is also to improve the accountability of the Advisory Council, the Minister of Education and Training, and the Ministry of Education and Training in the utilisation of public funds. This will include improvement in reporting lines and the transparency of reporting to the public and across key stakeholders. The review will consider the extent to which the Ministry of Education and Training, as the regulatory body, complies with the Education Act 2013 in operationalising the legal responsibilities of the Advisory Council. The review of the Education Act 2013 will further clarify the function and constitution of the Advisory Council (stipulated under section 16-22) to include broadening the ownership, leadership, and governance of the education sector. The Tonga Council of Directors of Education Systems will report to the Advisory Council, and the Technical Group will also report to the Advisory Council through the Council of Directors. The Ministry of Education and Training will provide the secretariat support and the budget support for the operations of the Advisory Council.

Output 1: Review of the Education Act 2013 Part IV Section 16-22 on the constitution and operation of the Advisory Council

2. Review the roles of the Tonga Council of Directors of Education Systems (TCDES) and broaden the membership of this body to include key education stakeholders, such as development partners, implementing agencies and Directors of Higher Education. The Tonga Council of Directors will act as a national body for considering technical aspects of the new education policy framework. The revised Tonga Council of Directors will also provide the function of the local education group (LEG). The TESPF technical group will report to the Council of Directors of Education Systems. The Council of Directors of Education Systems will in turn report to the Advisory Council of Education.

Output 2: Revised Tonga Council of Directors of Education Systems

Tākanga ‘o ‘etau fohé

Programme 2: Ke fakaivia - Empowerment

This programme proposes strategies that could assist in more equitable distribution of scarce human and material resources in the new policy period, for more sustainable and more equitable outcomes. This programme will also strengthen the governance, administration, and leadership of all education authorities, including the Ministry of Education and Training and tertiary institutions.

Ke fakaivia components:
1. An education resource mapping exercise is undertaken to identify all the resources in education and their current distribution. It would include all education systems and all education assets such as land, buildings, equipment, curriculum resources, and human resources, such as existing staff and their qualifications and years of experience, and existing financial resources. Some of these data would be available already in the databases of education systems, however MET’s EMIS could coordinate and oversee the exercise and write the report. The capability of MET’s EMIS needs to be strengthened and well supported to be able to carry out this exercise. EMIS could be supported by other education systems and their statistics personnel and units. There must be some agreement among all systems to participate and to make their data available for the purpose of the exercise. It is understood that some of the data may be privileged and confidential information, but there is a need for openness, honesty, and mutual trust and respect in order for the exercise to be effective. The outcome will assist with fair and just distribution of educational resources to make wise and sustainable decisions for supporting the education of all our young people, so that they may achieve quality outcomes.
Output 1: Education resource mapping exercise completed and report submitted to Advisory Council

2. Strengthen the governance, administration and leadership of all education authorities, including the Ministry of Education and Training and tertiary institutions. Through a mutually respectful approach, the Ministry of Education and Training needs to work collaboratively with each faith-based education authority to identify the level of support required to strengthen each education authority. This will also include tertiary institutions under each education authority and under the Ministry of Education and Training. The level of support is to be specific to strengthening the governance, administration, and leadership of each faith-based education authority, and needs to recognise that each education authority is at a different level of operation and capacity. It should also be recognised that the support can come from within the wider education sector, from external partners, and or from other faith-based education systems. The Ministry of Education and Training will take responsibility for this strengthening of the governance, administration and leadership of each education authority through collaboratively developing an Action Plan to strengthen the governance of each education authority.
Output 2: Action Plan for strengthening educational leaders

3. The Action Plan will include building the capability of educational leaders through the offering of targeted training including, where needed, scholarships for educational leaders. The training and continuing professional development for educational leaders is to focus on areas of executive leadership, policy development, educational planning, financing education, and community connectedness. The leadership development program should also include staff from the Ministry of Education and Training, senior education leaders from the tertiary sub-sector, as well as from each education authority. A key part of this programme should include mentoring and preparing future educational leaders. Furthermore, the educational leadership development programme will provide opportunities for senior education officers to continually engage with the new education policy framework through applied research, reflective learning, and sharing of lessons learned. Additionally, the programme should also include opportunities to deepen understanding between all education authorities, including the Ministry of Education and Training, and continually work towards deeper collaboration. The leadership development programme will include senior education officers from all education authorities, including the Ministry of Education and Training, including education officers

from Motu, senior education officials from the tertiary sub-sector, educational planners, policy writers, and finance officers. The leadership programme will also be offered as a way to mentor and prepare senior education officers for future leadership positions.

Output 3: Educational leadership development programme

4. The Action Plan will also include provisions for targeted training, including a qualifying programme for school principals. The school leadership development programme is specifically for heads of departments, deputy school principals, as well as current school principals, and will also specifically include the mentoring of future school leaders. The school leadership development programme will also include opportunities for school leaders to continually engage with the new education policy framework through applied research, sharing of lessons from implementation, and finding new solutions. The school leadership programme, like the executive education leadership programme, should also encourage opportunities for the sharing of learnings, research, and solutions across the education authorities, including the Ministry of Education and Training. The leadership programme should also promote deeper understanding and appreciation of each education authority, including the Ministry of Education and Training, and continually work towards deeper collaboration.

Output 4: School leadership development programme

Programme 3: Ke fakahoko – Implementation mechanism

Experience and the review of programmes and projects within the education sector tells us that even though they are often well planned, the outcomes still fall short of expectations. Implementation is often fragmented and uneven. One of the major constraints is poor management and coordination, which is not surprising in a small education sector, with scarce skilled and experienced human resources. Often there are competing demands on resources and emerging priorities take precedence. The MET is currently managing many programmes and projects funded by donor and development partners. While they were instituted to meet perceived needs, they are sometimes in conflict or are duplicating services. The urgent need has arisen for these programmes to be effectively coordinated to ensure that they are aligned and they support the goals of the new TESPF, and that collectively they work together to maximize educational achievements. This programme is aimed at bringing coherence and optimal efficacy to the implementation of TESPF.

Ke fakahoko – Implementation mechanism components

1. Strengthen the Ministry of Education and Training’s newly established unit for Project Management and Coordination Unit. This includes additional resources and staff for the Unit to be able to manage all incoming projects in the Ministry. Work plans are needed to outline the activities and resources and to gradually build up and strengthen the Project Management and Coordination Unit.

Output 1: Work plan for resourcing the Project Management and Coordination Unit

2. Strengthen the Ministry of Education and Training Policy, Planning and Research Unit to implement the new education policy framework. This will include additional staff and training required for the Planning Unit to manage and monitor the implementation of the new policy framework. Work plans will outline the activities and resources required to gradually build up and strengthen the Policy, Planning and Research unit.

Output 2: Work plan for resourcing the Policy, Planning and Research Unit

3. Establish a Technical Group (TG) to support the Ministry of Education’s Policy, Planning and Research Unit. The technical group will be drawn from the members of the co-design group that drafted the new education strategic policy framework. The technical group’s key role will be to support the Policy, Planning and Research Unit in the implementation and monitoring of the new education policy framework. Under the leadership of the Deputy CEO for Policy and Planning, this group will provide technical support to the Advisory Council. A TOR for the Technical Group will need to be created to clearly identify its roles and functions, the benefits and remunerations of members, and criteria for membership, which will depend on technical expertise. The Policy, Planning and Research Unit will be tasked with the setup of the Technical Group.

Output 3: The Technical Group for TEPF is established under the MET’s Policy, Planning and Research Unit

Programme 4: Ke lava ‘o fua mo vakai‘i ‘a e olá

This programme is intended to set up strategies and mechanisms that would ensure that the Policy Framework itself and its proposed outcomes are adequately monitored and evaluated through the establishment of evidence-based strategies and reliable and accurate data bases, which are supported by skilled and experienced staff and personnel. In many projects and programmes in education, the absence of such strategies and databases make it difficult for education systems to accurately measure the achievements of targets and indicators. The targets and indicators themselves must be realistic and achievable, given all the factors in our particular educational context. They must also be holistic and comprehensive and include those indicators and targets which are difficult to measure and are often left out of discussions and the reporting of educational performance and achievements. Meeting these expectations would require targeted resource inputs and the strengthening of the monitoring and evaluation across the whole education sector.

Ke lava ‘o fua mo vakai‘i ‘a e ola components:

1. Establish a robust education statistics strategy to ensure all the support data for monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of activities in TESPF are collected, compiled, analysed, and readily accessible to all schools and education systems. This will require resourcing all statistics units across the whole sector and providing appropriate PD programmes for personnel engaged in the area of statistics. Obtaining accurate and reliable data for the entire sector has been a continuing challenge. The storing and retrieval of important information in some usable and meaningful form and sharing and communicating it with all stakeholders continues to be a major constraint to effective monitoring and evaluation of educational performance. This component is intended to ensure that an effective education statistics strategy is established and that it benefits all stakeholders, and promotes decision-making based on reliable and valid data. Such as strategy could be developed by EMIS, MET in collaboration with sister statistics units in other education systems. The TG can use it to support its implementation functions.

Output 1: Education statistics strategy developed and in place

2. An action plan should be drawn up to strengthen EMIS and other statistics units across the sector by resourcing them with staff who have appropriate high-level knowledge, skills, and technical expertise and with high-quality equipment and software to ensure reliable, fast, and affordable connectivity to all islands and education systems. The state of EMIS within the Ministry has been neglected for many years. There is a lot of work to be done to improve the EMIS management, data collection protocol, data storage, and capacity of the Ministry to manage a reliable, secure, and functional EMIS system. Under the new TEPF, the EMIS Unit, MET, and other statistics units have been tasked with many responsibilities, but they cannot function effectively if they are inadequately resourced. This is a critical priority to be addressed as early as possible within the first phase of the new education policy framework. Appropriate staff and resources need to be put in place to strengthen the EMIS Unit as well as corresponding statistics units from other education authorities.

Output 2: Action plan to strengthen EMIS Unit within the Ministry

3. Under the leadership of the Deputy CEO for Policy, Planning and Research, hire additional technical assistance to work closely with the Technical Group and the Policy and Planning Unit, EMIS, and Project Management Unit to draw up a new monitoring, evaluation, research, and learning (MERL) system.
Output 3: New Monitoring and Evaluation, Research, and Learning System developed

Strategic initiatives phase 2: 2031-2035

PROGRAMMES & COMPONENTS:

Programme 1: Ke malu‘i

Ke malu‘i components
1. Review alignment of high-level organisations in education, such as TCDES, to ensure that they continue to work harmoniously with the Advisory Council and to strengthen them and to ensure they achieve their purposes.
Output 1: Strengthened advisory bodies in the education sector

Programme 2: Ke Fakaivia - Empowerment

Ke Fakaivia components
1. Review all grants systems in education with a view to abolishing them and creating, in their stead, one new allocation mechanism for all resources in education, which is to be administered through the new education strategy policy framework. At present, there are numerous grants to various sectors and systems of education and all have different conditions and requirements. They are fragmented and difficult to manage and monitor and many systems find compliance to be near impossible. This component is intended to assist the management and the distribution of resources in a coherent manner and to see at a glance the entitlements of different systems and sectors. It will promote fair, just, and equitable distribution of resources, inclusivity, and create relationships of trust and respect, in which education systems will work together to achieve common goals in education, raise the standards of education, and improve achievements.
Output 1: One single education grant system established

Programme 3: Ke fakahoko components

Ke fakahoko components
1. Ongoing monitoring of the capacity and capability of the Policy, Planning and Research Unit, to add resources and support as it continues to drive the implementation of the new education policy framework.
Output 1: Annual report reflecting improved capacity of the Policy, Planning and Research Unit

2. Ongoing monitoring of the capacity and capability of the Project Management Unit, to add resources and support to it as it continues to coordinate different external supports in implementation of the new education strategic policy framework.
Output 2: Annual report reflecting improved capacity of the Project Management Unit

3. Ongoing monitoring the capacity of the Technical Group.
Output 3: Monitoring report on the work of the Technical Group

Tākanga ‘o ‘etau fohé

Programme 4: Ke lava ‘o fua mo vakai‘i ‘a e olá component

Ke lava ‘o fua mo vakai‘i ‘a e olá components

1. Further expand and strengthen EMIS and further strengthen its partnerships and relationships with other statistics entities in-country and abroad.

Output 1: Strengthened and expanded EMIS

2. Carry out a mid-term review of the new education strategic policy framework. The mid-term review is to be carried out under the leadership of the Deputy CEO for the Policy, Planning and Research Unit.

Output 2: Mid-term review of the new education strategic policy framework



Operationalising the new education policy framework

The Ministry of Education and Training will be the body holding overall responsibility for the implementation of the new strategic policy framework for education. The Ministry of Education and Training will work hard to bring together a sector-wide commitment from all faith based education systems and key stakeholders for implementing the new policy framework.

The Ministry of Education and Training's Policy, Planning and Research Unit will be the key unit to set up the necessary structures and process to operationalise this policy. The Policy, Planning and Research Unit, together with the TESPF Technical working group, will be responsible for developing the implementation plan for the first and second phases of the new policy framework. The new Education Sector Strategic Plan will be the mechanism for implementing the policy framework. It is expected that the Education Sector Strategic Plan will provide a fully costed implementation plan for the first phase of the education policy framework.

Also part of the Education Sector Strategic Plan will be robustly designed mechanisms for monitoring, evaluation, research and learning from the implementation of the new policy framework. The following table provides key outputs and indicators which have been identified from the new policy framework and should guide the new Education Sector Strategic Plan. The indicators presented here are the SDG indicators. The PacREF, as well as the current indicators from the MICS, are all drawn down from the SDGs. One of the key challenges at present is the availability of up to date, reliable, and valid data to inform the status of our education system.

The development of the new Education Sector Strategic Plan and the Monitoring, Evaluation, Research and Learning framework can further draw down and refine the SDG indicators and targets for each phase of the new education policy framework. We expect that through the first phase, indicators and targets will be refined and made continually more measurable in order to demonstrate progress.



End of Phase 1 2002-2027 Indicators and Outputs

Policy Areas	Indicators	Outputs
Fatutama: Student Well-being	SDG 4.2.1 Proportion of children under 5 years of age who are developmentally on track in health, learning and psychosocial well-being, by gender. SDG 4.3.1 Participation rate of youth and adults in formal and non-formal education and training in the previous 12 months, by gender. SDG 4.7.1 Extent to which (i) global citizenship education and (ii) education for sustainable development, including gender equality and human rights, are mainstreamed at all levels in: (a) national education policies, (b) curricula, (c) teacher education, and (d) student assessment. Student well-being indicators to be developed.	Loto'i Tonga moral education programme Sports and Better Health programme 'Ofa Fonua Learning through service programme Global citizenship education programme
Fakapotopoto: Education for resilience and sustainable development	SDG 4.1.1 Proportion of children and young people (a) in Grade 2 or 3 (b) at the end of primary education and (c) at the end of lower secondary education achieving at least a minimum proficiency level in (i) reading and (ii) mathematics, by gender. SDG 4.2.1 Proportion of children under 5 years of age who are developmentally on track in health, learning and psychosocial well-being, by gender. SDG 4.2.2 Participation rate in organised learning (one year before the official primary entry age), by gender. SDG 4.3.1 Participation rate of youth and adults in formal and non-formal education and training in the previous 12 months, by gender. SDG 4.4.1 Proportion of youth and adults with information and communications technology (ICT) skills, by type of skill. SDG 4.6.1 Proportion of population in a given age group achieving at least a fixed level of proficiency in functional (a) literacy and (b) numeracy skills, by gender. SDG 4.c.1 Proportion of teachers in (a) pre-primary education (b) primary education (c) lower secondary education and (d) upper secondary education who have received at least the minimum organised teacher training (e.g. pedagogical training) pre-service or in-service required for teaching at the relevant level in a given country, by gender.	Curriculum and Literacy and Numeracy Programme Teacher Quality- Faiako ma'a Tonga Programme Assessment for learning Programme Education technology Programme Higher Education TVET ECE

Vahevahe taau mo e Ako kau kātoa: Inclusive and Improved equitable access	SDG 4.1.1 Proportion of children and young people (a) in Grade 2 or 3, (b) at the end of primary education, and (c) at the end of lower secondary education achieving at least a minimum proficiency level in (i) reading and (ii) mathematics, by gender. SDG 4.5.1 Parity indices (female/male, rural/urban, bottom/top wealth quintiles and others such as disability status, indigenous peoples, and conflict-affected, as data become available) for all education indicators on this list that can be disaggregated. SDG 4.6.1 Proportion of population in a given age group achieving at least a fixed level of proficiency in functional (a) literacy and (b) numeracy skills, by gender. SDG 4.a.1 Proportion of schools with access to: (a) electricity; (b) internet for pedagogical purposes; (c) computers for pedagogical purposes; (d) adapted infrastructure and materials for students with disabilities; (e) basic drinking water; (f) single-sex basic sanitation facilities; and (g) basic handwashing facilities (as per WASH indicator definitions).	Language Education programme Motu Schools programme Gender and Development programme Inclusive Schools programme Nurturing Schools programme
Fonua mo e Kāinga: Partnerships and Community Connectednes	SDG 4.b.1 Volume of official development assistance flows for scholarships by sector and type of study. SDG17.17.1 Amount of United States dollars committed to public-private and civil society partnerships.	Kāinga ‘o e Akó, Collaborative Education sector programme Kāinga ofi ‘o e Akó, Collaborative Communities programme Kāinga faingata‘a ‘o e Akó, Collaborative Partnerships programme
Tākanga ‘etau fohé: Governance and Leadership of Education	SDG 17.18.1 Proportion of sustainable development indicators produced at the national level with full disaggregation when relevant to the target, in accordance with the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics. SDG 17.19.1 Dollar value of all resources made available to strengthen statistical capacity in developing countries.	Ke malu‘i – safeguard programme Ke fakaivia – empowerment programme Ke fakahoko – implementation programme Ke lava ‘o fua mo vakai‘i ‘a e olá – monitoring, evaluation, learning and research programme




UBLIC
ERVICE
MISSION

Governance of the new education policy framework

The governance and leadership structure and processes proposed for the new TESPF 2025- 2035 are based on the Tongan concept of Kāinga. The kāinga is translated loosely into English as a community or group whose members are related to each other by blood or through other ties. In that sense, Tonga is often deemed to be a “fonua ʻa kāinga”, a country of haʻa (communities) who are related to each other in one form or another; a country with a social structure comprising a monarch and royal family, nobles, and commoners, who are all bound together by blood and other ties. The social organisation is replicated in the political structure, and is reflected in our country’s governance and leadership system.

The four golden pillars of Tongan society, as expounded by Her Majesty the late Queen Sālote Tupou III (1900-1962), are: fakaʻapaʻapa (respect), mamahiʻi meʻa (unceasing commitment and loyalty), lototō (humility and reciprocal caring), and tauhi vahaʻa (maintaining and sustaining good relationships). Tauhi vahaʻa is the key pillar of our society and the other three pillars and associated values all mutually support it to ensure that our relationships at every level, horizontally and vertically, remain healthy, strong, sustainable and resilient. Our people believe that these pillars are fundamental to good relationships and, therefore, also fundamental to good governance. They maintain that while law and order and legislations are necessary, relationships are at the heart of good governance. Hence, the values that underpin, maintain, and sustain tauhi vā are also at the core of good governance in Tonga. They have ensured the continuation and survival of our small country for millennia, despite national, regional and international turmoil and natural and man-made disasters such as those as we have recently witnessed with the volcanic eruption and COVID-19 pandemic.

As such, the governance and leadership structure of the new TESPF is predicated on collective decision-making, collective responsibility and accountability, and collective benefits and rewards. Education in our country has always been a privilege and a right accorded in law to every member of our communities, and it has always been our collective responsibility to ensure that the education of our children is of the highest quality, is adequately resourced, is safe and secure, and is accessible to all. All our children must be able to participate in it, fully benefit from it, use it wisely to benefit others, and to achieve sustainable livelihoods and resilience in order to build a Tonga that endures. In other words, education is everyone’s business, and it follows that everyone must be involved in its execution. This is the foundation of the Governance and Leadership of the new TESPF.

Monitoring, Evaluation, Research and Learning

One of the key lessons learned from the previous education policy framework was the absence of a strong and robust monitoring and evaluation system. As such, the new strategic policy framework for education will ensure that a strong, relevant and robust monitoring and evaluation system will be in place. The Ministry of Education and Training's Policy, Planning and Research Unit will be responsible for the development, ongoing improvement, and implementation of a new education sector-wide system to monitor and evaluate the new education policy framework.

The new monitoring and evaluation system will take a learning and evidence based approach. As such, it will include Research and learning components (MERL). The additional components of research and learning are critical and relevant to our changing context. The impact of the global pandemic and climate change will continue to impact how we implement the new education policy framework. The reality is that constant change is a reality and we will have to adapt and find new solutions along the way. Given our changing context, it is critical that we have valid, reliable data to inform us in our next steps.

Key principles to drive the MERL

1. **'Alofi 'a e vaka 'o e akó** – we are all responsible for educating our people. We are all responsible for monitoring, evaluating and learning as we implement our new education policy framework. This means that we will work hard to share data, to provide relevant, reliable and valid information that is on time, and we will take collective accountability for delivering the new education policy framework.

2. **Evidence based** – we will use evidence to inform our next steps. We will encourage research that is relevant and provides us with the best solutions for our context. We will call on our diaspora communities and our development partners to help us carry out research that is meaningful and relevant. We will strengthen our EMIS system, ensuring that we have reliable and valid classroom data, school data, and education authority level data. We be open to learning from our neighbouring countries, from the global world, and from our own national context. In truth, we need all the help that we can get to move us forward.

3. **Māfana** – we will focus on the shifts, even small ones, and we will stay focused on measuring the shifts in improvement. We know that each small step of change will lead to greater shifts and, ultimately, to transforming education for our people. At the classroom level, we will focus on students' shifts in learning. At the teacher level, we will focus on shifts in pedagogical approaches and in enabling more students to learn. We will also expect to see shifts at the school level, with schools becoming more reflective of the new education strategic policy framework. Collectively, we also expect to see shifts at a systems level, with improved leadership and participation in governance of the education sector.

To implement the new MERL, we will be open to using both qualitative and quantitative approaches, including the use of Talatalanoa and other research tools to learn. The MERL will be able to collect data at student level, classroom level, school level, and at education authority level. The MERL itself will also be open to ongoing development, as we continually strengthen our EMIS along the way.

Resourcing the new education policy framework

The new strategic policy framework for education will be resourced with contributions from government through the Ministry of Education and Training, from the Churches through their respective education authorities, from communities, and from development partners.

In going forward, the contributions from the Churches and the communities (ex-students, community development groups, Tongan diaspora, PTA, etc.) will be recognised and documented in the Ministry of Education and Training's reports. This is a critical step in recognising that the delivery of education service in Tonga is a **collective responsibility**. This will require the sharing of resources by the education authorities of the Churches as well as communities.

The new Education Sector Strategic Plan that will implement the new education policy framework will provide a detailed costing for the first phase of the new policy.

