



1. Project Data

Project ID

P145938

Project Name

Agriculture & Fisheries Cyclone Response

Country

Samoa

Practice Area(Lead)

Agriculture

L/C/TF Number(s)

IDA-H8850

Closing Date (Original)

31-Dec-2015

Total Project Cost (USD)

5,000,000.00

Bank Approval Date

17-Oct-2013

Closing Date (Actual)

31-Mar-2017

IBRD/IDA (USD)**Grants (USD)**

Original Commitment

5,000,000.00

0.00

Revised Commitment

5,000,000.00

0.00

Actual

4,901,897.85

0.00

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2. Project Objectives and Components

a. Objectives

According to the Loan Agreement (p.4), the project development objective was to provide recovery assistance to cyclone-affected farmers and fishers through vouchers and grants with the aim of restoring their lost production capacity, and to enhance preparedness of the agricultural sector to better respond to future disasters. The same objective was listed in the PAD (p.5-6).

This ICR Review will assess the projects development results on the basis of these two objectives:
PDO 1: To restore lost production capacity of cyclone-affected farmers and fishers. The instrument for achieving this PDO is through the provision of recovery assistance in the form of vouchers and grants.



PDO 2: To enhance preparedness of the agriculture sector to better respond to future disasters.

b. Were the project objectives/key associated outcome targets revised during implementation?
No

c. Will a split evaluation be undertaken?
No

d. Components

There were four components:

1. Cyclone Recovery for Subsistence Farmers and Fishers (Appraisal: US\$3.08m; Closing: US\$2.96m) aimed at restoring production capacity of cyclone-affected *subsistence* farmers and fishers. Activities included:

- issuing vouchers to subsistence farmers for purchase of eligible farm items
- issuing vouchers to subsistence fishers for purchase of eligible fishing equipment and/or farm items

1. Cyclone Recovery for Commercial Farmers and Fishers (Appraisal: US\$0.41m; Closing: US\$0.3m) aimed at restoring production capacity of cyclone-affected *commercial* farmers and fishers. Activities included:

- providing Recovery Grants to commercial farmers to assist in restoration of farm equipment and infrastructure lost or damaged due to the cyclone
- providing Recovery Grants to commercial farmers involved in aquaculture to assist in restoration of the equipment or infrastructure damaged due to the cyclone

1. Restoration of MAF Facilities and Strengthening the Agricultural Sector's Capacity for Disaster Preparedness and Response (Appraisal: US\$0.70m; Closing: US\$0.86m) carried out activities aimed at:

- supporting the repair of essential Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MAF) facilities, damaged during the cyclone as listed in the Post-Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA)
- establishing systems for the regular collection and updating of agricultural production information
- developing a standard methodology for collection and analysis of damage and loss data for the agricultural sector



- strengthening capacities of farmers and sector institutions in disaster preparedness and response.

1. Project Coordination and Management (Appraisal: US\$0.93m; Closing: US\$0.97m) supported the implementation and management of the project. Activities included:

- provision of technical assistance, necessary for coordination and implementation of the project
- procurement of vehicles and provision of adequate work facilities for MAF
- design and implementation of a Management Information System (MIS) for the Voucher Program and Recovery Grant Scheme and enhancing MAF's monitoring and evaluation systems to track implementation progress and results

e. Comments on Project Cost, Financing, Borrower Contribution, and Dates

Project costs: The actual project cost was US\$5.09m, slightly below the appraised cost of US\$5.12m. Funds were reallocated between disbursement categories and components. A seven percent savings (US\$200,000) from Component 1 (Cyclone Recovery for Subsistence Farmers and Fishers) was reallocated to Component 3 (US\$160,000) (Restoration of MAF Facilities and Strengthening the Agricultural Sector's Capacity for Disaster Preparedness and Response) and to Component 4 (US\$40,000) (Project Coordination and Management) (ICR, Section 1.7).

Financing: The project was financed by a US\$5.0m grant from the IDA Crisis Response Window (CRW). The grant was fully disbursed.

Borrower Contribution: The borrower contribution was not discussed in either the PAD or the ICR, but was noted in the PAD data sheet as US\$0.12m. The actual contribution is assumed to be US\$0.09m (US\$5.09 minus the IDA CRW US\$5.0m grant).

Dates: The project underwent two restructurings:

- December 2015: The project closing date was extended by six months from December 31, 2015 to June 30, 2016, to ensure adequate completion of scheduled activities and better consolidation of project results, in light of delays experienced in setting up the e-voucher system. (ICR, Section 1.7). One new indicator was added to make the results framework more informative, Number of beneficiary subsistence farming and fishing households who have received the e-voucher; with a target value of 7,000 households. The target for the percentage of recovery plans approved was increased from 90% to 100% to reflect the substantial progress that had already been achieved. There was also a reallocation of funds due to a savings of seven percent in Component 1 (see above).
- June 2016: The project closing date was extended by nine months from June 30, 2016 to March 31, 2017 to wrap up project activities and fully document lessons learned.



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3. Relevance of Objectives & Design

a. Relevance of Objectives

The project was prepared, delivered, and approved in less than three months as a medium-term recovery effort in response to damages brought by Tropical Cyclone Evan, which hit in December 2012. With the 2013 census showing that 85% of the population is based in agriculture, and the Post-Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA) indicating agriculture as one of three highly impacted sectors (the other two being transport and tourism), the project appropriately focused its efforts on commercial and subsistence farmers (ICR, Section 1.1). The 2012-16 Country Partnership Strategy (current at the time of appraisal and closing) also placed high priority on strengthening agricultural productivity (p.10). A focus on assets was appropriate, since other international and non-governmental organizations were already providing farm inputs and other forms of emergency assistance (ICR, Section 3.6). Support to commercial farmers was further relevant to enable the success of the Bank-funded Samoan Agricultural Competitiveness Enhancement Project (SACEP).

The second half of the objective, enhanced preparedness of the agricultural sector, was also relevant at the time of appraisal and closing. The MAF lacked capacity to respond to reconstruction and recovery needs in a timely manner, and there was no system in place for assessing farm damages and losses arising from disasters. The 2012-16 Country Partnership Strategy also emphasized improving long-term resilience and quick response capacity following future disasters (p.12).

Relevance of Objectives is considered Substantial: the project targeted high priority areas, while avoiding duplication with other emergency response and preparedness efforts.

Rating

Substantial

b. Relevance of Design

Project design relied primarily on the analysis presented in the PDNA (ICR, Section 1.1). The activities derived from this analysis would plausibly contribute to achievement of the PDO in a general sense. However, because the Results Framework (RF) was weak in outlining a clear causal chain - indicators centered on outputs rather than outcomes attribution and interpretation of the PDO is difficult.

The provision of vouchers to obtain farm equipment and supplies is an appropriate, but likely insufficient, intervention toward the aim of restoring production capacity. Indeed, during the ICR Stakeholder Workshop, beneficiaries indicated that the provision of seeds and other forms of assistance were more useful for immediate relief and restarting production, but such assistance was already being carried out by other donors



(ICR Section 3.6).

In order to give beneficiaries some freedom to select the assets most useful to their unique circumstances, project design appropriately leveraged vouchers instead of providing in-kind assistance. Vouchers were selected over cash due to government concern that cash would be misused (ICR, Section 2.1). However, especially for subsistence farmers, cash may have been a more effective instrument on the path to recovery: restoration of non-farm assets, such as housing, silos, or food supply for the year, and support for other incidental expenses, such as transport for newly acquired farm assets, were equally relevant to the restoration of production capacity. The voucher system was designed to cover a range of equipment and supplies, but there was some debate during the Stakeholder Workshop over whether additional items should have been permitted (ICR, Annex 6). In short, this design likely prevented misuse, but may have also reduced efficacy.

The decision to use e-vouchers, an approach never before used in Samoa, rather than paper vouchers, was risky but appropriate for a variety of reasons: the large number of households needing assistance; damaged transport infrastructure; limited capacity of the government to take on a high administrative burden; and, a high mobile phone penetration rate and expanding electronic banking services (ICR, Section 2.1). However, the project appraisal document did not adequately explore the implementation requirements of the e-voucher system, and roll-out was delayed as a result. Design also did not include explicit efforts for maintaining the system post-project closure.

The design of the system for selecting beneficiaries was relevant to reach the PDOs target of cyclone-affected farmers and fishers. While there was some question as to whether mayors could be fair in their role in selecting beneficiaries, posting the list of selected beneficiaries for public review was ultimately an effective accountability tool. Otherwise, there was some post-project discussion over the transparency behind determining which farmers were considered subsistence and which were considered commercial, since there was no official government definition (ICR, Section 6)

Project activities outlined in the third component facility repairs, data collection systems, capacity building - would plausibly contribute to enhanced preparedness of the agricultural sector, but lacked appropriate specificity to maximize potential benefits (ICR, Section 5.1).

In conclusion, Relevance of Design is rate as Substantial. The e-voucher system was strict enough to prevent misuse, but flexible to accommodate beneficiary needs and contextual limitations. Beneficiary selection was designed to ensure the PDOs intended groups were targeted. The third component included relevant interventions for future disaster preparedness and response. While the RF was weakly articulated, the components clearly outlined activities that would substantially contribute to the project objective.

Rating
Substantial



4. Achievement of Objectives (Efficacy)

Objective 1

Objective

Provide recovery assistance to cyclone-affected farmers and fishers through vouchers and grants with the aim of restoring their lost production capacity.

Rationale

Outputs

- SAT 7.3m (~US\$3m) allowed the project to reach 7,394 subsistence farmers or fishers (of which 24.3% were women and less than 1% fishermen) with vouchers
- 99% of eligible subsistence farmers that have received vouchers and 70% respondents to the E-Voucher Satisfaction Survey indicated that they were satisfied with the amount of assistance in terms of the value of the e-voucher that they received (ICR Section 3.6)
- 100% of recovery plans of eligible commercial farmers and aquaculturists approved (=100 plans)

Outcomes

- 95% of respondents to the beneficiary impact survey indicated that they had increased production as a result of the assistance received from the project; this perspective was also confirmed during the ICR Stakeholder Workshop (ICR Section 3.6)
- 84% of respondents to the E-Voucher Satisfaction Survey said they were able to use the funds for recovery (ICR Section 3.6)
- 93% of recovery plans of eligible commercial farmers and aquaculturists were implemented

As pointed out by the ICR (Section 3.2), the results framework did not include indicators to directly measure restoration of production capacity. This presents a major challenge in assessing both the achievement and attribution of this objective: evidence provided in the ICR is limited. The beneficiary impact survey was conducted with only a small sample (5-10%) of beneficiaries (ICR Section 3.6). The ICR Stakeholder Workshop was only a half-day event, and while unclear how many beneficiaries participated, the ICR (Annex 6) indicated most were village mayors.

Further minimizing achievement, in conducting its efficiency analysis, the ICR (Section 3.3.) assumed that 30% of farmers who received assistance did not make productive use of it, though the E-Voucher Satisfaction Survey suggested that percentage was closer to 16% (ICR Section 3.6). The ICR (Section 3.5) also noted that some of the poorest beneficiaries had challenges redeeming vouchers due to high logistical costs associated with bringing new assets back to the farm. If beneficiaries could not make productive use of their vouchers an intermediate outcome then the project would not have impacted their level of production capacity.



Finally, while the PDO does not give priority to farmers over fishermen, implementation appeared to focus almost exclusively on farmers. Less than one percent of beneficiaries were fishermen, even though the PAD (p.3-4) indicated that 25% of rural households engaged in fishing.

In response to the foregoing assessment, the concerned Global Practice and project team clarified that: (i) the voucher choice was driven by demands and needs; (ii) fishing households were a subset of farming households and were not mutually exclusive; (iii) beneficiaries could freely choose between a “green” farming voucher and a “blue” fishing voucher, but most chose the “green” farming voucher as it did not preclude them from continuing to engage sporadically in fishing; and (iv) there was no deliberate prioritization of farming over fishing.

It was further clarified that—as a surrogate indicator for directly measuring the restoration of production capacity for subsistence farmers and fishers—the vouchers selected by the affected households represented the concrete inputs that they had specifically chosen to meet their needs for restoring their production capacity. (Although this is a valid point, it is still useful to reiterate that the actual utilization and sustainability of the vouchers were more important to measure than just the number of vouchers issued.)

While the sample for the beneficiary impact survey is small, it was also clarified that the sampling was random and stratified according to geographic location and gender, to ensure that all villages were surveyed and women were represented. Also, the village mayors were not a “biased elite” group since they are often chosen by Samoan communities to represent them as interlocutors vis-à-vis the central government.

It was also clarified that the “logistical costs” associated with the voucher-supported, new assets to the farm just meant delays, and not outright inability to use the vouchers productively.

Finally, the project team provided two new tables that were not in the ICR, i.e., common items purchased through the vouchers and the detailed stratification of the beneficiary impact survey, which provide additional evidence in support of the achievement of this PDO.

Rating
Substantial

Objective 2

Objective

Enhance preparedness of the agricultural sector to better respond to future disasters.

Rationale

Output



- 100% of damaged MAF facilities were repaired
- Equipment was provided for MAF Crop, Livestock and Fisheries Divisions
- Disaster Risk Management Strategy for Agriculture, covering crops and livestock, and a Disaster Risk Management Strategy for Fisheries were prepared
- 66 MAF staff were trained on compiling regular agricultural production data, assessing damages & loss for the agricultural sector and capacities strengthened in DRR/DRM
- 400 client days (as noted in the RF analysis, Section F) or 1,381 training days (as noted in Annex 2) of training provided to farmers on technologies and practices for more resilient agriculture (of which 200 were for women). *NB: IEG was unable to confirm the distinction between client days and training days*
 - over 800 farmers/fishers trained on DRM data mgt, DRM in agr. and fishery, PDNA and Disaster Initial Assessment
 - 569 farmers and fishers outside of TCE affected areas participated in disaster risk reduction training *NB: IEG was unable to confirm whether these 569 were in addition to or a subset of the 800 farmers/fishers noted in the RF analysis.*
- Training materials for six courses and two community-level workshops
- Village-level disaster management plans for 10 villages in 5 districts

Outcomes

- The Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, Disaster Risk Management Office (DRMO) incorporated the Disaster Risk Management Strategy for Agriculture and the Disaster Risk Management Strategy for Fisheries (both prepared by the project) into the Samoan National Disaster Risk Management Plan
- Repaired facilities are more resilient to future disasters (e.g. through the provision of a generator, road improvements)

IEG evaluates PDO 2 based on the indicator provided for in the RF, however this indicator is relatively weak, overly complex, and lacking quantitative measures. The adoption of methodology and completion of trainings serve better as final outputs or intermediate outcomes. Capacity building should have been further measured by setting training targets for institutional participants rather than only farmers and fishermen. Overall, the lack of measurement in terms of application, utilization, adoption and mainstreaming of the new skills and knowledge that were gained from training and preparation of plans makes it difficult to measure achievement of this objective. More evidence that these have been mainstreamed within operational practices is required, which is a better indicator of preparedness compared to the outputs presented in the RF.

In sum, limited or absence of evidence means it is not possible to conclude that the project more than modestly achieved PDO 2.



Rating
Modest

5. Efficiency

Despite an extension of the closing date by 15 months, the project came in under budget due to the cost-savings uncovered in Component 1. Multiple delays occurred that impact efficiency: early-on in project kick-off due to the implementing agency's lack of experience; in the roll-out of the e-voucher system; and in implementation of disaster preparedness trainings (ICR, Sections 1.7, 2.2, 2.5).

At project closing, the ICR team, faced with a lack of baseline and outcome data on production capacities, pulled data from secondary sources (FAO and another Bank-funded project) to conduct a thoughtful efficiency analysis aimed at estimating project returns on the restoration of production capacity. It was estimated that, for moderately-affected (50% losses) subsistence farmers, the project cost-benefit ratio was 0.9 to 2.45, depending on the crop. For severely-affected (80% losses) subsistence farmers, the project cost-benefit ratio was higher at 1.53 to 3.04. Cost-benefit ratio for commercial farmers was based on only two types of farms (pig breeding and vegetable production) and was estimated to be 4.86 for the moderately-affected and 9.19 for the severely-affected. These benefits were primarily derived from the assumption that the project permitted beneficiaries to restart production, whereas without the project, production would have been delayed or impossible to recover. Unfortunately, the lack of evidence confirming a restoration of production capacity makes it difficult to confirm that assumption.

These analyses were aggregated to estimate a net present value of US\$2.3m and an EIRR of 41% for the restoration of production activities. Given that these activities would have resulted in indirect benefits (ICR, Section 3.3) increased sales for farm asset suppliers, increased demand for farm labor, increased farmer household consumption, future use of the e-voucher system - that were not covered in this calculation, and the fact that disaster preparedness would plausibly lead to cost-savings in the event of a future disaster, a 41% EIRR is likely in an accurate range even if cost-benefit ratios were inflated. Still, had beneficiaries received support under the original timeline (without the delays noted above), returns could have been even greater. Indeed, some farmers had already started to re-build their assets by the time the e-vouches were distributed (ICR, Annex 3).

The decision to use e-vouchers produced greater benefits in the long term (due to the potential for system to be used for other purposes), likely reduced leakages and enhanced targeting, and reduced costs typically associated with the material and administrative burden of paper vouchers. However, because the government was reluctant to distribute cash due to a fear of misuse on the part of recipients (ICR, Section 2.1), cash transfers were not considered though it is possible they could have presented even greater efficiencies.

In conclusion, the absence of concrete primary data on outcomes, project delays, and tenuous attribution lead to a Modest rating for Efficiency.



Efficiency Rating

Modest

a. If available, enter the Economic Rate of Return (ERR) and/or Financial Rate of Return (FRR) at appraisal and the re-estimated value at evaluation:

	Rate Available?	Point value (%)	*Coverage/Scope (%)
Appraisal		0	0 <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable
ICR Estimate	✓	41.00	64.00 <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable

* Refers to percent of total project cost for which ERR/FRR was calculated.

6. Outcome

The relevance of objectives and design are both rated substantial. The project's objectives and logistical interventions were mostly weighted (nearly 85% of project funding) towards PDO1, i.e., the restoration of production capacity among farmers and fishers, which is rated substantial. PDO 2, consisting of relatively smaller and pointed activities related to institutional strengthening, is rated modest. Efficiency is rated modest. The overall outcome rating is rated as moderately satisfactory.

a. Outcome Rating

Moderately Satisfactory

7. Rationale for Risk to Development Outcome Rating

Enhanced preparedness achieved by the project mitigates against the risk that gains achieved in the restoration of production capacity will be lost due to a future natural disaster. Still, delays in implementing disaster preparedness training put the long-term impacts at risk, as participants had less time to internalize the training. Disaster preparedness plans prepared under the project were adopted by the relevant government agency--the Disaster Risk Management Office (DRMO) of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment. However, it is unclear whether DRMO will make appropriate budget provisions and institutional arrangements to uphold and maintain these new preparedness efforts. Financial risk to restored MAF operations is minimal given that costs were already incorporated into government budgets before the cyclone hit. (ICR, Section 2.5)

a. Risk to Development Outcome Rating



Substantial

8. Assessment of Bank Performance

a. Quality-at-Entry

Project preparation was fast to account for its emergency nature. Preparations and design relied on the analysis conducted in the PDNA. Design reflected lessons from other emergency recovery operations, including the importance of simplicity and expedited delivery of support with a minimum administrative burden (ICR, Section 2.1). The Results Framework, however, had significant shortcomings, and was inadequate to allow for proper measurement of the PDO (ICR, Section 5.1a). Due to these shortcomings, notably the lack of baselines and indicators related to increase in production capacity as a direct result of the vouchers, the attribution of project activities to reported outcomes is unclear and lacking evidence.

Most risks were appropriately identified and mitigated. However, while the risk relating to the e-voucher innovation and the MAFs lack of experience were appropriately identified, mitigation measures were insufficient. The MAFs limited experience resulted in delays early-on in project start-up and implementation. Further delays were experienced in setting up the e-voucher system, which proved more challenging than anticipated even with the strong technical assistance provided. As a recovery project, time was of the essence and these delays meant beneficiaries experienced a prolonged period of lost productivity and income (ICR, Section 2.2). The risk that the e-voucher system would fall into disuse without explicit efforts to the contrary was not properly identified or mitigated in project design. Otherwise, risks related to disputes over beneficiary selection were effectively avoided thanks to a design that involved publicly posting beneficiary lists in each village (ICR, Section 2.1).

Quality-at-Entry Rating

Moderately Satisfactory

b. Quality of supervision

Challenges pertaining to MAFs lack of experience with the World Bank were mitigated by stronger collaboration with the SACEP project coordination unit. The Bank was effective in providing technical support throughout implementation, including facilitating key relationships between the diverse range of stakeholders necessary to implement the e-voucher system (ICR, Section 2.2). Continuity of key staff from design through project completion was invaluable. The ICR also outlined the projects effectiveness in resolving many challenges experienced throughout the project due to strong problem-solving on the part of Bank and project staff (ICR, Section 2.2).

However, there were some shortcomings. Grievance mechanisms were designed but not properly implemented (ICR Section 5.1b), the RF was never updated despite the lack of attention paid to measuring outcomes, and, despite the good reception of the e-voucher system, mechanisms were not added to ensure its continued use.



Quality of Supervision Rating

Moderately Satisfactory

Overall Bank Performance Rating

Moderately Satisfactory

9. Assessment of Borrower Performance

a. Government Performance

The government was engaged in project design, effectively communicating what would be acceptable and suitable to the Samoan context (ICR Section 2.1). The government was open and collaborative with the private sector, and flexible in establishing the necessary institutional arrangements to set up the e-voucher system (ICR, Section 2.2, Section 5.2a). There was room for improvement in the use of data collected by the MIS. Otherwise, at the time of project closure, the institutional support to maintain the e-voucher system for future use was lacking. (ICR, Section 2.5).

Government Performance Rating

Moderately Satisfactory

b. Implementing Agency Performance

Project implementation was done by the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MAF), with coordination with the Ministry of Finance, the Small Business Enterprise Center, and the Ministry of Women, Community, and Development.

The MAF lacked experience in project management and was unfamiliar with procedures to access project financing (ICR, Section 2.2). This caused delays early on in project implementation. In addition, the ICR noted other shortcomings, including: a lack of integration of project staff into MAF operations; the unexploited potential of the MIS and M&E system; and, inadequate engagement and guidance from MAF senior management. (ICR section 5.2b)

While the MAFs lack of experience resulted in delays, the private sector provider contracted to distribute the e-vouchers, Digicel, was highly competent and provided technical support and human resources to the project at a level exceeding original estimates (ICR, Section 2.2).

Implementing Agency Performance Rating

Moderately Satisfactory

Overall Borrower Performance Rating

Moderately Satisfactory



10. M&E Design, Implementation, & Utilization

a. M&E Design

There were considerable shortcomings in the results framework.

The ICR correctly noted (Section 3.2) that performance indicators related to the first half of the PDO focused more on outputs (value of redeemed vouchers; implementation of approved recovery plans) rather than outcomes (restoration of productive capacity). As part of the December 2015 restructuring, the addition of a new indicator - number of beneficiary subsistence farming and fishing households who have received the e-voucher made the results framework more informative but still fell short of measuring outcomes. Weak outcome measurements and the lack of baseline data (due to the emergency nature of the project, a baseline was not collected (ICR, Section 3.3)) or comparison groups also meant it was not possible to evaluate the causal chain or determine attribution. Otherwise, the M&E design appropriately included visits to beneficiary households in order to monitor the use of inputs and compliance with safeguards.

One performance indicator was designed to measure the second half of the PDO, enhanced preparedness. While somewhat better designed than the above indicators, the ICR correctly stated (Section 3.2) that the single indicator would have been better split into multiple indicators: for example, (1) methodology developed/adopted; (2) MAF disaster response capacity; (3) farmer disaster response capacity.

Intermediate results indicators were appropriately designed to measure project progress in achieving its intended outputs.

b. M&E Implementation

The ICR (Section 2.3) indicated that the activities called for in the PAD were implemented to some degree. MIS system served as the main resource for M&E, and it was effectively implemented to collect a significant amount of data on e-voucher operations. Data collected included the number of beneficiaries as well as detailed information on the assets purchased with vouchers.

c. M&E Utilization

While the MIS system was effective in collecting a large amount of data on e-voucher operations, that data was not fully leveraged by the project and MAF (ICR, Section 2.3).

M&E Quality Rating

Negligible



11. Other Issues

a. Safeguards

The project was rated Category B, triggering safeguard policies in four areas: OP/BP 4.01 Environmental assessment; OP/BP 4.04 Natural habitats; OP 4.09 Pest management; and, OP/BP 4.10 Indigenous peoples. An Environmental and Social Screening and Assessment Framework (ESSAF) was prepared by the Government to address these issues. The ICR (Section 2.4) reported that the project was fully compliant in implementing the measures outlined in the ESSAF: non-compliant goods (such as pesticides and illegal fishing nets) were not eligible for purchase under the e-voucher scheme; farmer recovery plans were screened for compliance before approval; and, a list of eligible beneficiaries was posted publicly in each community for public scrutiny. As regards the latter, community members and beneficiaries were able to make complaints to the PMU, but these grievances and any response to them were not logged.

b. Fiduciary Compliance

Financial management: Financial management was satisfactory overall. Interim financial reports and audits were submitted on time. While there was one instance where the unexpected death of a staff member prevented the project from responding to an information request by Government auditors, this issue was ultimately resolved with the arrival of the replacement staff member. (ICR, Section 2.4)

Procurement: Procurement performance was satisfactory overall. One minor delay occurred related to the e-voucher scheme and electronic payment system provider, but this was quickly resolved with Bank support (ICR, Section 2.4)

c. Unintended impacts (Positive or Negative)

The e-voucher system, along with the institutional knowledge gained in setting up that system and the registry of nearly 8,000 households, were unintended benefits. Such a system could prove useful for future disaster response or other grant and voucher programs. Unfortunately, formal long-term arrangements were not made to ensure the system could continue to generate benefits post-project. With the help of a 2017 case study on the system (produced by the Bank), project staff are currently advocating for continued support and use of the system. The institutional support to maintain the system is, however, currently lacking. (ICR, Section 2.5)

Increased sales for hardware suppliers boosted these actors revenues in the short term, thus contributing to their post-cyclone recovery, but likely did not affect total sales over the long-term (if it is assumed that beneficiaries would have eventually restored their assets anyway). Increased demand for farm labor and other farm inputs would have had similar impacts.



d. Other

12. Ratings

Ratings	ICR	IEG	Reason for Disagreements/Comment
Outcome	Satisfactory	Moderately Satisfactory	The ratings for relevance, efficacy, and efficiency yield a Moderately Satisfactory rating, given the weak results framework, limited evidence on outcomes, and long project delays.
Risk to Development Outcome	Negligible	Substantial	The ICR questioned whether disaster preparedness efforts would be maintained by the DRMO. This exacerbates the risk that a future natural disaster could wipe out the restored production capacity.
Bank Performance	Moderately Satisfactory	Moderately Satisfactory	---
Borrower Performance	Moderately Satisfactory	Moderately Satisfactory	---
Quality of ICR		Substantial	---

Note

When insufficient information is provided by the Bank for IEG to arrive at a clear rating, IEG will downgrade the relevant ratings as warranted beginning July 1, 2006.

The "Reason for Disagreement/Comments" column could cross-reference other sections of the ICR Review, as appropriate.

13. Lessons

The following lessons were summarized from the ICR (Section 6):

- **While ultimately more efficient and transparent, the initial set-up of e-voucher systems can be time-intensive, requiring multiple steps from multiple actors.** In the Samoan context, set-up and roll-out took about 12 months and required: appropriate legislative provisions and financial regulations, configuration of merchant operating systems, and on-the-ground assistance for beneficiaries and suppliers who had never before used the system. Because these efforts were not properly accounted for at the time of project design, distribution of vouchers was delayed. This is especially important to consider in an emergency context.



- **Secondary costs and logistical challenges associated with the redemption of vouchers can create obstacles in realizing vouchers intended benefits.** Some subsistence farmers were unable to redeem their vouchers as they lacked the means for transporting assets from the relatively few merchant locations to their homes. In addition, there were challenges related to selected merchants due to their location, limited inventory, and staffing levels.

- **Implementing agencies lacking experience in managing donor-financed projects could benefit from close collaboration with more experienced agencies, but overlooking the time necessary to learn can cause project delays.** Close collaboration between the MAF PMU and the PMU associated with another World Bank project enabled learning. However, the learning curve was not sufficiently accounted for in the project timeline, and delays occurred as a result.

IEG adds the following lesson:

- **When external shocks like natural disasters wipe out production, there is an opportunity to re-orient production to more sustainable and profitable crops.** In the case of Samoa, a negative average annual growth rate in the agricultural sector for the decade preceding the project is clear evidence that a return to the status quo may not be desirable (PAD, p.1). Indeed, commercial farmers pushed the project to increase its flexibility and allow them to invest in new activities that were more economically sustainable rather than be forced to invest in the recovery of less viable pre-disaster activities.

14. Assessment Recommended?

No

15. Comments on Quality of ICR

The ICR is consistent with guidelines. Challenges to project implementation are candidly discussed overall, though not always in a coherent manner. Secondary sources were effectively leveraged in order to conduct a thoughtful efficiency analysis on the project's major components, despite a deficient results framework and lack of a baseline. No efficiency analysis was conducted on disaster preparedness activities, however. There were some inconsistencies regarding project outputs.



a. Quality of ICR Rating
Substantial