



GOVERNMENT OF SAMOA



AUSTRALIAN HIGH COMMISSION

25 March 2022 – Apia, Samoa

JOINT STATEMENT

Australia and Samoa's enduring friendship has been defined by our commitment to each other not just in times of prosperity, but also in our moments of need. We have supported each other during Samoa's measles epidemic, Australia's bushfires, and more recently, the devastating floods which saw Samoan seasonal workers come to the aid of our Australian communities. We continue this strong history of support as we face the challenges of COVID-19 together.

Today, Samoa's Minister of Finance, the Honourable Mulipola Anarosa Ale Molio'o, and Australia's High Commissioner to Samoa, Her Excellency Emily Luck, signed an agreement to provide up to AUD\$20 million to support Samoa's response to and recovery from the ongoing socio-economic impacts of COVID-19 and support key policy reforms.

This funding was made available through the Australian Government's development program and the Pacific COVID-19 Response Package. Announced in October 2020, the Response Package is a \$304.7 million fund that has provided support to the Pacific and Timor-Leste to deliver temporary and targeted economic and fiscal assistance to address pandemic impacts, including to maintain essential health and other services, and protect the most vulnerable, with a focus on women and girls.

In Samoa, funds under the new agreement will be delivered in alignment with the Pathway for the Development of Samoa and directed to maintaining critical services, supporting the most vulnerable in the community and managing the fiscal impacts of the pandemic.

This includes supporting essential and outreach health services, creating a safe environment from violence for women and girls, providing safe and secure shelter for vulnerable families, and addressing non-communicable diseases. These are all areas where the impacts of COVID-19 have exacerbated existing issues and risks faced by vulnerable groups.

"Australia has worked and will continue to work alongside the Government of Samoa to identify the priority short-term and longer-term needs to be addressed through this funding package. Together we are working to respond to COVID-19 while also positioning Samoa, and the region, for a strong economic recovery," said Australia's High Commissioner to Samoa, Emily Luck.

"No doubt the partnership will responsibly allow our society to adapt and come back clean, green and develop through sustainable growth with people and communities at the centre. The AUD\$20million grant will help the Government's efforts towards health preparedness as part of its COVID19 response as well as incentivise financial and economic policy reforms to support growth and recovery; and building resilience particularly of our vulnerable population," said the Minister of Finance, the Honourable Mulipola Anarosa Ale Molio'o.



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