

## INITIAL POVERTY AND SOCIAL ANALYSIS

Country:	<input type="text" value="Samoa"/>	Project Title:	<input type="text" value="Samoa Submarine Cable Project"/>
Lending/Financing Modality:	<input type="text" value="Project grant"/>	Department/ Division:	<input type="text" value="PARD/PAUS"/>

### I. POVERTY IMPACT AND SOCIAL DIMENSIONS

#### A. Links to the National Poverty Reduction Strategy and Country Partnership Strategy

Samoa's current strategy for economic and social development is set out in the Strategy for the Development of Samoa (SDS) 2012-2016. The SDS provides a four-year road map for development activities in key sectors. The SDS's theme is "Boosting Productivity for Sustainable Development". The priority areas for sustainable development are the economic, social and infrastructure sectors and the environment. Key outcomes are sustained macroeconomic stability; the reinvigorating of the agriculture sector; the revitalization of exports; sustainable tourism; an enabling environment for business development; a healthy Samoa; improved focus on access to education, training and learning outcomes; social cohesion; sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation; efficient, safe and sustainable transport systems and networks; universal access to reliable and affordable information communications technology (ICT) services; sustainable energy supply; environmental sustainability and climate and disaster resilience.

One of the key outcomes of the SDS is 'universal access to reliable and affordable ICT services'. The National Communications and Information Technology Policy (NCITP) 2013-2017 has been carefully crafted to ensure ICT activities promote human, social and economic development for all, to achieve the ultimate goal of the government's vision of improved standards of living for its people. The use of ICT has become pervasive in both the public and private sectors as well as at the community level; hence prompting a need for an integrated approach to harnessing ICT as a driver for the development of the economy. The last 15 years has seen major changes in the sector, driven by innovations in communication and information technologies. These changes aim to transform Samoa into a modern society that is adaptive, as well as proactive; in making use of the opportunities that globalization brings through improved access to good and services; and raising the standard of living in innovative ways that only ICT can bring about.

The launch of the National Broadband Highway Project (NBH) and the proposed submarine cable project (the second for the country) reflects the government's commitment for improved and speedy connections within the country, and improved access internationally. The issues of affordability and access remain a concern; likewise, there is a need to create a safe environment to protect the more vulnerable members of the community by creating awareness of the social costs of the internet.

The proposed project will contribute indirectly to reducing poverty in Samoa by decreasing the cost of communication for businesses and individuals and increasing access to information and services essential for socio-economic development. It will contribute to improved efficiency and effectiveness of private sector activities as well as public services. It will also open up new business opportunities such as business process outsourcing thus creating employment opportunities. Additionally, the project will enhance regional integration and cooperation by expanding the regional network offering cheaper and better quality communications; hence, encouraging trade in goods and services.

General Intervention  Individual or Household (TI-H)  Geographic (TI-G)  Non-Income MDGs (TI-M1, M2, etc.)

The proposed project does not target a specific segment of the population of Samoa. It is intended to benefit the general public through more efficient and affordable telecommunication and internet services.

#### C. Poverty and Social Analysis

1. Key issues and potential beneficiaries.

The primary beneficiaries will include telecommunications operators and internet service providers. Ultimately, the benefits will flow on down to the users of telecommunications and internet services – the general public, businesses and the public sector. The submarine cable will enable service providers to deliver better quality service at lower cost; hence making them more affordable and accessible to all users.

2. Impact channels and expected systemic changes. The project concept will build a submarine cable to Apia – on

the main island of Upolu with a spur to Savaii, primarily with the aim of promoting social equity in terms of access. A higher number of Samoans live overseas which accounts for high remittances for the country. Access to affordable internet services will improve means of communications between all Samoans and families overseas and make remitting funds easier. Micro business owners will be able to access potential markets as well as access information to improve their products and services. A longer term impact of the project will be to create the environment for improved education and health services through better access to information and remote support.

Several attempts have been made under other projects to provide ICT in schools and in the community in an attempt to improve communications. Two such projects include the schoolnet project financed by ADB to provide computer equipment to selected schools around the country and the Feso'otai Centre project administered by the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology which established community computer centres around the country.<sup>1</sup> Cost and quality of internet service have been a constraining factor on the success of these projects.

3. Focus of (and resources allocated in) the PPTA or due diligence. Due diligence in technical and financial aspects of the project are being conducted by the World Bank and the project management team financed by the Government of Australia. ADB is providing technical assistance through an existing regional TA to support an environmental and social safeguards assessment including a poverty and social assessment, complementing the efforts made by the World Bank and other partners.<sup>2</sup>

4. Specific analysis for policy-based lending. Not applicable.

## II. GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT

1. What are the key gender issues in the sector/subsector that are likely to be relevant to this project or program?

Given the benefits and importance of ICT, men and women need to have equal opportunities to access and use them. The most basic gender equality issue in ICT is access, which is linked to the availability of the necessary infrastructure. Additional investment in domestic backhaul network and regulation for cross-subsidy for rural users may be required to expand the access for both men and women.

Lack of access to reliable communication services often force people to travel long distance. Mobility for women is limited in most Pacific countries. With improved telecommunications and access points made available in communities, women can easily communicate with their counterparts in other areas without having to travel.

2. Does the proposed project or program have the potential to make a contribution to the promotion of gender equity and/or empowerment of women by providing women's access to and use of opportunities, services, resources, assets, and participation in decision making?

Yes  No Please explain.

The project will certainly have an impact on the empowerment of women as it provides them with greater access to information so they can make informed decision and contribute to decision making. Women are leading the charge in promoting income generating activities at the grassroots level and small business development. Access to affordable internet services will help them access markets through promoting their products and services via the internet, as well as access information on how to improve their products and services. Opportunities exist in potential IT-based services like call centers and so forth.

3. Could the proposed project have an adverse impact on women and/or girls or widen gender inequality?

Yes  No Please explain.

We do not envisage any adverse effects of the project specifically on women. Affordable and easy access to the internet ensures that both men and women have equal access to available information as well as services. Women will have the opportunity to be able to work from home should the need arises. However, Samoa has yet to develop appropriate legislations to protect people – men and women – from scams and negative contents on some information available via the internet.

4. Indicate the intended gender mainstreaming category:

GEN (gender equity)  EGM (effective gender mainstreaming)  
 SGE (some gender elements)  NGE (no gender elements)

## III. PARTICIPATION AND EMPOWERMENT

1. Who are the main stakeholders of the project, including beneficiaries and negatively affected people? Identify how they will participate in the project design.

The main stakeholders of the project are the government of Samoa (relevant ministries include finance,

<sup>1</sup> ADB. 2007. *Schoolnet and Community Access Project (Samoa)*. Manila

<sup>2</sup> ADB. 2013. *Pacific Information and Communication Technology Investment Planning and Capacity Development Facility*. Manila.

telecommunications, land and environment, agriculture and fisheries, attorney general, office of the regulator); the telecommunication operators and internet service providers; but ultimately the general public and businesses who are the users of internet services. The key stakeholders from the government and operators have formed the project steering committee which is overseeing the preparation of the project. Other stakeholders including the public and businesses will take part in consultative process on environment and safeguards issues which will be undertaken as part of the project due diligence.

2. How can the project contribute (in a systemic way) to engaging and empowering stakeholders and beneficiaries, particularly, the poor, vulnerable and excluded groups? What issues in the project design require participation of the poor and excluded?

The objective of the project is to provide affordable and accessible quality internet services. It will therefore ensure that everyone have access to information, be informed and can contribute to decision making no matter their location in the country and their walk of life. The increase in the use of mobile phones in Samoa has been phenomenal and with the advent of social media comes an increase in mobile broadband usage. With lower internet costs, this usage is likely to increase. This does mean increase in access to information – good and bad, hence, there is concern on the likely social issues which may arise due to access to all sorts of information. Stakeholders and beneficiaries should participate in discussions on what policies and legislations that should be put in place to address this issue. Additionally, stakeholders and beneficiaries should take part in awareness programs on how to make sure the type of information young children have access to are monitored.

3. What are the key, active, and relevant civil society organizations in the project area? What is the level of civil society organization participation in the project design?

Information generation and sharing (H)  Consultation (H)  Collaboration  Partnership

4. Are there issues during project design for which participation of the poor and excluded is important? What are they and how shall they be addressed?  Yes  No

The issue relating to potential social issues which may arise out of increased access to affordable internet services have not just come eventuated as part of this project. It's an issue that should be addressed as part of the government's policy discussions around privacy of information. It's an issue that should be addressed as part of community awareness, not only by the government but also by other quarters of the community like schools, churches, villages and so forth of the pros and cons of having access to so much information, good and bad.

#### IV. SOCIAL SAFEGUARDS

**A. Involuntary Resettlement Category**  A  B  C  FI

1. Does the project have the potential to involve involuntary land acquisition resulting in physical and economic displacement?  Yes  No

2. What action plan is required to address involuntary resettlement as part of the PPTA or due diligence process?

Resettlement plan  Resettlement framework  Social impact matrix  
 Environmental and social management system arrangement  None

The proposed landing stations will be at Fagalii, Upolu and Tuasivi, Savaii. The proposed Fagalii site is owned by the state-owned Samoa Land Corporation and discussions are underway to secure lease of this land. The proposed Tuasivi site is on government-owned land. The project is therefore not expected to trigger social safeguards.

**B. Indigenous Peoples Category**  A  B  C  FI

1. Does the proposed project have the potential to directly or indirectly affect the dignity, human rights, livelihood systems, or culture of indigenous peoples?  Yes  No

2. Does it affect the territories or natural and cultural resources indigenous peoples own, use, occupy, or claim, as their ancestral domain?  Yes  No

3. Will the project require broad community support of affected indigenous communities?  Yes  No

4. What action plan is required to address risks to indigenous peoples as part of the PPTA or due diligence process?

Indigenous peoples plan  Indigenous peoples planning framework  Social Impact matrix  
 Environmental and social management system arrangement  None

#### V. OTHER SOCIAL ISSUES AND RISKS

1. What other social issues and risks should be considered in the project design?

Creating decent jobs and employment  Adhering to core labor standards  Labor retrenchment  
 Spread of communicable diseases, including HIV/AIDS  Increase in human trafficking  Affordability  
 Increase in unplanned migration  Increase in vulnerability to natural disasters  Creating political instability  
 Creating internal social conflicts  Others, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

2. How are these additional social issues and risks going to be addressed in the project design?

The construction of a submarine cable system will provide affordable capacity, hence lower the cost and improve accessibility of internet services in the country. This in turn will improve communications and access to information by the users. Having affordable and improved ICT provides potential for IT-based business opportunities which can lead to job creation and employment.

#### **VI. PPTA OR DUE DILIGENCE RESOURCE REQUIREMENT**

1. Do the terms of reference for the PPTA (or other due diligence) contain key information needed to be gathered during PPTA or due diligence process to better analyze (i) poverty and social impact; (ii) gender impact, (iii) participation dimensions; (iv) social safeguards; and (v) other social risks. Are the relevant specialists identified?

Yes       No

2. What resources (e.g., consultants, survey budget, and workshop) are allocated for conducting poverty, social and/or gender analysis, and participation plan during the PPTA or due diligence?

ADB is financing a consulting team comprising an Environmental Impact Assessment Specialist, a Marine Ecologist and a Social Safeguards and Development Specialist to carry out an environment and safeguards assessment for the project. The team will assess if there are any land acquisition and resettlement issues relating to the proposed landing sites for the cable on both Upolu and Savaii, and, if required prepare a land acquisition and resettlement plan. The team will also prepare a poverty and social assessment covering gender issues and a due diligence on the indigenous people; and a community participation plan. The team will conduct consultative workshops while in the field with key stakeholders.