

Management Response to the Evaluation of the UN Pacific Strategy 2018-2022

UNCT Pacific, November 2022

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UNPS Evaluation Report UNPS Fund Evaluation

Management Response to the terminal Evaluation of the UN Pacific Strategy 2018-2022

Draft for consultations -

I. Background

In line with the <u>UNSDG Internal Guidance on the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework</u>, a final evaluation of the Cooperation Framework must be conducted to provide lessons and recommendations for the next planning cycle. With the UN Pacific Strategy UNPS 2018-2022 coming to an end, the UNCT Pacific commissioned in October 2021 an independent evaluation (UNPS Evaluation) to inform the new UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2023-2027 (CF).

The UNPS Evaluation was conducted over a period of four months (October 2021-January 2022) by a team of experts led by Elinor Bajraktari and including Stephanie Hodge and Kolone Vaai, the latter a Samoan national who supported the Multi-Country Office Review in the Pacific in 2019. Three objectives guided the UNPS Evaluation as follows:

- **1.** Assess the contribution of the UNPS to Pacific sub-region development results through evidence-based judgements using evaluative approaches
- 2. Identify the factors that have affected the UNPS's contribution, investigating why the performance is as it is and explaining the enabling factors and bottlenecks.
- **3.** Provide actionable recommendations for improving the UNPS's contribution, especially for incorporation into the new CF programming cycle.

The UNCT assigned Dr. Ali Safarnejad of UNICEF as Evaluation Manager who was supported on the task by a dedicated Steering Committee and the three Resident Coordinator Offices in the Pacific (Fiji, Micronesia and Samoa).

The UNPS Evaluation covered the 14 Pacific Island Countries and Territories under the responsibility of the three Multi-Country Offices in the Pacific – Fiji, Micronesia and Samoa - and used the UNPS Results Framework to review reported achievements under the 6 outcomes of the UNPS 2018-2022 across the region. It observed closely UNEG norms and standards to ensure quality of recommendations provided to the UNCT for the CF 2023-2027.

In line with the TORs, the evaluation team submitted to the Steering Committee and subsequently to the UNCT the Inception Report in November 2021 and a first draft of the final report in February 2022.

The Evaluation Manager and the RCOs in Fiji, Micronesia and Samoa presented the findings of the evaluation to the national Joint Steering Committees and to all stakeholders throughout the process of development of the new Cooperation Framework 2023-2027.

Factual corrections and comments provided by the UNCT and resulting from system-wide consultations on the new CF have been reviewed and addressed by the evaluation team prior to the release of the final report in June 2022.

An addendum to the report was included to reflect the evaluation of the UN Pacific Strategy Fund that was commissioned by the Government of New Zealand (NZ) to evaluate results under the UN-NZ Pacific Partnership covering 3 of the 6 outcomes of the UNPS 2018-2022.

In overseeing the UNPS Evaluation process, the Evaluation Manager received assistance from the UN Evaluation Development Group for Asia Pacific (UNEDAP) and the UN Development Coordination Office (DCO).

This Management Response acknowledges the findings of the UNPS Evaluation and presents actions and timetables to address the recommendations as agreed upon by the Pacific UNCT.

II. Methodology

The UNPS Evaluation was guided by a total of 8 questions clustered under the 5 fundamental principles in quality programming and results-based management in the UN system as follows:

Relevance:

- To what extent are the UNPS objectives aligned and been consistent with the needs, priorities, and policies of the PICT governments
- How dynamic and responsive has the UNPS been to emerging and unforeseen needs, especially those of the most vulnerable, disadvantaged and marginalized groups?
- To what extent has the UNPS implementation taken on the findings and addressed recommendations of the 2019 Multi-Country Office Review?

Effectiveness*:

- To what extent has the UNPS contributed effectively to provide greater clarity and transparency of results achieved and resources used?
- What have been the benefits for the people and institutions targeted by the interventions, including the most vulnerable, disadvantaged, and marginalized population?

Efficiency:

Does UNPS internal coordination reduce transaction costs and create efficiencies for UNCT members implementing the UNPS?

Sustainability:

• What mechanisms, if any, has the UNPS planned for - and UNCT established - to ensure socio-political, institutional, financial and environmental sustainability?

Coherence:

• To what extent has the UNPS implementation fostered coherence, through the promotion of synergies, interlinkages between its interventions, partnerships, external relations, and through its governance structures?

Tailored questionnaires to various stakeholders were used to collect responses and ensure robustness of findings. Among informants who provided answers via online questionnaires and interviews, a large part was represented by Governments, Civil Society Organizations, UN staff, Heads of Agencies and Resident Coordinator Offices.

The evaluation team reviewed also the UNCT Pacific annual reports and the underpinning evidence and data provided by the 6 Outcome Groups of the UNPS 2018-2022.

As reflected in the final Evaluation Report, no project specific evaluation was conducted as, according to the RBM policy in the UN system, projects are evaluated individually prior to closure.

III. Findings

The evaluation team provided a total of 17 findings regarding the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and coherence in the implementation of the UNPS 2018-2022 across the 14 PICTs. The UNCT agreed with all the findings and drew a series of lessons that guided the development of the new CF 2023-2027.

More specifically, the evaluation team found that the UNCT engagement with Governments across the Pacific has not been systematic and primarily consisted of agency specific meetings and consultations (Finding #2). The underlying cause of such uncoordinated interaction with Governments across the Pacific is the uneven agency footprint at country level and the absence of country specific UNCTs, which is a common feature of Multi-Country Offices in Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in all three regions – (i) Caribbean, (ii) Atlantic, Indian Ocean and South China Sea and (3) Pacific. The Joint Country Action Plans that annualized the UNPS 2018-2022 as a recommendation of the MCO Review have been found a good tool to contextualize the regional vision of the UNPS and guide country level development action.

Linked to that, the evaluation team found that the absence of a country-specific results framework in the UNPS 2018-2022 impeded country alignment and relevance until the JCAPs became mandatory as a recommendation of the MCO Review (Finding #7). In fact, UN agencies in the Pacific operate on the basis of multi-country programmes and projects, nationalizing interventions and setting country milestones and targets (Finding #9) remaining therefore a challenge. Distinguishing between regional and national public goods and

identifying what can be best done regionally versus nationally area areas of reflection for the UNCT Pacific as we embark on the new CF 2023-2027.

The extension of the Resident Coordinator Offices in countries outside the MCO hubs called joint presence offices and now named Country Coordination Offices (CCO) was found by the evaluation team as an important component of the coordination function across the region, but functional relations of CCOs with country structures and UN agencies operating regional could be further improved (Finding #3). The MCO Review elevated the profile of the Country Coordination Officers to ensure substantive capacity is on board to assist Joint Steering Committees and inform relevant UNCTs as to how programmes can better address country's needs, but such capacity is not easy to source and more is needed to have the UNCT members utilizing CCOs at their full potential.

The evaluation team found UNCT Pacific work across the 6 outcomes of the UNPS 2018-2022 – climate change, disaster resilience and environment and environmental protection, gender equality, inclusive growth, basic services, governance and community engagement, and human rights, as making notable contributions to the SDGs (Findings #11 to #16).

The establishment of the UNPS Fund as a pooled mechanism for joint programme implementation in the Pacific as well as the mobilization of resources from the Government of New Zealand (NZD 24.7 million) and from vertical funds such as the Joint SDG Fund, the UN-India Development Partnership Fund, the Peace Building Fund, the UN Partnership for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNPRPD) Fund, the Global Fund for Coral Reefs and other vertical instruments were found as positive developments in reducing fragmentation and increasing coherence and efficiency (Finding #2).

Of a particular importance is Finding #7 according to which the UNPS 2018-2022 and its implementation had a strong "Leaving No One Behind" focus while also centering action on disaster risk management, climate change, environmental sustainability and human rights. Moving forward, the UNCT aims to ensure that, through biennial Country Implementation Plans, more evidence is built at the country level with respect to the benefits the Cooperation Framework 2023-2027 creates for those further behind and that human rights are upheld at all levels of the society while higher women's participation in the public and political arenas is achieved.

The UNCT takes note of the granular analysis of the programme performance that the evaluation of the UNPS 2018-2022 has conducted, and the recommendations provided by the evaluation team with the aim to enhance relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and coherence of UN's work in the Pacific during the implementation of the CF 2023-2027 at a time of major compounding challenges for the Pacific and the world.

In its Management Response to the UNPS Evaluation, the UNCT commits to pursuing all of the recommendations provided by the evaluation team and wishes to review progress at the end of the first biennial Country Implementation Plans (2023-2024). Time-bound, well-defined actions with clear responsibilities within the UNCT are presented below. The Management Response will be updated accordingly at the end of 2024.

IV. Conclusions and Recommendations

The UNCT agrees with the conclusions and recommendations presented by the evaluation team in the UNPS Evaluation report and wishes to acknowledge the quality of the work conducted under time pressure and travel constraints.

The UNPS 2018-2022 was developed before the UN Reform and the MCO Review, which together have dramatically transformed the UN ways of working in the Pacific. Several disasters, some of catastrophic proportions such as the volcanic eruption in Tonga, a measles crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic have also shifted priorities and coordination mechanisms for the UNCT. The Pacific Humanitarian Team and the Joint Incident Management Team have played an important role in complementing the UNCT and providing adequate disaster and health response across the region.

While extensive vaccination allowed countries in the Pacific to eventually open borders and resume business in late 2022, the region is home to the most vulnerable nations in the world and remains in a development emergency mode calling on the UN to exercise flexibility in programming and financing. It is because of such multidimensional vulnerabilities that the operationalization of the Cooperation Framework needs a seamless interplay of humanitarian and development interventions.

Very importantly, as the UNPS Evaluation noted, the UN was able to adopt changes brought about by the UN Reform and the MCO Review and continue the implementation of the UNPS owing to a functional regional UNCT platform that strengthened coordination and overcame logistical challenges that are inherent in SIDS settings and were exacerbated by the pandemic.

Managing to also establish a pooled financing mechanism in the form of the UNPS Fund and attract financing in accordance with the Funding Compact principles is also an indication of donor's trust in the UN in the Pacific.

Lastly, the evaluation team highlighted the work led by the UN in the Pacific on the broader SIDS agenda (the SAMOA Pathway) including the development of the first Multidimensional Vulnerability Index for access to concessional financing and the SDG financing gap analysis for SIDS that allow UNCTs in such contexts to better programme resources to advance the 2030 Agenda.

Given the most recent global initiatives of the UN to address multiple crises including through reengineering food systems, transforming education and improving debt sustainability, the Cooperation Framework and the CIPs will aim to provide adequate assistance to the PICTs in acting on such commitments together with the rest of the world.

Table 1 - Management response to the recommendations of the UNPS Evaluation

Recommendation	Responsible Parties	Related Finding	Timeframe	Management Response
Recommendation 1: Strengthen Inter-agency Coordination Structures	UNCT, RCOs, Agencies, National Governments	Finding 2, Finding 3	In progress One Year 2023	ACCEPTED with comments
1.1. The UNCT should complete the full establishment and harmonization of the UNPS coordination infrastructure. This includes the full establishment of the third RCO for Micronesia and the establishment of joint committees in all countries.	UNCT, RCOs, Agencies, National Governments	Finding 2, Finding 3	In progress One Year 2023	1.1. The new Cooperation Framework is accompanied by a governance structure. The UNCT Configuration will address Micronesia MCO needs in terms of footprint and skills make up.
1.2. The UNCT should reach agreement on a clear and shared understanding of the roles and responsibilities of key coordination structures – key aspects that require more clarity are the role of UNCG vis-à-vis that of the RCOs, the role of OGs vis-à-vis that of the RCOs, etc.	UNCT, RCOs, Agencies, National Governments	Finding 2, Finding 3	In progress One Year 2023	1.2. In line with the Management and Accountability Framework, Fiji, Micronesia and Samoa RCOs continue to strengthen collaboration and support to the UNCT. A Programme Management Team (PMT) took over the UNCG role in coordinating planning and monitoring to inform UNCT decisions. OGs are now functions of the PMT. DMEG remains in place to support CF reporting.

Recommendation	Responsible Parties	Related Finding	Timeframe	Management Response
1.3. The UNCT should consider the option of expanding participation in country-level JSCs to non-state actors as a means to improving representation and strengthening the checks and balances of the UNPS processes.	UNCT, RCOs, Agencies, National Governments	Finding 2, Finding 3	In progress One Year 2023	1.3. Most countries Joint Steering Committees include non-state actors as implementing partners of various joint programmes. All JSCs will include civil society by end of 2023.
1.4. As a first step to improving coordination within the UNCT, the three RCOs should strengthen coordination among themselves. This will require the establishment of clear coordination procedures and systems.	UNCT, RCOs, Agencies, National Governments	Finding 2, Finding 3	In progress One Year 2023	1.4. Staffing of RCOs still unfolding. Within DCO designed job descriptions for RCO staff, tailored TORs will be used to match country's and UNCT's needs of expertise.
1.5. The RCOs should address the confusion of government counterparts about the role and responsibilities of the country-level JSCs by providing greater clarity and more information on these structures. Also, the specific role expected of JSC members representing governments should be further clarified – especially, whether they are expected to engage in planning and programming, or just oversight and coordination.	UNCT, RCOs, Agencies, National Governments	Finding 2, Finding 3	In progress One Year 2023	1.5. RCOs will review and revise JSC Terms of Reference accordingly to ensure full functionality in coordinating the implementation of the CF through CIPs and joint programmes. Strategic Planners in the RCO will ensure clarity on roles and responsibilities of JSCs.

Recommendation	Responsible Parties	Related Finding	Timeframe	Management Response
1.6. The RCOs should also address their staff turnover issue which is seen as a challenge by some agencies.	UNCT, RCOs, Agencies, National Governments	Finding 2, Finding 3	In progress One Year 2023	1.6. DCO & Secretariat OHR issued a policy for RCO staff mobility to temporarily cover vacancies in other duty stations as part of the career development opportunities that the staff is entitled to. The RCOs in the Pacific will better utilize this staff mobility policy to cover vacancies.

Recommendation	Responsible Parties	Related Finding	Timeframe	Management Response
1.7. The OG's reporting lines should be fully clarified and the arrangement should be communicated clearly to all relevant parties. Also, the process through which the OGs provide information to UN entities should be clarified and communicated to relevant parties. OG meetings should be structured more adequately, both in terms of frequency and regularity of meetings and also in terms of agenda-setting, reporting, etc. The UNCT should consider the idea proposed by some stakeholders of opening the OG meetings to national stakeholders – one option that may be considered is the OG2++ format, which involves coordination meetings with a wider set of national stakeholders. Additionally, OGs could be turned into fora for the conduct of programme reviews with the involvement of representatives from the governments, civil society and social partners and the private sector.	UNCT, RCOs, Agencies, National Governments	Finding 2, Finding 3	In progress One Year 2023	1.7. Newly established Programme Management Team in the CF governance structure hosts the results groups in the four areas of the CF – Planet, People, Prosperity and Peace- to limit bureaucracy and allow time for UNCT members to deliver on commitments. Review of the results monitoring system has been conducted as part of the governance structure of the CF and will be tested during the first CIP cycle. Emphasis will be placed on results monitoring at the CIP level with DMEG consolidating progress across CF outcome areas. JSCs will serve as monitoring mechanisms at output level in each country and will report to DMEG with the RCO Data Manager support.

Recommendation	Responsible Parties	Related Finding	Timeframe	Management Response
1.8. UNCT should ensure that DMEG is adequately established and meets regularly to ensure quality and completeness of data, including financial information. All the assessments and evaluations at the Pacific level should be coordinated and guided by this group.	UNCT, RCOs, Agencies, National Governments	Finding 2, Finding 3	In progress One Year 2023	1.8. Agreed. Work in progress with the RCOs strategic planners and data managers serving as technical coordinators.

Recommendation	Responsible Parties	Related Finding	Timeframe	Management Response
1.9. The UNCT should consolidate its strategic approach to communications by ensuring that the next programme cycle is underpinned by a single communications strategy. Such a strategy could be combined with a knowledge management strategy at the Pacific level. UNCmG should be strengthened and made fully operational, with regular meetings, clear commitment and strong participation by the agencies.	UNCT, RCOs, Agencies, National Governments	Finding 2, Finding 3	In progress One Year 2023	1.9. To be discussed. Knowledge management at regional and subregional level is the responsibility of the Regional Collaborative Platform and REC (ESCAP). JPs have their own communication strategies as a requirement introduced by the specific funding mechanism or donor. The UN Pacific Comms Strategy is meant to ensure consistency of messaging and clarify roles of RCO Comms, UNCT members' comms policies and UNIC without centralizing the function. RCOs will ensure communication across UNCT aligns with key messages around the content and the ambition of the CF.

Recommendation	Responsible Parties	Related Finding	Timeframe	Management Response
1.10. Links between the work of the OGs and the thematic groups, especially DMEG and UNCmG, should be strengthened. One suggestion for how to do this is by having DMEG and UNCmG members participate in the OGs.	UNCT, RCOs, Agencies, National Governments	Finding 2, Finding 3	In progress One Year 2023	1.10. The newly established Programme Management Team manages results monitoring across the 4 outcome areas of the CF. DMEG provides the platform for data collection drawing on inputs received from JSCs via RCOs data managers. The UNCmG has a stronger functional engagement with both the PMT and UNIC to enhance consistency of messaging in the region. A review of the CF governance structure will take place within the first year of CIP implementation.

Recommendation	Responsible Parties	Related Finding	Timeframe	Management Response
1.11. Given the need for multiple interventions in this area, this evaluation recommends that UNCT take a harmonized approach in the establishment of coordination structures across sub-regions and countries. Although some degree of innovation and diversity is always desirable, the most essential of these structures (such as the UNCTs or JSCs) should function and operate in the same way independently of location. All of this can be achieved more systematically on the basis of a "comprehensive review" of the coordination infrastructure with a view to identifying the most appropriate measures based on the needs of all relevant stakeholders.	UNCT, RCOs, Agencies, National Governments	Finding 2, Finding 3	In progress One Year 2023	1.11. In progress and aligned with the recommendation to prioritize the needs of various stakeholders. The RC system has a performance framework of indicators that will enable the comprehensive review recommended by the evaluation,

Recommendation	Responsible Parties	Related Finding	Timeframe	Management Response
1.12. If the review mentioned above will be conducted, the three RCOs should coordinate it in close cooperation with each other. Overall, the process of harmonization of coordination structures will require much stronger coordination among the three RCOs. The RCOs should also develop a shared vision on the instruments that they seek to promote for the coordination of agencies under the UNPS (i.e. monitoring and evaluation frameworks, etc.).	UNCT, RCOs, Agencies, National Governments	Finding 2, Finding 3	In progress One Year 2023	1.12. The RCOs will harmonize their annual workplans to ensure adequate support to the MCO specific UNCTs and the regional UNCT regardless of the location where implementation happens. The regular consultations that have led to the finalization of the CF will continue in the implementation of the CF and the CIPs.

Recommendation	Responsible Parties	Related Finding	Timeframe	Management Response
Recommendation 2: Engage More Effectively with Regional Cooperation Structures	UNCT and RCOs, as well as National Government and Regional Cooperation Organizations	Finding 2	In progress Two Years 2023- 2024	ACCEPTED with comments

Recommendation	Responsible Parties	Related Finding	Timeframe	Management Response
2.1. UN should strengthen its partnership with the regional intergovernmental organizations and bodies by developing a system-wide strategic approach for such engagement. The following are some more specific recommendations identified in this evaluation.	UNCT and RCOs, as well as National Government and Regional Cooperation Organizations	Finding 2	In progress Two Years 2023- 2024	2.1. In the new CF governance structure, regional organizations participate in the PMT dedicated meetings to results monitoring and thematic discussions on potential joint programmes.

Recommendation	Responsible Parties	Related Finding	Timeframe	Management Response
2.2. The RCOs should conduct a detailed mapping of all the regional cooperation structures on the ground and an assessment of the role they play in fostering regional cooperation. Such an assessment should be the basis for the identification of opportunities for engagement by the UN system. The process should result in the identification of regional players who can play a role in the implementation of the UNPS.	UNCT and RCOs, as well as National Government and Regional Cooperation Organizations	Finding 2	In progress Two Years 2023- 2024	2.2. Regional position in Fiji and the PIFS will continue dialogue towards completion of this assessment. UNCT & CROPs regular meetings have been agreed upon at the Leaders Forum in Fiji, July 2022. The UNCT Configuration will draw on the mapping of existing structures and programmes to ensure full complementarity in services provided by the UN versus other development actors in the Pacific.

Recommendation	Responsible Parties	Related Finding	Timeframe	Management Response
2.3. Informed by the above-mentioned assessment, the three RCs must be given by the UN system and UNCT clear authority and resources to provide strong leadership and coordination in jointly negotiating a partnership framework on behalf of the UNCT with the relevant regional structures/initiatives and CROP agencies grounded on a clear division of labour based on respective comparative advantages.	UNCT and RCOs, as well as National Government and Regional Cooperation Organizations	Finding 2	In progress Two Years 2023- 2024	2.3. RC/RCO Fiji has the mandated responsibility of engaging with regional organizations in the Pacific. To the extent to which such regional organizations have country specific engagements, relevant RCOs and their UNCTs will coordinate collaboration locally. Subregional partnerships that fall within the geographical boundaries of an MCO will be managed by the latter.

Recommendation	Responsible Parties	Related Finding	Timeframe	Management Response
2.4. The UNCT should engage with CROP in developing a strategic approach for how UN and CROP agencies can be complementary and mutually supportive of each other. UNCT should explore with CROP avenues through which the UNPS could be used more effectively to enable practical joint programmatic engagements with CROP agencies at the country level.	UNCT and RCOs, as well as National Government and Regional Cooperation Organizations	Finding 2	In progress Two Years 2023- 2024	2.4. This strategy is led by the Fiji RCO and will be operationalized in the new CF as agreed with the CROP during consultations throughout the development of the framework.

Recommendation	Responsible Parties	Related Finding	Timeframe	Management Response
2.5. UNCT should also explore opportunities for building up the capacity of PIFS as the secretariat of CROP. There is also potential for further cooperation with the Pacific Community for capacity building on monitoring and data collection for the SDGs. Support could be provided to the Regional Data Hub in the collection of information relevant to the UNPS.	UNCT and RCOs, as well as National Government and Regional Cooperation Organizations	Finding 2	In progress Two Years 2023- 2024	2.5. For further consideration - The PIFS is an intergovernmental mechanism with a status of UN Observer. Partnership is the only form of engagement and request for capacity development should come from the PIFS itself. Collaboration on data management is already in place with ESCAP leading on the UN side.

Recommendation	Responsible Parties	Related Finding	Timeframe	Management Response
2.6. The role and mandate of the Fiji RCO in leading synergies with intergovernmental regional and subregional organizations should be further clarified and solidified.	UNCT and RCOs, as well as National Government and Regional Cooperation Organizations	Finding 2	In progress Two Years 2023- 2024	2.6. In progress. Fiji RCO has established a functional engagement with regional organizations and will continue collaboration under the new CF. Subregional partnerships that fall within the geographical boundaries of a MCO should remain with the latter. An example thereof is the Micronesian Presidents Summit that falls entirely within the geographical mandate of MCO Micronesia.

Recommendation	Responsible Parties	Related Finding	Timeframe	Management Response
Recommendation 3: Strengthen Partnerships with Civil Society, Private Sector and Development Partners	UNCT and RCOs, as well as Regional Cooperation Organizations	Finding 2	One Year to Two Years 2023-2024	ACCEPTED with comments

Recommendation	Responsible Parties	Related Finding	Timeframe	Management Response
3.1. For the upcoming cooperation framework, the UNCT should strengthen engagement with civil society and social partners at both regional and country levels. The UN should adopt a more systematic and strategic approach for this engagement. It should be done through a strategic and well-thought-out approach shared across the UNCT. The following are some more specific recommendations identified in this evaluation: o The UNCT should engage CSOs across all outcome areas and through all stages of programme preparation and execution. For example, potential cooperation with the Pacific Islands Association of NGOs (PIANGO) could be explored. Furthermore, the UNCT should explore options and avenues for greater engagement of CSOs in programme implementation, especially service delivery. The UNCT should also identify ways to engage CSOs more effectively in the monitoring and reporting of UNPS results. The practice of virtual consultations with CSOs should be maintained and further institutionalized.	UNCT and RCOs, as well as Regional Cooperation Organizations	Finding 2	One Year to Two Years 2023-2024	3.1. In progress. The CF identifies clear roles for the civil society across the 4 outcome areas: People, Planet, Peace and Prosperity. Consultations with regional NGOs have taken place. National NGOs and community-based organizations have been consulted in the elaboration of the CCA as well as in the development of the CF 2023-2027.

Recommendation	Responsible Parties	Related Finding	Timeframe	Management Response
○ The inter-agency coordination infrastructure should be further opened for involvement by civil society and social partners. While the UNCT has encouraged JSCs to include the representatives of civil societies, evaluation participants stressed the importance of further opening up of country-level JSCs to civil society and social partners. Another suggested measure is the engagement of civil society and social partners with outcome groups in a formalized and well-structured fashion, along the lines of the OG2 (augmented format).	UNCT and RCOs, as well as Regional Cooperation Organizations	Finding 2	One Year to Two Years 2023-2024	To continue consultations in programming and joint implementation of the CF 2023-2027, Joint Steering Committees at country level will include CSOs as relevant. Partnerships will be sought and nurtured at both JP and individual agency project levels. The governance structure of the CF will include regional CSOs such as PIANGO and the Pacific Disability Forum in the Programme Management Team to consult on results, joint programming and emerging priorities. The thematic priority groups for gender and human rights will include CSOs.

Recommendation	Responsible Parties	Related Finding	Timeframe	Management Response
 CSOs engaged in this evaluation demanded greater support from the UN system for their capacities. A dedicated UN programme to improve the capacity of NGOs across PICTs to participate in development cooperation was identified as a priority by civil society and social partners. The UN can also do more to create greater space for the involvement of CSOs in the region's development processes. 	UNCT and RCOs, as well as Regional Cooperation Organizations	Finding 2	One Year to Two Years 2023-2024	The CF identifies capacitating CSOs as an enabler of SDG progress. UNCT will consider integrating joint work with CSOs across programmes as a quality and sustainability safeguard.
3.2. UNCT should engage more closely with the private sector at the regional and country level, both in terms of tapping private sector financial resources and also helping companies become socially more responsible. As in the case of civil society and social partners, this engagement should be grounded in a strategic and systemic approach shared by all agencies. The RCOs could explore options for cooperation with the Pacific Islands Private Sector Organization (PIPSO) and Pacific Islands Trade Unions (PICTU).	UNCT and RCOs, as well as Regional Cooperation Organizations	Finding 2	One Year to Two Years 2023-2024	3.2. Agreed. Consultations with the private sector identified areas of cooperation around blue and green economies and dedicated financing instruments. With ILO support, stronger participation of tripartite structures in designing and implementing programmes is envisaged. The CF financing strategy will further clarify private sector involvement.

Recommendation	Responsible Parties	Related Finding	Timeframe	Management Response
3.3. The UN should explore opportunities to play, alongside other regional cooperation bodies, a far more significant role in facilitating donor coordination in the Pacific. At the regional level, the UNCT should strengthen the joint mechanisms it uses for coordination and information-sharing with development partners. At the country level, the UN can play a more active role in supporting the coordination capabilities of the respective governments. The RCOs, JPOs/CPOs and CCS should provide greater and better coordinated (with the agencies) support to Pacific governments for improving their capabilities to coordinate development assistance more effectively. The country-level donor coordination virtual meetings organized in Cook Islands, Niue and Tokelau serve as a good example – they should be further institutionalized and expanded in the region.	UNCT and RCOs, as well as Regional Cooperation Organizations	Finding 2	One Year to Two Years 2023-2024	3.3. Meetings of the Pacific Development Forum (development partners including donors) will be more regular in within the new CF. Each MCO will also establish coordination mechanisms across countries of responsibility.

Recommendation	Responsible Parties	Related Finding	Timeframe	Management Response
Recommendation 4: Strengthen the Governance and Accountability of Country-Level joint structures	UNCT, RCOs, National Partners	Finding 3	One year 2023	ACCEPTED with comments

Recommendation	Responsible Parties	Related Finding	Timeframe	Management Response
4. At a high level, this evaluation recommends an expanded assessment/review of the "country presence" structures and needs. The "country presence" concept should be grounded in a well-thought-out and well-established model that reflects the views of both agencies and national governments and that also accommodates country specificities. The review should be conducted in a coordinated fashion by all three RCOs, closely involving the respective UNCTs and national partners. Such an expanded exercise will be a good opportunity to review the mandate and operations modality of the JPOs/CPOs and come up with a model that reflects current realities and needs of the UN agencies and national governments. It should incorporate the ongoing stock-taking exercise on UN premises being undertaken by the Fiji RCO in the five countries under its purview. Based on the above-mentioned review, the RCOs should agree to a harmonized approach for the JPOs/CPOs.	UNCT, RCOs, National Partners	Finding 3	One year 2023	4. In progress as part of the UNCT Configuration exercise that accompanies the new Cooperation Framework 2023-2027. The UNCT Configuration will include the optimal RCO footprint and the responsibilities around BOS that are location specific. The stocktaking of UN premises is part of the end goal of the UN reform to optimize common services including establishing common premises as part of the efficiency agenda. One of the MCOs (Samoa) does not have JPOs/CCOs as, in line with the UNS-G QCPR report (A/75/79), the Special Purpose Trust Fund cannot finance coordination offices for non-UN Member States.

Recommendation	Responsible Parties	Related Finding	Timeframe	Management Response
4.1. JPOs/CPOs a. As a first step, the RCOs should complete the establishment of JPOs/CPOs and recruitment of CCOs in all relevant countries/territories.	UNCT, RCOs, National Partners	Finding 3	One year 2023	4.1 <u>JPOs/CPOs</u> 4.1.a. ongoing as part of the MCO Review and in consultation with relevant governments.
b. This process should be based on a clear plan agreed with the UNCT and complete with milestones and timelines.	UNCT, RCOs, National Partners	Finding 3	One year 2023	4.1.b. included in the UNCT/RCO configuration exercise. Actual role of the CCOs (national coordinators) must be agreed with Government. The UN cannot alone make such a decision.

Recommendation	Responsible Parties	Related Finding	Timeframe	Management Response
c. With the endorsement of UNCT, the RCOs should review the role of national coordinators with a view to whether that role could be strengthened to include functions such as country and sectoral analyses, support for programme development, monitoring of activities, etc. As an example, the role of the coordinator could be conceived as a seconded RCO position in the foreign affairs/finance/planning agency of the respective host government, helping with substantive processes such as planning, programme development, general donor coordination, etc. Any enhancements in the role of country coordinators should be done in the context of the review of the mandate and operations modality of the JPOs/CPOs noted above.	UNCT, RCOs, National Partners	Finding 3	One year 2023	4.1.c. agreed and aligned with the MAF section on MCOs. RCOs will ensure profiles of JPOs/CCOs will match needs and expectations of the UNCT.

Recommendation	Responsible Parties	Related Finding	Timeframe	Management Response
d. UN agencies - especially the larger ones - should embrace the role of the JPOs/CPOs and be willing to rely of them for certain tasks which need to be agreed beforehand at the level of the UNCT. The RCOs should step up their efforts in improving the visibility of the JPOs/CPOs in the eyes of national partners. National stakeholders should be provided with clear messages about the mandate and role of the JPO/CPO network. These messages will need to be consistent, whether they are coming from the RCOs or the agencies.	UNCT, RCOs, National Partners	Finding 3	One year 2023	4.1.d. JPOs/CPOs are recruited in consultation with governments. Their visibility is linked to CPIs and they co-chair JSCs with national governments.
4.2. JCAPs	UNCT, RCOs, National Partners	Finding 3	One year 2023	4.2. (JCAPs now called Country Implementation Plans CIPs)
a. The RCOs should ensure that country-level planning becomes a meaningful process that brings together UN agencies and national counterparts. The JCAPs should become more substantive documents with improved quality and increased relevance and greater consistency across the three RCOs. The formulation of JCAPs requires the meaningful involvement of all relevant stakeholders.	UNCT, RCOs, National Partners	Finding 3	One year 2023	4.2.a. CIPs are built through consultations overseen by the national JSCs. As biennial frameworks, CIPs also allow for continued alignment with changing national priorities.

Recommendation	Responsible Parties	Related Finding	Timeframe	Management Response
b. UNCTs and RCOs should seek to the extent possible to link the formulation of JCAPs to national budget review and planning processes, so as to ensure the integration of country- level UN activities into the sectoral and national plans, which will eventually enhance ownership and reduce transaction costs.	UNCT, RCOs, National Partners	Finding 3	One year 2023	4.2b. Agreed with the caveat that CIPs foster additional work to what Governments are doing in their annual sector plans and budgets. The ultimate objective is accelerated SDG progress which requires stronger complementarities between the UN-supported work and what countries are doing alone or with other partners. We align at the theory of change level, not at activity by activity level. Very importantly, development interventions are multi-year programmes that do not fit the one year budget cycle of governments.
c. At the country level, the UN should build a robust process for sustained engagement of national stakeholders through JCAPs. This process should result in a stronger sense of ownership among national counterparts.	UNCT, RCOs, National Partners	Finding 3	One year 2023	4.2.c Ongoing. This is the role of the JSC and the technical committees established by the Joint Programmes to advance implementation through locally designed solutions.

Recommendation	Responsible Parties	Related Finding	Timeframe	Management Response
d. RCOs and JPOs/CPOs should organize more effective communications and awareness- raising activities aimed at improving national partners' understanding of the cooperation framework, role of UN system and JCAPs.	UNCT, RCOs, National Partners	Finding 3	One year 2023	4.2.d. Ongoing and part of the RCO communication strategy in support of the UN reform and the pursuit of the MCO review recommendations.

Recommendation	Responsible Parties	Related Finding	Timeframe	Management Response
Recommendation 5: Further Promote Joint Activities and Programming Among UN Agencies	UNCT, RCOs, Agencies, National Governments	Finding 4, Finding 5	One year 2023	ACCEPTED with comments

Recommendation	Responsible Parties	Related Finding	Timeframe	Management Response
5.1. UNCT and the RCOs should make greater efforts in identifying incentives that could improve the attractiveness of joint programming for the agencies. This process should take into account and respect the agencies' respective mandates and rules and procedures.	UNCT, RCOs, Agencies, National Governments	Finding 4, Finding 5	One year 2023	5.1. The RCOs will work with MPTFO to extend operations of the UNPS Fund and promote the mechanism of pooled financing in line with the Funding Compact. The RCO will continue to apply for the Joint SDG Fund rounds as relevant to the CF and agency specific regional and subregional programmes.

Recommendation	Responsible Parties	Related Finding	Timeframe	Management Response
5.2. In those cases when the development of joint programmes is coordinated by the RCOs, the latter need to provide the agencies with greater clarity and consistency for criteria and processes they use in incentivizing joint activities (such as submissions for joint programmes).	UNCT, RCOs, Agencies, National Governments	Finding 4, Finding 5	One year 2023	5.2. All joint programmes are coordinated by the RCOs. The UNCT will be presented with a methodology for the selection of agencies as PUNOs to ensure fair competition over available resources and continued alignment with national needs and priorities.
5.3. The UN agencies, from their side, need to display greater willingness and effort in forging joint programmes among themselves. This will require a great degree of will in working together, recognizing each other's comparative advantages and strengths.	UNCT, RCOs, Agencies, National Governments	Finding 4, Finding 5	One year 2023	5.3. RCOs will map lessons learned in joint programming during the UNPS (2018-2022) for UNCT consideration to support improved joint planning and implementation.

Recommendation	Responsible Parties	Related Finding	Timeframe	Management Response
5.4. UNCT and OGs, under the coordination of RCOs, could identify signature services and flagship products that could be feasibly conducted jointly. This could include areas such as policy advisory services, research, training including results-based management, monitoring, and evaluation, strategies for capacity building, knowledge management strategy and South- South Cooperation.	UNCT, RCOs, Agencies, National Governments	Finding 4, Finding 5	One Year 2023	5.4. Establishing national monitoring and evaluation capacities is a priority for the next CF to enable countries to better track SDG progress and improve VNR capacities.

Recommendation	Responsible Parties	Related Finding	Timeframe	Management Response
5.5. UNCT, under the coordination of the RCOs, should continue to work towards the establishment of a fully-fledged UNPSF. RCOs should intensify efforts to attract additional donors to the UNPSF. Convincing donors to channel their resources through the fund will require a lot of advocacy and negotiations, and more importantly demonstrating the value of the pooled fund idea. The RCOs will need to harmonize their positions and approaches on this front, which might require the development of a common strategic approach shared not only among the RCOs, but also endorsed by the entire UNCT.	UNCT, RCOs, Agencies, National Governments	Finding 4, Finding 5	One Year 2023	5.5. RCOs will work with MPTFO to extend the UNPS Fund. Advocacy will continue in order to attract resources to the UNPSF for all UNCT, all PICTs and the CF. The new Fund TORs will expand scope from the UNPSF drawing on the lessons learned from the Fund evaluation which was commissioned by the Government of New Zealand.

Recommendation	Responsible Parties	Related Finding	Timeframe	Management Response
Recommendation 6: Improve the Process for the Design of New Cooperation Framework	RCOs, UNCT, Agencies, National Governments	Finding 1, Finding 2	Six Months to One Year (up to Dec 2023)	ACCEPTED with comments

Recommendation	Responsible Parties	Related Finding	Timeframe	Management Response
Regional Level				
6.1. The process for designing the upcoming cooperation framework should be inclusive and conducted through a continuous bottom-up process. The three RCOs should design a suite of tools and a series of engagements to bring together all stakeholders at regional and country-level. The design of the upcoming cooperation framework will benefit from more effective consultations with civil society and social partners groups and the private sector.	RCOs, UNCT, Agencies, National Governments	Finding 1, Finding 2	Six Months to One Year (up to Dec 2023)	6.1. Ongoing. Extensive regional consultations have taken place in addition to country level presentations to all stakeholders. Regional consultations included governments, CROPs, INGOs, private sector

Recommendation	Responsible Parties	Related Finding	Timeframe	Management Response
6.2. Given the impact of the pandemic, the new cooperation framework needs to be remolded to adequately respond to the new development landscape in the region. The new framework needs to promote methods and approaches capable to sustain an effective response to rapidly changing conditions. Further, recognizing the Pacific region's vulnerability to the devastating impacts of natural disasters and climate change, it is essential that the COVID- 19 response and recovery strives to "build back better" and promotes sustainable approaches to economic development and natural resource management.	RCOs, UNCT, Agencies, National Governments	Finding 1, Finding 2	Six Months to One Year (up to Dec 2023)	6.2. The CF is informed by a regional multi-CCA complemented by country CCAs that have set the new baselines that the impact of COVID-19 led to. In line with the Internal Guidance on the Cooperation Framework, CCAs are to be updated annually to provide an accurate assessment of the state of affairs and inform quality programming. A green recovery is integrated into the new CF and will further be detailed in the CIPs.

Recommendation	Responsible Parties	Related Finding	Timeframe	Management Response
6.3. UNCT should conduct a comprehensive analysis of the impact of the work of the UN during the COVID-19 crisis with a view to understanding the impact of that work and using it as the basis for the development of the new programme which, going forward, should inevitably encompass activities focused on the COVID-19 recovery. The whole COVID-19 response should be seamlessly integrated into the broader cooperation framework.	RCOs, UNCT, Agencies, National Governments	Finding 1, Finding 2	Six Months to One Year (up to Dec 2023)	6.3. The evaluation of the UNPS should have captured that considering that 2020 and 2021 were COVID-19 years. Unfortunately, the evaluation has not taken stock of how the UN managed to continue implementation of JPs during COVID-19. Evaluations of specific work of UN agencies have reflected lessons learned during COVID-19 that will be useful in the pursuit of the new CIPs.
Country Level				Country Level

Recommendation	Responsible Parties	Related Finding	Timeframe	Management Response
6.4. In the upcoming framework, special emphasis should be placed on developing tailored country-specific support based on a solid assessment of the country-level situation and priorities placed in the broader regional context. The assessment should also include a realistic estimation of the countries' needs which should be used to plan UN's technical support.	RCOs, UNCT, Agencies, National Governments	Finding 1 Finding 2	Six Months to One Year (up to Dec 2023)	6.4 These are the underlying principles for the development of the CF and the CIPs. For each country, a CCA has been produced and will be updated to inform the biennial CIPs. Agency specific CPDs reflect how the respective agency will support the country-tailored UN assistance.

Recommendation	Responsible Parties	Related Finding	Timeframe	Management Response
Recommendation 7: Strengthen the Results-Based Management of the Cooperation Framework	UNCT, RCOs, Agencies, National Governments	Finding 9	Six Months to One Year (up to Dec 2023)	ACCEPTED with comments

Recommendation	Responsible Parties	Related Finding	Timeframe	Management Response
7.1. UNCT should strengthen its overall M&E infrastructure. Given the enormity of challenges in this area and the need for much stronger coordination, the whole enterprise of improving the M&E system in the Pacific region will benefit for a systematic review of the challenges and options undertaken jointly by the three RCOs with the blessing of the UNCT. This exercise could comprise an assessment of all key components of the M&E infrastructure, including coordination, data aggregation mechanisms, UN Info system, use of indicators, baselines, targets, etc.	UNCT, RCOs, Agencies, National Governments	Finding 9	Six Months to One Year (up to Dec 2023)	7.1. The RCOs have undertaken work to strengthen the CF Results Framework defining outcome statements consistent with the theory of change and better reflecting the UN competitive advantage in the Pacific. CIP results framework will align output statements with the CF outcomes. A thorough selection of SDG and SAMOA Pathway indicators has been conducted to better track the work in the next 5 years.

Recommendation	Responsible Parties	Related Finding	Timeframe	Management Response
7.2. The RCOs should harmonize the approaches used to monitor and report UNPS results across the 14 countries. The RCOs should accelerate the operationalization of the UN Info system to facilitate the harmonization process. Joint UNPS reporting should be made consistent over countries and time. There is also a need for better disaggregation of indicators the UNCT uses (e.g. on the basis of gender, disability, age and other groups that may experience social exclusion). The evaluative work undertaken by the agencies should be utilized by the UNCT more effectively and strategically at the country and regional level under the coordination of the RCOs.	UNCT, RCOs, Agencies, National Governments	Finding 9	Six Months to One Year (up to Dec 2023)	7.2. CIP will be used for UNInfo reporting as each MCO has a distinct presence on the platform. Annual reports to Governments will be harmonized structure wise with the UNInfo to allow extraction of reports from the system and ensure consistency and transparency of country results. CIP indicators will aim to align with the country's M&E framework for VNR reporting will securing data disaggregation for LNOB tracking.

Recommendation	Responsible Parties	Related Finding	Timeframe	Management Response
7.3. The UNCT and RCOs should identify ways to reduce the complexity and length of UN planning documents, which make them inaccessible to government and civil society and social partners. They should also seek to lower the transactions costs for the governments and address the fatigue resulting from the heavy reporting requirements by UN agencies, donors, and other partners.	UNCT, RCOs, Agencies, National Governments	Finding 9	Six Months to One Year (up to Dec 2023)	7.3. Noted. The Annual Report of the UNCT to the Government is a MAF requirement. Reports on Joint Programmes result from the JSCs in which governments are represented. One possible change could be to consolidate reports to Governments into the One UN Annual Report (as per the MAF) and eliminate any agency specific reporting.
7.4. UNCT and the RCOs should establish an efficient and easy to use system for the collection and aggregation of financial information at the level of UNPS.	UNCT, RCOs, Agencies, National Governments	Finding 9	Six Months to One Year (up to Dec 2023)	7.4. Disclosure of financial information is a MAF requirement. DMEG will ensure the results framework includes resources disbursed at output level.

Recommendation	Responsible Parties	Related Finding	Timeframe	Management Response
7.5. UNCT should work more closely with and support the regional structures for the establishment of an effective system for monitoring SDGs at the regional and national level. The UN could play a greater role in support of the region's data collection and analysis capabilities. It is well-positioned to further support PICTs' efforts to improve regional and national data systems. This could include both technical support for national statistical departments and also support for the coordination of data collection and reporting approaches in the region. UN support for the development to statistical capabilities in the region could be expanded to include not only national statistical agencies, but also other key agencies which have a role in the generation of data. The collection and monitoring of SDG indicators for the Pacific region currently undertaken by the Pacific Data Hub could be adapted not only to the country level (feeding into the national VNRs), but also to tracking the UNPS's results framework at the regional level.	UNCT, RCOs, Agencies, National Governments	Finding 9	Six Months to One Year (up to Dec 2023)	7.5. Ongoing. ESCAP has an SDG data hub as part of its intergovernmental mandate. SDG Monitoring and Evaluation frameworks at country level will be reviewed with ESCAP support to ensure proxy indicators align with the global SDG indicator and standardize reporting across PICTs. To strengthen robustness of data collection and reporting, the UN will use ESCAP expertise and infrastructure and continue collaboration with the Pacific Data Hub at the Secretariat of the Pacific Community.

Recommendation	Responsible Parties	Related Finding	Timeframe	Management Response
Recommendation 8: Enhance the Sustainability of the New Cooperation Framework	UNCT RCOs	Finding 17	2023-2027	ACCEPTED with comments
8.1. For the upcoming cooperation framework, the UNCT should develop a solid Resource Mobilization Strategy. Country-level resource mobilization strategies could be developed as subsets of the regional strategy.	UNCT RCOs	Finding 17	2023-2027	8.1. In progress. The development of the Resource Mobilization Strategy alongside the CF is a requirement as per UNSDG Guidance for Cooperation Frameworks.

Recommendation	Responsible Parties	Related Finding	Timeframe	Management Response
8.2. RCOs should deploy their increased capacities more effectively in the resource mobilization front. UNCT RM efforts should be coordinated across RCOs and countries. In particular, the RCOs should strengthen their role in coordinating resource mobilization among agencies, ensuring that there are no overlaps in agency approaches to donors.	UNCT RCOs	Finding 17	2023-2027	8.2. Agreed. The Resource Mobilization Strategy will be premised on the full adoption of the Funding Compact by both UN agencies and donors to ensure optimized use of limited resources.
8.3. UNCT should strengthen cooperation with Pacific regional structures to ensure more coordinated access to regionally available resources.	UNCT RCOs	Finding 17	2023-2027	8.3. Under consideration. Recent dialogues have focused on strengthened complementarities to avoid competition over the same resources.

Recommendation	Responsible Parties	Related Finding	Timeframe	Management Response
8.4. The resource mobilization strategy should identify concrete actions for channeling the resources and contributions of the private sector more effectively towards the countries development objectives.	UNCT RCOs	Finding 17	2023-2027	8.4 Making the CF investment ready is among the objectives that will guide the resources mobilization strategy. The next 5 years will be dedicated to the development of State-contingent instruments including blue, green and sustainability bonds.

V. Monitoring the implementation of the Management Response

The RCOs in the Pacific through the dedicated Data Managers Development Officers will track progress against the agreed actions in this Management Response and provide an update to the UNCT every three months.

Progress will be pursued through all joint programmes and agency specific interventions and updated in UN Info.