



Government of Samoa

# Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries

## Progress Report Stimulus Package II

### 1.0. Introduction

The following is an updated progress from the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MAF) on the implementation of the Stimulus Package Two (SP2) which had an allocated amount of SAT 2,549,954.89 to support food security work and targeting the export of agricultural and fisheries related produce to stimulate the economy. The approval of the implementation of the activities in the Stimulus Package II for MAF was given in FK 20(50).

Revisions to the implementation modality of the SP2 was approved via a FK 21(40) to utilize the amount of SAT 723,586.99 for its support to complete outstanding activities related to cattle distribution, cattle subsidy as well as coconut and cocoa seedling propagation. Overall, the support under SP2 focused on the following areas:

- (1) Support to farmers through the distribution of planting materials.
- (2) Support to farmers through the distribution of livestock and livestock incentive.
- (3) Support to the unemployed in the Tourism Industry.
- (4) Support to the Fishers and Crops Exporters

This report will briefly detail the activities implemented under each category as well as the limitations experienced under each activity and the next steps. A Financial Report is attached as Annex 1 to this report to highlight the expenses to date for each activity and the amount of funds remaining.

Overall, the Ministry has implemented most of the activities and has spent around 71% of the budget allocated to the distribution of planting materials and livestock and to those unemployed under the tourism industry and cattle distribution. Due to the nature of the activities requiring more human capacity and resources from farmers themselves, some of the activities are being implemented and can be completed before June 2022.

### 2.0. Support to farmers through the distribution of planting materials and livestock

#### 2.1. *Tiapula, Cocoa and Coconut Distribution*

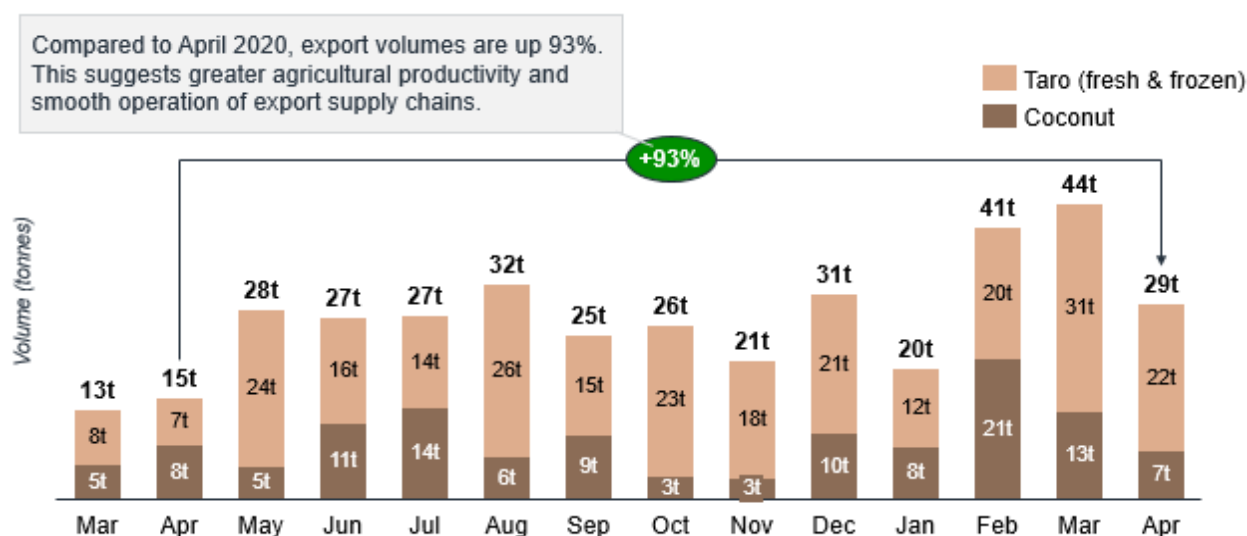
MAF initially targeted to distribute a total of one million *tiapula* (500,000 for Savaii and 500,000 for Upolu). To date, MAF has achieved its target of distributing 1 million *tiapula* to farmers in both Upolu and Savaii. Data from the market has indicated an increase in total taro production throughout Samoa particularly in the month of August 2021.

Considering the activity of *tiapula* distribution started in mid-2020 under the SP1 and with the addition of one million *tiapula* under the SP2, it can be inferred that there is a link between both Stimulus Packages and the increase in taro production and exports as a result. As noted in **Figure 1**, it can be seen that export volumes have increased for taro in February – April 2021 when compared with the same time period in 2020.

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**“.....enhancing partnerships to develop and sustain agriculture and fisheries.....”**

### Taro and coconut export volumes 2020/21



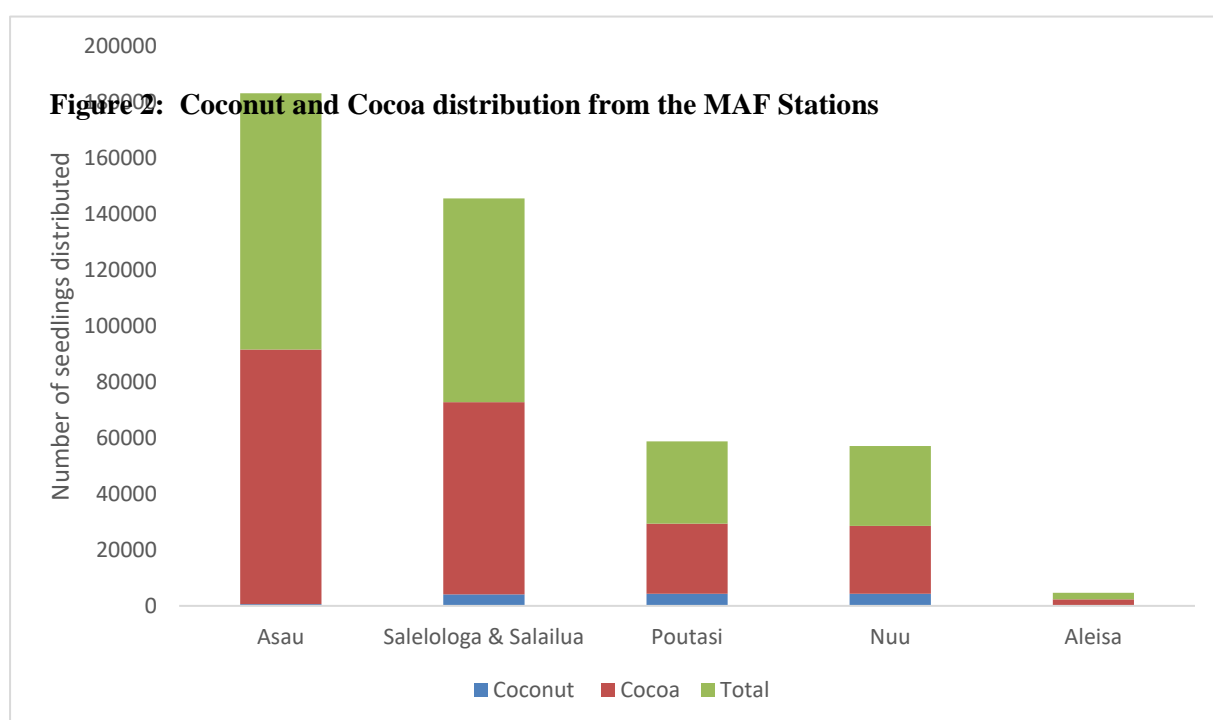
**Figure 1: Taro and coconut export volumes from March 2020 – March 2021**

In relation to the distribution of cocoa and coconut seedlings, MAF initially targeted a total of 300,000 cocoa and 300,000 coconut seedlings to be distributed. These activities are still in progress as there is a waiting period for cocoa seedlings to be ready before it can be distributed to farmers. There are also few farmers who can supply cocoa seedlings. With coconuts, there has been difficulty in farmers supplying enough coconut seedlings which has resulted in the Ministry pursuing more suppliers of both cocoa and coconuts to meet the demand for both crops. In total 192,123 cocoa and coconut seedlings have been distributed to farmers in Savaii and Upolu. Most of the cocoa seedlings were produced in Savaii in the Asau district. This is to be expected considering that this area is one of the highest in cocoa seedling production.

The difficulty facing the Ministry with coconut growing is due to the fact that a lot of the coconuts are senile. As a result, growing of these seeds will result in a generation of coconut trees with low productivity. Therefore, the Ministry is actively seeking out farmers who can produce the quality seeds required to sustain the coconut industry in the long term. Although only 9,087 coconuts have been grown and distributed, the Ministry is confident that they will be able to fulfil its obligation to distribute 300,000 coconut seedlings by December 2021. The addition of a new Assistant Chief Executive Officer in Savaii will further support and expedite this activity.

**Figure 2** gives an overview of the coconut and cocoa seedlings distributed throughout Samoa. These seedlings were produced in the following agriculture stations of Poutasi, Salelologa and Salailua and Asau utilizing the support from those who were left unemployed under the Tourism Industry as a result of COVID-19 impacts in the tourism sector.

## Cocoa and Coconut Seedling Production per MAF Station



### 2.2. Livestock Distribution and Livestock Incentive

MAF has distributed pigs, chickens, sheep and cattle under the program. To date a total of \$67,050 has been utilized on the distribution of livestock work. A total of 100% of the budget allocated for pigs and chickens has been utilized and 98% of the allocated budget for sheep distribution has been utilized. To date the Ministry has distributed a total of 17 pigs, 100 chickens and around 50 sheep have been distributed to farmers. These activities are considered complete for the Ministry.

With much of the Ministry's efforts focused on the distribution of the pigs, chickens and sheep in the first months of the Stimulus Package II, little time has been left to carry out the cattle distribution. To date the Ministry has distributed more than 180 cattle and the work continues. Savaii has contacted new farmers added to the list to supply cattle as well as the buyers of the cattle. For Upolu, the same progress can be noted and will continue to December 2021 with distribution planned for early 2022.

The main challenges faced include obtaining the right age of cattle from the selected farmers and ensuring that the cattle are healthy. The Ministry still struggles to confirm the supplies of the cattle, payment for cattle already procured is in progress and will continue to early 2022.

**Figures 3 and 4** gives an idea of the amount of work involved in the distribution of cattle which requires the complete attention of the Livestock Division.



**Figure 3: Staff loading cattle for distribution**



**Figure 4: Staff loading and keeping the livestock in place**

For the livestock incentive, the Ministry is prioritizing the cattle distribution as well as work for the Matching Grants Program which will utilize a considerable portion of suppliers current stock. In light of this, the work for the livestock incentive has now been deferred until March 2022. The Ministry has however made contact with the respective suppliers of cattle fencing material so that they are aware of the program and will work closely with the Ministry in its implementation in the New Year.

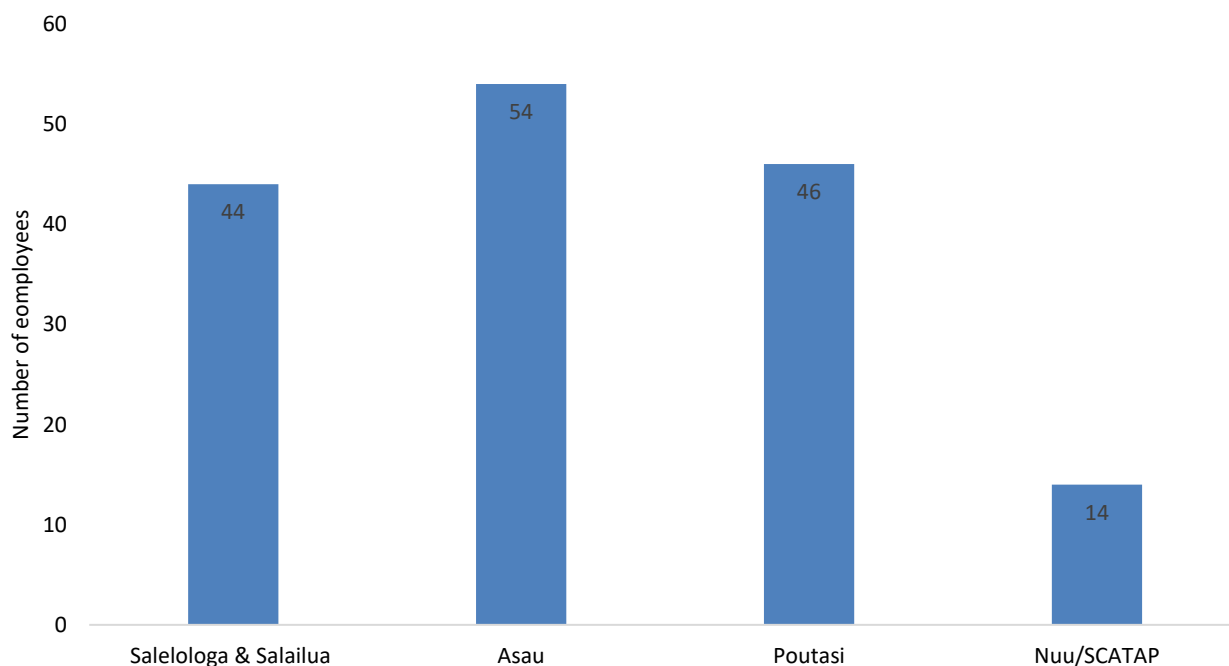
### **3.0. Support to the unemployed in the Tourism Industry**



A total of 200 people who previously worked for the Tourism Industry were employed by the Ministry for a period of 15 weeks and later extended to two more weeks giving them the opportunity to be employed for 17 weeks. However, the total number of people who ended up being employed totalled 158.

For those who were employed in the Salelologa, Salailua, Asau and Poutasi areas, their main work focused on the propagation of seedlings for distribution to farmers including themselves. The idea was to support them utilize available land area for cocoa and coconut production. For the Nu'u and the Samoa-China Agriculture Technical Aid Project (SCATAP), the workers were employed to clear the area for the expansion of production under the said project. The support from these workers enabled the Ministry to produce seedlings noted in Figure 2.

The Ministry through the Crops Division and the Corporate Service Division are now working to recruit 20 more workers to support the exporters as well as the work at Atele packhouse. The aim is to have these workers on board in January 2022 to support the work of the Ministry and exporters.



**Figure 5: Number of employees under the Tourism Sector per MAF Station**

#### **4.0. Crops and Fisheries Partial Insurance Support to Exporters**

This activity is divided into two sections: Support to Fishers and Support to Crop Exporters. In relation to the support to Fishers the Ministry has utilized 100% of its budget allocated for the leases, export loss and the payment of histamine testing at the Scientific Research Organisation of Samoa (SROS).

A total of 73% remains for the alia owners and to date the Ministry has recruited a person to carry out welding work for the alia owners and has welded 13 alia with a few still in progress and will be completed before the

end of the year. Licensing of boats is still in progress and the work should complete by December 2021 or January 2022.

In relation to support to crop exporters, the Ministry has spent 81% of its budget allocated towards the subsidy for the primary exporters and 45% of its budget allocated to the secondary exporters. The Ministry is finalizing the re-submission of a new list of exporters to receive the subsidy as data from 2018 has now been taken into consideration to identify losses from the exporters who may have been missed out in the original analysis but were affected.

## **5.0. Conclusion**

The above progress report briefly highlights the activities implemented by MAF utilizing the SP2 budget allocated. To date, the Ministry has completed most of the activities in the budget with a few activities to be continued. These activities include:

- i) the completion of the distribution of cocoa and coconut seedlings,
- ii) distribution of cattle to farmers,
- iii) implementation of the livestock incentive subsidy in collaboration relevant suppliers,
- iv) recruitment of the 20 workers for Atele Packhouse
- v) alia welding and licensing for fishers and
- vi) completion of the export subsidy for crops exporters (PK submission is being finalized)

The delay in the implementation of these activities have been due to limited staff numbers and competing priorities for MAF, beneficiaries not coming forward to claim their funds, limited number of cattle available in country and the limited expertise in the areas such as alia welding requiring more time to implement these activities. To date, MAF notes that it has spent a total of 57% of the allocated budget for the livestock and crops related activities and a total of 61% of the allocated budget targeted towards exporters. The Ministry is confident that these activities will be completed before the end of the FY 2021/2022.