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United Nations Pacific Strategy Fund Steering Committee meeting, 09 November 2021

Minutes of UNPSF Steering Committee

Agenda Item	Discussions	Agreed Action Items	Responsible
Opening Remarks	<p><i>RC Fiji MCO:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcomed the UNPSF members to the Steering Committee • Introduction of new RC for Micronesia and the new UNICEF Rep for the Pacific • Noted NZ and Australia’s assistance to Fiji is crucial and things are slowly returning to normal in country • Acknowledged the support given to the agencies in terms of funding to support with the outbreak • Acknowledged NZ’s support to Medevac one of the UN staff during the outbreak • Cyclone season has officially started in the Pacific – expecting at least 3 cyclones to make landfall • UN assessing economic impact of COVID not only in Fiji but the Pacific • Many of the Pacific countries remain closed to international travel. • Need to focus on the building back better message and programmes to give countries ideas of where things have been done better and sustainable. Have conducted virtual missions to 8 Pacific countries to engage with key partners as 	<p>Wellington to share copy of Minister’s speech outlining Pacific Reset to Resilience.</p>	<p>MFAT</p>



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	<p>it informs the Common Country Analysis (CCA) which precedes the UN Cooperation Framework (CF).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Expect to have first draft by early December for the CCA and begin work on the Cooperation Framework at the same time. March/ April is the tentative timeline to have a draft CF.• Evaluation of the current UN Pacific Strategy – hope to have the first draft soon and will be shared with partners.• This Partnership is highly spoken of in New York and across the UN agencies – one of the key questions is the strategy to expand the Partnership and one of importance to us all. <p><i>MFAT Wellington:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Acknowledged challenging operating environment for Fiji colleagues and to continue delivery• Introduction of Joanna Heslop as the new Lead Adviser on UN Reform, including the UNPP, and Adele Plummer as the new Unit Manager.• Key policy developments – <i>Pacific Reset to Resilience</i>. Frames how NZ will operate in the Pacific focusing on economic, social, environment and climate change and intergenerational resilience• Minister of Foreign Affairs has outlined principles and values to guide NZ’s partnerships with Pacific partners. Work to be led by Pacific partners and priorities.• Prime Minister and Minister of Climate Change announced quadrupling of Climate Change funding to 1.3billion, with half		
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	<p>dedicated to Pacific and at least half to adaptation. Extra \$800m on top of existing funds for Climate Change.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• NZ's Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) will reduce net emissions 50% below gross by 2030. Reflects awareness that climate change is an existential threat to the Pacific and we need to play our part.• UNPS Fund – halfway mark – need to focus on the Mid Term Review for lessons learnt and recommendations for the way forward. Mechanism not expected to be perfect from the beginning but areas for improvement should be identified: <i>'Using our past to inform the future'</i> <p><i>RC Samoa MCO:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Acknowledged quality of partnership and trust built between the agencies involved to achieve the goals of the partnership• Acknowledged establishment of new RCO/MCO in Micronesia• Report of the UN Secretary General on the RC function adopted on 22/10/21 has taken note of the progress of the RC functions. Article 16 focuses on the Funding Compact which urges full implementation by member states and UN agencies of commitments made in the Funding Compact. UNPSF is premised on principles of Funding Compact.• New Management and Accountability Framework (MAF) as the set of principles that guides the funding framework of UN Country Team (UNCT) and engagement of UN with partners. Centred on new ways of joint programming and co-financing.		
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update from Samoa: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Samoa presented on their third Universal Periodic Review on 02/11/2021. ○ Recommendations focused around Gender Based Violence (GBV), women’s empowerment, the rights of persons with disabilities, and ending corporal punishment. ○ Advanced preparation for Common Country Analysis for Samoa, Cook Islands, Niue, Tokelau • UN Pacific Strategy Evaluation will review progress of programmes under the Partnership including other programmes. Need to include complementarity and coherence between the UNPS Evaluation and the UNPS Fund Mid Term Review • Acknowledged the MPTF representative to the Steering Committee, Ilaria 		
<p>Review and endorsement of March 2021 minutes</p>	<p><i>RC Samoa MCO</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have acted on most of the agreed actions from the March meeting • Some of the documents relevant to the Partnership have been updated, including the MERL and Communication Guidelines. <p><i>MFAT Wellington:</i></p>	<p>March 2021 minutes endorsed</p>	



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Noted they were okay with the March Minutes and updates 		
<p>Endorsement of outstanding documents which have been pending: Communications M&E and Dashboard Financial and Budget Projections</p>	<p><u>Communications Plan, MERL and Dashboard</u> <i>MFAT Wellington:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the Communications Plan’s focus on human-centred stories and the invisible but life-changing work. Look forward to the coordinated messages to reflect One UN delivery and the objectives of the Partnership. Endorsed the Communications Plan MERL and Dashboard – one remaining issue to understand how the partnership is achieving the broader objectives beyond the development impact we are all working to achieve. However the other objectives around coordination, efficiency, UN Reforms and risk reduction need to be reflected more as well in the MERL and Dashboard. This also relates to the proposed Mid Term Review Terms of Reference. Great to see MERL and Dashboard in action – found it useful. Mitigation proposed for one of the risks – propose to add in mitigation for other risks. Seek reflections from the UN to what extent the planned outputs (Theory of Change) leading to the outcomes are relevant and achievable – open to have these discussions 	<p>Communications Plan endorsed</p> <p>Agencies to reflect the UN Reforms, Coordination, Efficiency and Risk reduction more in the MERL and Dashboard</p>	<p>Agencies/ Secretariat</p>



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	<p>and welcome reflections around this if these require changes.</p> <p><i>UNFPA</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adaptation has been part of the Partnership – there has been detailed discussion on the Theory of Change to review and have been in communication with Wellington on the indicators, how they will be monitored, how they fit into the Theory of Change, and how they will be adjusted to the COVID-19 situation on the ground. Programme colleagues feel they are on track with slight amendments in close dialogue with MFAT on the progress of activities. <p><i>UNICEF</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• There is more flexibility to look at the overall outcome. Some delays in programme implementation but commitment with government will ensure the activities will be on track. Flexibility has enabled the programme to address the needs of the countries such as Birth registration.• Query on the M&E framework, whether there is a need for a parallel one or whether the existing UNPS framework can be utilised. <p><i>RC Samoa MCO:</i></p>		
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarified whether there is any logic between outputs in the Theory of Change and the Dashboard. <p><i>UNWomen</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenge is on the agencies to tell the story and how we are achieving under the Partnership. • Mid Term Evaluation will give us the opportunity to reflect on the programme <p><i>UNDP</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well established programmes and projects are at different stages of implementation – which is why they were selected for the Partnership funding. We need to tell the story that speaks about the Partnership and sometimes it is difficult to link the results, the story, and the funding. <p><u>Financial Update on the Fund</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation by MPTFO on the financial update and the Gateway website <p><i>UNWomen</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledged NZ’s flexibility to repurpose some of the funds to support the communities during the COVID outbreak <p><i>MFAT Wellington</i></p>	<p>Financial Update endorsed</p>	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acknowledged the financial report and update from the MPTF 		
Strategic Discussions			
Partnerships and UN Reforms	<p><i>UNICEF</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Noted that now is the time for the UN and partners to jointly advocate for progress on the agreed priorities with our countries Challenge is the payment in tranches as it creates uncertainty and limits the capacity to plan ahead. Limited reporting requirements is a plus – reporting at a higher level is appreciated. There are synergies that exist but it is difficult to measure whether they existed with or without the Partnership. Working together and delivering as One UN should be based on the comparative advantage of the agencies that are best placed to deliver <p><i>UNDP</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Noted that there are many partnerships that UN has with NZ. Have to compare why this Partnership is good vs if the Partnership was not in place There is an opportunity when the Partnership comes to the end to review and co-create programmes and define it the way we want. 		



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Partnerships are important and we have a lot of opportunities. The transaction costs are the main challenge. <p><i>RC Samoa MCO</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• For Samoa, one Joint Steering Committee – with one day allocated for Samoa alone and one day for the Multi-Country programmes. The Partnership is included in the agenda to provide an update of the work in the four countries. It is also a way to ensure coherence across the joint programmes, for example on Social Protection and SDG Financing.• Regular updates provided across the board on the Partnership and other joint programmes.• Building Back Better cannot happen with the indebtedness of SIDS – MultiDimensional Vulnerability Index (MVI) will support SIDS to access all forms of financing regardless of their income per capita. Hope it will be adopted in 2022.• Antigua, Bermuda and Tuvalu signed an agreement for the establishment of a Commission on Climate Justice and are seeking advice on the Law of the Sea against big polluters to request all forms of compensation and help to adapt to the aggressive forms of climate change.		
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Noted the importance of the data work under the Partnership and the relevance of the DHS/MICS data for the entire portfolio, CCAs and the Cooperation Framework• Noted that within the Partnership we built on existing programmes and did not have the opportunity to create new ones given the UNPS was already in existing. The Partnership was to strengthen and complement the existing activities.• The Cooperation Framework will need a resource mobilisation strategy – grateful we are able to build in the UNPSF- but can do more. Although need to consider current limitations with borders and mobility across the Pacific. <p><i>RC Fiji MCO</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Mid Term Review will answer whether the Partnership is working.• The original intention was for a longer timeframe – it would have provided an opportunity to co-create new activities. Unfortunately this did not happen when the timeframe was shortened and therefore we had to identify existing programmes for the Partnership.• NZ is one of the few donors to support the Funding Compact and the UN Reforms		
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The UN needs to tell a compelling story about the Partnership and ramp up efforts and make a greater impact to Pacific people.• Need to also look at coordination on the Government side – going forward the National Steering Committees will review the Country Action Plans as a whole-of-country exercise. It will also help strengthen the approach that NZ has started. <p><i>MFAT Wellington</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Interested in the review taking the Partnership to the next step and providing recommendations on how challenges can be overcome• If there is a next phase there needs to be a lot of thinking on the best approach• Want to review the impact and note there is a broader evaluation. But want to see other dimensions/objectives (ie UN Reforms) reflected in the review.• One of the NZ concerns is explaining what the UN is doing in the Pacific and therefore one of the reasons why NZ wanted to work this way through this Partnership.• Happy to have more strategic discussions with the UN.		
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<p>COVID 19 Impact on current and future operations</p>	<p><i>UNWomen</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to take supplies and support out to Kadavu to keep the market going. Able to repurpose. There was a slow down but re-engaging with the vendors which is important for resilience. Vendors able to diversify what they were growing and supplying. • Pre-Cyclone season as well so will be preparing to support the vendors • In Samoa, grateful that Australia has joined the M4C. Working with the new government on recruitment. There have been some delays due to the change in government. <p><i>UNDP Samoa</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have been rolling out M4C by undertaking an assessment of the women vendors. In the process of recruiting consultants to conduct the work. <p><i>UNICEF</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Despite COVID and challenges, there have been a lot of advances. On the normative side and enabling side on the first 1000 days – introduction of new vaccines in Vanuatu, Samoa and Tuvalu; frameworks for Early Childhood Education. MICS has been progressing. Some of the 		



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	<p>analysis has been shifted from MICS towards Samoa on a different approach for a MICS plus.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some negative impacts on routine services including routine immunisation/vaccination services . A particular concern is the drop in measles coverage. • Introduction of new vaccinations have been delayed in at least 8 countries with the support of NZ and other donors. • Particular challenge is the general slow down in decisions due to lack of focus in certain areas, slow return of decision-makers to the countries, or the UN staff being unable to return to their duty stations. Very limited vendor availability, especially in smaller countries with shipping and cold chain storage. <p><i>UNFPA</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership has improved relationship with UNICEF in terms of coordination and collaboration • Northern Pacific countries are particular focus of UNPFA under this Partnership • Adolescent Friendly Services and training to youth in RMI and FSM. <p><i>UNODC</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COVID-19 has imposed operational challenges on the Anti-Corruption programme but has also created programmatic opportunities. Managed to adjust to 		
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	<p>integrate COVID into the work – acknowledged flexibility of the programme to progress on the activities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Published two publications on COVID-19: Threats to Corruption and Threats to Human Rights, which is an example of UN coherence and cooperation. <p><i>RC Samoa MCO</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• NZ provided additional vaccines to Samoa for the 12 – 18 age group and the other three countries.• Acknowledge work of UNICEF and WHO have been extremely important in the COVID-19 support to Samoa. <p><i>MFAT Wellington</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wanted to have a discussion on the impact of COVID-19 in the Pacific, specifically what work is being done and how it is being done.• One of the benefits for NZ for this Partnership are the key UN partners to note the work undertaken in the Pacific• Acknowledge the update provided by the partners in terms of the Partnership and the activities• NZ is supporting vaccine roll out with UNICEF as well as focusing on budget support for the countries.• On COVID-19, three key words are noted – Flexibility, Adaptability and Resilience		
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NZ also supporting the countries to diversify or build back better – and what they can do more in the cross-cutting space • NZ also looking at reopening borders in an orderly manner and wishes to support countries in going through the border reopening process. • Propose next meeting should include discussions on Building Back Better and the opportunities to work together <p><i>RC Fiji MCO</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint Country Action Plans for the 14 countries for 2021, the UN are recording \$266m USD and, of this, 20% is targeting COVID response. • The UN SG’s COVID-19 Response fund and the Peace Building Fund (to which NZ is a contributor) also support the COVID-19 response • Acknowledged NZ as a contributor to the UN SDG Fund which focuses on Building Back Better in terms of the economy and protecting the planet. There is a significant allocation to the Fiji \$10m initiative that focuses on Blue Economy and Livelihoods and work on Social Protection for the Samoa MCO countries. 	<p>Next Steering Committee to have more discussions on Building Back Better and the Opportunities for the Partners.</p>	<p>Secretariat/ Co-Chairs</p>
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<p>Future Programme Direction</p>	<p><i>Mid Term Review</i></p> <p><i>MFAT Wellington</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The focus should be on how this modality delivers compared to other funding mechanisms – need to consider how the Fund delivers in terms of coordination and risk reduction. • The Review should assess whether the Partnership is creating any difference • The draft TOR was very focused on impact but may not add sufficient insight into how the Fund is operating and supporting the UN Reform. <p><i>RC Fiji MCO</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TOR for the Mid Term Review to be revised and circulated to members for input • TOR for the UNPS Evaluation to be shared with NZ <p><i>RC Samoa MCO</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided clarity on the UNPS Evaluation (underway) on the overall UN Pacific Strategy and the UNPS Fund Mid Term Review • Need to ensure the questions of the two do not overlap and try to align as much as possible <p><i>UNWomen</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TOR for the Mid Term Review to be revised and circulated to members for input • TOR for the UNPS Evaluation to share with NZ 	<p>Secretariat</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the Partnership model if the partners and experts can come together to co-design and believe there is enormous potential for the partnership. • Propose a programmatic space either in future meetings or separate meetings could be better engendered. <p><i>UNFPA</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May want to review indicators and whether the choice of those measures is working for the partners. 		
<p>AOB</p>	<p><i>RC Micronesia MCO</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pleased that the Fund is to enable UN Reform, Coordination and Coherence. Need to tune the programme accordingly • Note that they are on board to play their part as One UN <p><i>RC Samoa MCO</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed that, for the remaining fund, the team should work on the Fund Transfer Request and balance and seek NZ endorsement via email. <p><i>MPTF</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$2.8m available for allocation • Once MPTF has approval on the funding allocation they will be able to release the funds. 	<p>Endorse Fund Transfer Request endorsement via email once finances have been updated.</p>	



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<p>Closing Remarks</p>	<p><i>RC Samoa MCO</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The UN still in a learning mode in this Partnership. Need to accept that this is a first in the Pacific – there might be areas for improvement and try to learn from the two evaluations • Partnership has been very progressive since the beginning in its design and aspirations • For Samoa, there is a lot of benefit to using an integrated approach for continued alignment and benefits to having those funds under the RCO. <p><i>RC Fiji MCO</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledge the support and engagement extended to the Pacific Team by NZ • Need to think and act on growing this Partnership and bring in other development partners. • Must recognise the importance of having a Programme Coordinator to pull things together <p><i>MFAT Wellington</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree on next step. They are working on recruiting a Coordinator and hope to make progress on that. • Acknowledge the useful discussions and will liase with the Secretariat on the TOR for the Mid Term Review. 		