



### Key Policy Areas for Student Assessment

#### 1. Classroom Assessment

Samoa's 'Making Assessment Work: Classroom Assessment Manual' provides guidelines for classroom assessment activities and their uses. There are also official documents that specify what students are expected to learn in different subject areas and years, and teachers are provided with a variety of training opportunities to ensure they develop competencies in classroom assessment. Overall, classroom assessment practices in Samoa are perceived as being of moderate quality. Consistent feedback on student learning and performance is provided to the students and their parents through school report cards which must be disseminated at least twice per year.

#### Status

Established  
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#### 2. Examinations

The Samoa Secondary Leaving Certificate examination is administered annually to Year 13 students in English and optional subjects. While government resources constitute the most significant source of funding for the examination, students are required to pay a small examination fee. There are some formal mechanisms in place to ensure the quality of the examination, including the 'Examination, Assessment, and Certification: Rules and Procedures' document, which provides standardized instructions for examination administration and data processing.

Established  
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#### 3. National Large-Scale Assessment (NLSA)

The Samoa Primary Education Literacy Level (SPELL) assessment was first introduced in 1993 and has been implemented every year since then to all students in Years 4 and 6 in Samoan, English, and Numeracy. Although there is no policy document pertaining to SPELL, the National Exam Calendar specifies the timing of future assessment rounds, as well as the subject areas and year levels to be assessed. National results and information are disseminated through an annual SPELL report and a Statistical Digest. Results are used to track the impact of reforms on student achievement levels and to inform curriculum improvement, teacher training programs, and resource allocation.

Established  
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#### 4. International Large-Scale Assessment (ILSA)

In 2012, Samoa took part in the Pacific Islands Literacy and Numeracy Assessment (PILNA) for the first time. Fourteen countries in the Pacific region participated. Minimal quality problems were identified with the carrying out of PILNA in Samoa. The country complied with all technical standards required for the exercise, and therefore it is expected that the country's results will be presented in the main section of the PILNA international report.

Emerging  
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## Introduction

Samoa has focused on increasing student learning outcomes by improving the quality of education in the country. An effective student assessment system is an important component of efforts to improve education quality and learning outcomes because it provides the necessary information to meet stakeholders' decision-making needs. In order to gain a better understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of its existing assessment system, Samoa decided to benchmark this system using standardized tools developed under The World Bank's Systems Approach for Better Education Results (SABER) program. SABER is an evidence-based program to help countries systematically examine and strengthen the performance of different aspects of their education systems.

## What is SABER-Student Assessment?

SABER-Student Assessment is a component of the SABER program that focuses specifically on benchmarking student assessment policies and systems. The goal of SABER-Student Assessment is to promote stronger assessment systems that contribute to improved education quality and learning for all.

National governments and international agencies are increasingly recognizing the key role that assessment of student learning plays in an effective education system. The importance of assessment is linked to its role in:

- (i) providing information on levels of student learning and achievement in the system;
- (ii) monitoring trends in education quality over time;
- (iii) supporting educators and students with real-time information to improve teaching and learning; and
- (iv) holding stakeholders accountable for results.

## SABER-Student Assessment methodology

The SABER-Student Assessment framework is built on the available evidence base for what an effective assessment system looks like. The framework provides guidance on how countries can build more effective student assessment systems. The framework is structured around two main dimensions of assessment systems: the types/purposes of assessment activities and the quality of those activities.

### Assessment types and purposes

Assessment systems tend to be comprised of three main types of assessment activities, each of which serves a different purpose and addresses different information needs. These three main types are: classroom assessment, examinations, and large-scale, system level assessments.

*Classroom assessment* provides real-time information to support ongoing teaching and learning in individual classrooms. Classroom assessments use a variety of formats, including observation, questioning, and paper-and-pencil tests, to evaluate student learning, generally on a daily basis.

*Examinations* provide a basis for selecting or certifying students as they move from one level of the education system to the next (or into the workforce). All eligible students are tested on an annual basis (or more often if the system allows for repeat testing). Examinations cover the main subject areas in the curriculum and usually involve essays and multiple-choice questions.

*Large-scale, system-level assessments* provide feedback on the overall performance of the education system at particular grades or age levels. These assessments typically cover a few subjects on a regular basis (such as every 3 to 5 years), are often sample based, and use multiple-choice and short-answer formats. They may be national or international in scope.

Appendix 1 summarizes the key features of these main types of assessment activities.

## Quality drivers of an assessment system

The key considerations when evaluating a student assessment system are the individual and combined quality of assessment activities in terms of the adequacy of the information generated to support decision making. There are three main drivers of information quality in an assessment system: enabling context, system alignment, and assessment quality.

*Enabling context* refers to the broader context in which the assessment activity takes place and the extent to which that context is conducive to, or supportive of, the assessment. It covers issues such as the legislative or policy framework for assessment activities; institutional and organizational structures for designing, carrying out, or using results from the assessment; the availability of sufficient and stable sources of funding; and the presence of trained assessment staff.

*System alignment* refers to the extent to which the assessment is aligned with the rest of the education system. This includes the degree of congruence between assessment activities and system learning goals, standards, curriculum, and pre- and in-service teacher training.

*Assessment quality* refers to the psychometric quality of the instruments, processes, and procedures for the assessment activity. It covers issues such as design and implementation of assessment activities, analysis and interpretation of student responses to those activities, and the appropriateness of how assessment results are reported and used.

Crossing the quality drivers with the different assessment types/purposes provides the framework and broad indicator areas shown in Table 1. This framework is a starting point for identifying indicators that can be used to review assessment systems and plan for their improvement.

**Table 1: Framework for building an effective assessment system, with indicator areas**

	Assessment types/purposes		
	Classroom assessment	Examinations	Large-scale, system-level assessment
Enabling context	Policies Leadership and public engagement Funding Institutional arrangements Human resources		
System alignment	Learning/quality goals Curriculum Pre- and in-service teacher training opportunities		
Assessment quality	Ensuring quality (design, administration, analysis) Ensuring effective uses		

Source: World Bank.

The indicators are identified based on a combination of criteria, including:

- professional standards for assessment;
- empirical research on the characteristics of effective assessment systems, including analysis of the characteristics that differentiate between the assessment systems of low- versus high-performing nations; and
- theory — that is, general consensus among experts that it contributes to effective assessment.

## Levels of development

The World Bank has developed a set of standardized questionnaires and rubrics for collecting and evaluating data on the three assessment types and related quality drivers.

The questionnaires are used to collect data on the characteristics of the assessment system in a particular country. The information from the questionnaires is then applied to the rubrics in order to judge the development level of the country's assessment system in different areas.

The basic structure of the rubrics for evaluating data collected using the standardized questionnaires is summarized in Appendix 2. The goal of the rubrics is to provide a country with some sense of the development level of its assessment activities compared to best or

recommended practice in each area. For each indicator, the rubric displays four development levels—*Latent*, *Emerging*, *Established*, and *Advanced*. These levels are artificially constructed categories chosen to represent key stages on the underlying continuum for each indicator. Each level is accompanied by a description of what performance on the indicator looks like at that level.

- *Latent* is the lowest level of performance; it represents absence of, or deviation from, the desired attribute.
- *Emerging* is the next level; it represents partial presence of the attribute.
- *Established* represents the acceptable minimum standard.
- *Advanced* represents the ideal or current best practice.

A summary of the development levels for each assessment type is presented in Appendix 3.

In reality, assessment systems are likely to be at different levels of development in different areas. For example, a system may be *Established* in the area of examinations, but *Emerging* in the area of large-scale, system-level assessment, and vice versa. While intuition suggests that it is probably better to be further along in as many areas as possible, the evidence is unclear as to whether it is necessary to be functioning at *Advanced* levels in all areas. Therefore, one might view the *Established* level as a desirable minimum outcome to achieve in all areas, but only aspire beyond that in those areas that most contribute to the national vision or priorities for education. In line with these considerations, the ratings generated by the rubrics are not meant to be additive across assessment types (that is, they are not meant to be added to create an overall rating for an assessment system; they are only meant to produce an overall rating for each assessment type). The methodology for assigning development levels is summarized in Appendix 4.

## Education in Samoa

Samoa is a lower middle-income Pacific island country located in East Asia. GDP per capita is \$3,620, with annual growth of approximately 3 percent in 2012. Between 1990 and 2008, Samoa's economy demonstrated strong growth and macro-economic stability, as compared to other similarly situated small-island economies in both the Pacific and Caribbean regions. In 2009, the economy of Samoa contracted by over 5 percent, in large part due to a devastating tsunami and the global economic crisis.

Despite these shocks, Samoa is still on track to meet several key Millennium Development Goals, including achieving universal primary education. This is a reflection of the island's strong policy performance and service delivery capacity.

Primary education in Samoa covers an eight-year cycle and is compulsory for children between the years of five and fourteen. As in many other Pacific island countries, there are three methods of provision of primary and secondary education in Samoa: the Government, in partnership with village-based school committees; mission schools; and private schools. In 2012, the net primary school enrolment ratio was 93 percent and the adult literacy rate was 99 percent.

However, the quality of education remains a concern; approximately 50 percent of Year 6 children were assessed and identified as "at risk" for poor outcomes in English literacy and numeracy. In order to address education challenges, the Ministry of Education, Sports, and Culture (MESCC) developed the Strategic Policies and Plan for 2006-2015, which identified 18 key policy areas, including the expansion of Early Childhood Development services, the revision and development of curriculum for primary and secondary education, and the support of teacher education and training.

Detailed information was collected on Samoa's student assessment system using the SABER-Student Assessment questionnaires and rubrics. It is important to remember that these tools primarily focus on benchmarking a country's policies and arrangements for assessment activities at the system or macro level. Additional data would need to be collected to determine actual, on-the-

ground practices in Samoa, particularly by teachers and students in schools. The following sections discuss the findings by each assessment type, accompanied by suggested policy options. The suggested policy options were determined in collaboration with key local stakeholders based on Samoa's immediate interests and needs. Detailed, completed rubrics for each assessment type in Samoa are provided in Appendix 5.

## Classroom Assessment

### Level of development



The *Making Assessment Work: Classroom Assessment Manual* was authorized by the MESC in 2011. This document provides the framework for classroom assessment and its use in Samoa. The document is divided into three sections: (i) A Guide to Assessment Literacy; (ii) Best Practices for Classroom Assessment; and (iii) Classroom Assessment Techniques. While the MESC establishes the framework for classroom assessment in Samoa, individual schools have the authority and responsibility to design and implement classroom assessment activities.

For both primary and secondary education, official documents that specify what students are expected to learn in different subjects in different years, and to what level of performance, are available to teachers. In addition, at the secondary level, the *Teacher Development Series* documents provide teachers with guidelines, practical resources, practice assessment materials, professional development support, and rubrics and scoring guidelines for each subject.

In order to ensure that teachers develop competencies in classroom assessment, Samoa offers courses on classroom assessment as part of pre- and in-service teacher training. In particular, pre-service teacher training includes two courses that address classroom assessment topics: (i) Assessment Techniques and Training Strategies and (ii) Primary Teacher and Classroom Assessment. In addition, online training resources are available to teachers through the MESC's website under the "Teaching Resources" link. However, many teachers cannot access the online training resources as they have limited connectivity to the internet. Teachers are also encouraged to participate in national, regional, and international workshops on classroom assessment topics, although participation is dependent upon the availability of funding.

Overall, classroom assessment practices in Samoa are perceived as being of moderate quality. Parents tend to be well informed about their children's grades and

classroom assessment activities provide useful feedback to students. However, most classroom assessments only include multiple-choice or selection type questions and are mainly about recalling information. While classroom assessment practices are usually aligned with the curriculum framework, teachers do not use explicit criteria for scoring students' work.

In Samoa, classroom assessment is required to be used in diagnosing student learning issues, providing feedback to students on their learning, informing parents about their child's learning, planning the next steps in instruction, grading students for internal classroom uses, providing input for student selection or certification, and informing teachers on specific areas where support is required.

The Samoa National School Assessment Policy Framework and the National Curriculum Policy Framework both state that schools are required to report on individual student performance to parents, students, school committees (which are tasked with developing the three-year School Improvement Plans that establish the strategic vision for the school), and other educational institutions. Student performance and progress in various subject areas must be reported to students and parents in informal meetings or in school report cards (which must be disseminated at least twice per year). Schools are not required to report on individual student performance to school district or MESC officials.

### Suggested policy options

1. Ensure the systematic availability of a variety of resources to help teachers engage in classroom assessment activities at both the primary and secondary levels. For example, develop item banks and online classroom assessment resources specific to supporting classroom assessment activities and ensure that these resources are accessible to all teachers. Additionally, create easy-to-use and readily-available criteria that teachers can use to score students' work at the primary level. Introduce training resources that expose teachers to methodologies (such as essays, open-ended questions, and observation of practical activities) for assessing students' knowledge and higher-order thinking skills.

2. Introduce additional, formal, country-level mechanisms to monitor and support the improved quality of classroom assessment practices. For example, commission a national review of education in Samoa that includes a component on the quality of classroom assessment and recommendations for how to improve it.

3. Require schools to report classroom assessment information to key stakeholders, including MESC officials. Introduce a schedule at the ministry level to which schools must adhere in communicating assessment results to key stakeholders.

## Examinations

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### Level of development



The Samoa Secondary Leaving Certificate examination has been carried out since 1989. Until 2012, it was called the Pacific Senior Secondary Certificate. The Samoa Secondary Leaving Certificate examination is administered annually to Year 13 students in English and optional subjects, including Samoan, History, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Mathematics, Accounting, Economics, Agricultural Science, Computer Studies, Geography, Food and Textiles, Design Technology, Physical Education and Health, Arts, and Music.

The *Samoa National School Assessment Policy Framework* document, authorized in 2010 by the MESC, authorizes the Samoa Secondary Leaving Certificate. The MESC, which consists of a permanent body of stakeholders, provides leadership for the examination.

Regular funding for the examination is allocated at the discretion of the government. Government resources constitute the most significant source of funding for the examination. In addition, students are required to pay a small fee for taking the examination. Funding covers examination design, administration, and data analysis. The annual budget of the Curriculum, Materials, and Assessment Division (CMAD) of MESC covers staff salaries, research and development, and data reporting.

The country offers some opportunities to learn about the Samoa Secondary Leaving Certificate examination. For example, courses on assessment in pre-service teacher training discuss the examinations used in Samoa, including the Samoa Secondary Leaving Certificate examination. In addition, the MESC hosts annual workshops for Year 12 and Year 13 teachers, which include topics relevant for the examination.

Comprehensive materials to prepare for the Samoa Secondary Leaving Certificate examination, such as examples of the types of questions that are on the examination and information on how to prepare for the examination, are available and accessible to all students. The framework document explaining what is measured

on the examination is also available. After the examination is administered, an examiner report is prepared and distributed to schools.

There are some formal mechanisms in place to ensure the quality of the examination. For example, all proctors and administrators are trained according to a protocol. In addition, the *Examination, Assessment, and Certification: Rules and Procedures* document provides standardized instructions for the administration and data processing of the examination. Double data scoring and double processing of data also takes place.

Students who do not perform well on the examination may opt for less selective schools or repeat the year. If students decide to repeat the school year, they can take the examination again at the end of that school year. Part IV of the *Examination, Assessment, and Certification: Rule and Procedures* document highlights compassionate consideration for students who have suffered from a temporary illness, non permanent disability, or an extraneous event close to or during external assessment that they believe significantly impaired their performance on the assessment.

### Suggested policy options

1. Allocate additional funding to CMAD to allow it to put in place an adequate number of staff to carry out the examination.
2. Introduce a variety of formal, system-level mechanisms to ensure the quality of the examination. For example, conduct a pilot before the main data collection takes place. Additionally, introduce external review or observers, and an external certification or audit.



## National Large-Scale Assessment (NLSA)

### Level of development



The Samoa Primary Education Literacy Level (SPELL) assessment was first introduced in 1993 and has been implemented every year to all students in Years 4 and 6. The assessment is administered to monitor education quality at the country level; support schools and teachers; hold government or political authorities accountable; and inform policy design, evaluation, and decision making. The assessment covers Samoan, English, and Numeracy.

Although there is no stand-alone policy document pertaining to SPELL, the assessment is referenced in the National School Assessment Policy Framework. The National Exam Calendar also specifies the timing of future assessment rounds, as well as subject areas and years to be assessed.

Regular funding for SPELL is allocated through the MESC's examination budget. CMAD, which is part of MESC, has been in charge of SPELL since 1993. CMAD is nationally recognized as the authority on student assessment.

There are courses in pre-service teacher training on assessment which cover assessments administered in the country. In addition, the MESC hosts workshops on SPELL for Years 4 and Year 6 teachers and principals. These opportunities are available to CMAD employees and assessment specialists, School Review Officers, university students, and school principals and teachers.

Accommodations or alternative assessments are provided for students with disabilities. For example, SPELL is administered at special schools to students with vision and hearing impairments. In addition, specific plans are made to ensure that SPELL is administered to students in hard-to-reach parts of Samoa. The assessment is also offered in the language of instruction for almost all student groups.

There are some formal mechanisms in place to ensure the quality of SPELL. These mechanisms include a

standardized manual for SPELL administrators, double data scoring, double processing of data, and internal reviewers.

SPELL results are disseminated through an annual SPELL report and a *Statistical Digest* (which is available online). Both the report and the *Statistical Digest* are also sent to schools and are available at the MESC office. In addition, results are presented during teacher and principal workshops.

Results from SPELL are used to track the impact of reforms on student achievement levels. In addition, results are used to inform curriculum improvement, teacher training programs, resource allocation, and other assessment activities in the system.

There are some formal mechanisms in place to monitor SPELL, such as expert review groups and a Literacy Task Force. In addition, there is funding for independent research on SPELL. At the same time, the teacher and principal workshops provide an opportunity to monitor SPELL on an annual basis and gauge efficacy in terms of impact, acceptability, and credibility.

### Suggested policy options

1. Introduce a formal policy document that provides authorization for SPELL and make it publicly available online.
2. Ensure a variety of opportunities to key stakeholders to learn more about SPELL. For example, establish internships or short-term employment opportunities in assessment units, such as CMAD, as a way to develop local expertise for carrying out SPELL.

## International Large-Scale Assessment (ILSA)

### Level of development



In 2012, Samoa took part in the Pacific Islands Literacy and Numeracy Assessment (PILNA) for the first time. In total, 14 countries in the Pacific region participated. There is no national policy document that addresses Samoa's participation in ILSAs. However, in 2006, the South Pacific Board for Educational Assessment (SPBEA, now known as the Education Quality and Assessment Programme, or EQAP), a regional body to which Samoa belongs, received a mandate from the Pacific Forum Education Ministers Meeting (FEEdMM) to develop PILNA.

Funding for PILNA was allocated by the Australian Aid Programme and EQAP, and covered most core activities, including implementation of the assessment, and processing and analysis of the collected data. In addition, funding covered national reporting and dissemination of assessment results as well as attendance at international meetings.

A National Coordinator was appointed to implement PILNA. In addition, a School Coordinator was identified to manage administration at the school level for the selected schools. Test Supervisors (teachers) administered the assessment at the classroom level in the selected schools. For each assessment area, literacy and numeracy, a panel was responsible for marking the papers. Although the 2012 PILNA was the first time that the PILNA team in Samoa was in charge of an ILSA, there were minimal problems in carrying out the assessment. While there were some delays in data processing and scoring, these were largely due to Cyclone Evan, which struck in December 2012.

The MESC held presentations on the PILNA for ILSA team members and assessment specialists. Key personnel also participated in workshops organized by EQAP for all PILNA-participating countries. In addition, EQAP provided in-country training on scoring the test items to the selected panel of markers.

The PILNA was sufficiently aligned with Samoa's learning goals. Classroom lessons, textbooks, and learning

resources cover content similar to, and slightly more advanced than, the content covered by PILNA. As a result, students had extensive previous exposure to the type of content and skills measured by PILNA.

Samoa complied with all technical standards for PILNA. Therefore, it is expected that the country's results will be presented in the main section of the international report.

### Suggested policy options

1. Ensure appropriate institutional support for PILNA by introducing a formal, country-level policy document that addresses Samoa's participation in ILSAs.
2. Increase the capacity of individuals involved in carrying out key PILNA activities as well as of assessment specialists, university teachers and students, and other educators. For example, organize workshops or meetings on using PILNA databases and analyzing assessment results.

## Appendix 1: Assessment Types and Their Key Differences

	Classroom	Large-scale assessment Surveys		Examinations	
		National	International	Exit	Entrance
<b>Purpose</b>	To provide immediate feedback to inform classroom instruction	To provide feedback on overall health of the system at particular grade/age level(s), and to monitor trends in learning	To provide feedback on the comparative performance of the education system at particular grade/age level(s)	To certify students as they move from one level of the education system to the next (or into the workforce)	To select students for further educational opportunities
<b>Frequency</b>	Daily	For individual subjects offered on a regular basis (such as every 3-5 years)	For individual subjects offered on a regular basis (such as every 3-5 years)	Annually and more often where the system allows for repeats	Annually and more often where the system allows for repeats
<b>Who is tested?</b>	All students	Sample or census of students at a particular grade or age level(s)	A sample of students at a particular grade or age level(s)	All eligible students	All eligible students
<b>Format</b>	Varies from observation to questioning to paper-and-pencil tests to student performances	Usually multiple choice and short answer	Usually multiple choice and short answer	Usually essay and multiple choice	Usually essay and multiple choice
<b>Coverage of curriculum</b>	All subject areas	Generally confined to a few subjects	Generally confined to one or two subjects	Covers main subject areas	Covers main subject areas
<b>Additional information collected from students?</b>	Yes, as part of the teaching process	Frequently	Yes	Seldom	Seldom
<b>Scoring</b>	Usually informal and simple	Varies from simple to more statistically sophisticated techniques	Usually involves statistically sophisticated techniques	Varies from simple to more statistically sophisticated techniques	Varies from simple to more statistically sophisticated techniques

## Appendix 2: Basic Structure of Rubrics for Evaluating Data Collected on a Student Assessment System

Dimension	Development Level				
	LATENT (Absence of, or deviation from, attribute)	EMERGING (On way to meeting minimum standard)	ESTABLISHED (Acceptable minimum standard)	ADVANCED (Best practice)	Justification
<b>EC—ENABLING CONTEXT</b>					
EC1—Policies					
EC2—Leadership, public engagement					
EC3—Funding					
EC4—Institutional arrangements					
EC5—Human resources					
<b>SA—SYSTEM ALIGNMENT</b>					
SA1—Learning/quality goals					
SA2—Curriculum					
SA3—Pre-, in-service teacher training					
<b>AQ—ASSESSMENT QUALITY</b>					
AQ1—Ensuring quality (design, administration, analysis)					
AQ2—Ensuring effective uses					

### Appendix 3: Summary of the Development Levels for Each Assessment Type

Assessment Type	LATENT	EMERGING	ESTABLISHED	ADVANCED
	<i>Absence of, or deviation from, the attribute</i>	<i>On way to meeting minimum standard</i>	<i>Acceptable minimum standard</i>	<i>Best practice</i>
<b>CLASSROOM ASSESSMENT</b>	There is no system-wide institutional capacity to support and ensure the quality of classroom assessment practices.	There is weak system-wide institutional capacity to support and ensure the quality of classroom assessment practices.	There is sufficient system-wide institutional capacity to support and ensure the quality of classroom assessment practices.	There is strong system-wide institutional capacity to support and ensure the quality of classroom assessment practices.
<b>EXAMINATIONS</b>	There is no standardized examination in place for key decisions.	There is a partially stable standardized examination in place, and a need to develop institutional capacity to run the examination. The examination typically is of poor quality and is perceived as unfair or corrupt.	There is a stable standardized examination in place. There is institutional capacity and some limited mechanisms to monitor it. The examination is of acceptable quality and is perceived as fair for most students and free from corruption.	There is a stable standardized examination in place and institutional capacity and strong mechanisms to monitor it. The examination is of high quality and is perceived as fair and free from corruption.
<b>NATIONAL (OR SYSTEM-LEVEL) LARGE-SCALE ASSESSMENT</b>	There is no NLSA in place.	There is an unstable NLSA in place and a need to develop institutional capacity to run the NLSA. Assessment quality and impact are weak.	There is a stable NLSA in place. There is institutional capacity and some limited mechanisms to monitor it. The NLSA is of moderate quality and its information is disseminated, but not always used in effective ways.	There is a stable NLSA in place and institutional capacity and strong mechanisms to monitor it. The NLSA is of high quality and its information is effectively used to improve education.
<b>INTERNATIONAL LARGE-SCALE ASSESSMENT</b>	There is neither a history of participation in an ILSA nor plans to participate in one.	Participation in an ILSA has been initiated, but there still is need to develop institutional capacity to carry out the ILSA.	There is more or less stable participation in an ILSA. There is institutional capacity to carry out the ILSA. The information from the ILSA is disseminated, but not always used in effective ways.	There is stable participation in an ILSA and institutional capacity to run the ILSA. The information from the ILSA is effectively used to improve education.

## Appendix 4: Methodology for Assigning Development Levels

1. The country team or consultant collects information about the assessment system in the country.

2. Based on the collected information, a level of development and score is assigned to each dimension in the rubrics:

- Latent = 1 score point
- Emerging = 2 score points
- Established = 3 score points
- Advanced = 4 score points

3. The score for each quality driver is computed by aggregating the scores for each of its constituent dimensions. For example:

The quality driver, 'Enabling Context,' in the case of ILSA, has 3 dimensions on which a hypothetical country receives the following scores: Dimension A = 2 points; Dimension B = 2 points; Dimension C = 3 points. The hypothetical country's overall score for this quality driver would be:  $(2+2+3)/3 = 2.33$

4. A preliminary level of development is assigned to each quality driver.

5. The preliminary development level is validated using expert judgment in cooperation with the country team and The World Bank Task Team Leader.

For scores that allow a margin of discretion (i.e., to choose between two levels of development), a final decision has to be made based on expert judgment. For example, the aforementioned hypothetical country has an 'Enabling Context' score of 2.33, corresponding to a preliminary level of development of 'Emerging or Established.' Based on qualitative information not captured in the rubric, along with expert judgment, the country team chooses 'Emerging' as the most appropriate level.

6. Scores for certain key dimensions under 'Enabling Context' (in the case of EXAM, NLSA, and ILSA) and under 'System Alignment' (in the case of CLASS) were set as ceiling scores, i.e., the overall mean score for the particular assessment type cannot be greater than the score for these key dimensions. These key variables include formal policy, regular funding, having a permanent assessment unit, and the quality of assessment practices.

**Appendix 5: SABER-Student Assessment Rubrics for Samoa**

In each row of the rubric, the relevant selection is indicated by blue color highlighting. The selection may include a superscript number that refers to the justification or explanation for the selection. The explanation or justification text can be located in the “Development-level rating justifications” section at the end of each rubric. If a row includes a superscript, but not blue color highlighting, this means that insufficient information was available to determine the relevant selection in the row.

# **SAMOA**

## ***Classroom Assessment***



**ENABLING CONTEXT AND SYSTEM ALIGNMENT**

*Overall policy and resource framework within which classroom assessment activity takes place in a country or system, and the degree to which classroom assessment activity is coherent with other components of the education system.*

<p><b>LATENT</b></p> <p>● ○ ○ ○</p>	<p><b>EMERGING</b></p> <p>● ● ○ ○</p>	<p><b>ESTABLISHED</b></p> <p>● ● ● ○</p>	<p><b>ADVANCED</b></p> <p>● ● ● ●</p>
<p><b>ENABLING CONTEXT AND SYSTEM ALIGNMENT 1:</b> <i>Setting clear guidelines for classroom assessment</i></p>			
<p>There is no country-level document that provides guidelines for classroom assessment.</p>	<p>There is an informal or draft country-level document that provides guidelines for classroom assessment.</p>	<p>There is a formal country-level document that provides guidelines for classroom assessment, but the document is not available online to anybody interested.</p>	<p>There is a formal country-level document that provides guidelines for classroom assessment, publicly available online to anybody interested.<sup>1</sup></p>
<p><b>ENABLING CONTEXT AND SYSTEM ALIGNMENT 2:</b> <i>Aligning classroom assessment with country learning goals</i></p>			
<p>There are no country-wide resources for teachers for classroom assessment.</p>	<p>There are very few country-wide resources for teachers for classroom assessment.</p>	<p>There are some country-wide resources for teachers for classroom assessment.<sup>2</sup></p>	<p>There are a variety of country-wide resources for teachers for classroom assessment.</p>
<p>There is no official curriculum or standards document.</p>	<p>There is an official curriculum or standards document, but it is not clear what students are expected to learn.</p>	<p>There is an official curriculum or standards document that specifies what students are expected to learn, but the desired level of performance is not clear.</p>	<p>There is an official curriculum or standards document that specifies what students are expected to learn and the desired level of performance.<sup>3</sup></p>
<p><b>ENABLING CONTEXT AND SYSTEM ALIGNMENT 3:</b> <i>Having effective human resources to carry out classroom assessment activities</i></p>			
<p>There are no formal country-level mechanisms to ensure that teachers develop competencies in classroom assessment.</p>	<p>There are very minimal formal country-level mechanisms to ensure that teachers develop competencies in classroom assessment.</p>	<p>There are some formal country-level mechanisms to ensure that teachers develop competencies in classroom assessment.</p>	<p>There are a variety of formal country-level mechanisms to ensure that teachers develop competencies in classroom assessment.<sup>4</sup></p>

**ASSESSMENT QUALITY**

*Quality of classroom assessment design, administration, analysis and use.*

<p><b>LATENT</b> ● ○ ○ ○</p>	<p><b>EMERGING</b> ● ● ○ ○</p>	<p><b>ESTABLISHED</b> ● ● ● ○</p>	<p><b>ADVANCED</b> ● ● ● ●</p>
<p><b>ASSESSMENT QUALITY 1:</b> <i>Ensuring the quality of classroom assessment</i></p>			
<p>Classroom assessment practices are very weak, or there is no information available on classroom assessment practices.</p>	<p>Classroom assessment practices are known to be weak.</p>	<p>Classroom assessment practices are known to be of moderate quality.<sup>5</sup></p>	<p>Classroom assessment practices are known to be of high quality.</p>
<p>There are no formal country-level mechanisms to monitor the quality of classroom assessment practices.</p>	<p>There are minimal formal country-level mechanisms to monitor the quality of classroom assessment practices.<sup>6</sup></p>	<p>There are some formal country-level mechanisms to monitor the quality of classroom assessment practices.</p>	<p>There are varied formal country-level mechanisms to monitor the quality of classroom assessment practices.</p>
<p><b>ASSESSMENT QUALITY 2:</b> <i>Ensuring effective uses of classroom assessment</i></p>			
<p>There are no required uses of classroom assessment.</p>	<p>There are minimal required uses of classroom assessment.</p>	<p>There are varied required uses of classroom assessment.</p>	<p>There are varied required uses of classroom assessment, including its use as an input for selection or certification.<sup>7</sup></p>
<p>Schools are not required to report information on individual student performance.</p>	<p>At least some schools are required to report information on individual student performance.</p>	<p>All schools are required to report information on individual student performance to parents.<sup>8</sup></p>	<p>All schools are required to report information on individual student performance to parents and other key stakeholders.</p>
<p>Information on student performance is not required to be reported.</p>	<p>Minimal information on student performance is required to be reported.</p>	<p>Some information on student performance is required to be reported in school report cards.</p>	<p>A variety of information about student performance is required to be reported in school report cards.<sup>9</sup></p>

**Classroom Assessment:** *Development-level rating justifications*

1. In Samoa, the Ministry of Education, Sport, and Culture (MESC) establishes the framework for classroom assessment, which is aligned with the Samoa National Assessment Policy Framework and the National Curriculum Policy Framework. The *Making Assessment Work: Classroom Assessment Manual* document, authorized in March 2011 by the MESC, provides the framework and a comprehensive overview of classroom assessment use in Samoa. The document, which contains three sections, Guide to Assessment Literacy; Best Practices for Classroom Assessment; and Classroom Assessment Techniques, is publicly available and disseminated to all schools. While the MESC establishes the framework for classroom assessment in the country, schools have the authority and responsibility to design and implement classroom assessment.
2. Documents that outline student learning and performance expectations by year and subject are available to teachers in Samoa. For example, the Samoa Primary School Curriculum documents articulate the strands, achievement objectives, learning outcomes, and key ideas for each year in each subject area for Years 1 through 8. Similarly, the Samoa Secondary School Curriculum documents are available for each subject area and are complemented by the *Teacher Development Series* documents which provide teachers with guidelines, practical resources, practice assessment materials, and professional development support. In addition, at the secondary level, the *Teacher Development Series* includes rubrics and scoring guidelines for each subject. Textbooks or workbooks are also available to teachers to provide support for classroom assessment at the secondary level, and computer-based testing is available at the secondary level in computer studies courses. However, item banks and online assessment resources specific to supporting classroom assessment activities are not available to teachers.
3. An official curriculum or standards document specifies what students are expected to learn and the desired level of performance for each subject area at the primary and secondary levels.
4. A variety of formal level mechanisms are in place to ensure that teachers develop competencies in classroom assessment. For example, pre- and in-service teacher training address competencies in classroom assessment. There are two specific courses that address classroom assessment in pre-service training: (i) Assessment Techniques and Training Strategies and (ii) Primary Teacher and Classroom Assessment (only available at the primary level). In addition, while there are some online resources for teachers on the MESC "Teaching Resources Link List" webpage, the information provided is not specific to classroom assessment. Further, many teachers cannot access the online training resources as they have limited connectivity to the internet. However, depending on available resources, the MESC affords teachers the opportunity to participate in national, regional, and international workshops on topics including classroom assessment. Also, teachers have opportunities to participate in item development or scoring of test questions for large-scale assessments or exams, and school inspection or teacher supervision includes a component focused on classroom assessment.
5. Classroom assessment practices are known to be of moderate quality. For example, the use of multiple-choice/selection type questions is very common. It is also common for classroom assessment activities to be mainly about recalling information and for teachers to not use explicit or a priori criteria for scoring or grading students' work. However, it is rare that parents are poorly informed about students' grades and that classroom assessment activities provide little useful feedback to students. It is also rare for classroom assessment activities to be mainly used as administrative or control tools rather than as a pedagogical resource and to not be aligned with a pedagogical or curricular framework.

6. Classroom assessment is a required component of a teacher's performance evaluation and school inspection or teacher supervision. At the school level, the head teacher is responsible for evaluating other teachers, including on their use of classroom assessment. In addition, the School Review Officer spot-checks classroom assessment in each school at the district level. Also, the Monitoring and Evaluation Unit within the MESCS is a central level authority whose primary focus is to review classroom assessment for each teacher at the primary and secondary level.  
  
Government funding allocated towards education research at the discretion of the MESCS is available for research on the quality of classroom assessment activities and how to improve classroom assessment. However, other mechanisms, such as an external moderation system that reviews the difficulty of classroom assessment activities and appropriateness of scoring criteria or national reviews of the quality of education which include a focus on classroom assessment are not available in Samoa.
7. In Samoa, classroom assessment is required to be used in diagnosing student learning issues, providing feedback to students on their learning, informing parents about their child's learning, planning next steps in instruction, grading students for internal classroom uses, providing input for selection or certification, and informing teachers on specific areas of support required.
8. The Samoa National School Assessment Policy Framework and the National Curriculum Policy Framework both state that schools are required to report on individual student performance to parents, students, school committees (which are tasked with developing the three-year School Improvement Plans that establish the strategic vision for the school), and other educational institutions, such as the secondary and tertiary schools that students attend. However, schools are not required to report on individual student performance to school district or MESCS officials.
9. In addition to student performance or grades in Mathematics, Language, and other areas, student performance or grades relative to other students and student progress in performance are required to be reported. This information is required to be reported to students and parents in informal meetings or in school report cards (which must be disseminated at least twice per year).

# **SAMOA**

## ***Examinations***

**ENABLING CONTEXT**





*Overall framework of policies, leadership, institutional arrangements, fiscal and human resources in which the assessment activity takes place in a country, and the extent to which that framework is directly conducive to, or supportive of, the assessment activity.*

<p><b>LATENT</b> ● ○ ○ ○</p>	<p><b>EMERGING</b> ● ● ○ ○</p>	<p><b>ESTABLISHED</b> ● ● ● ○</p>	<p><b>ADVANCED</b> ● ● ● ●</p>
<p><b>ENABLING CONTEXT 1:</b> <i>Setting clear policies for the examination</i></p>			
<p>There is no examination.</p>	<p>The examination has been operating on an irregular basis.</p>	<p>The examination has been operating regularly.<sup>1</sup></p>	<p>This option does not apply to this dimension</p>
<p>There is no examination, or there is no policy pertaining to the examination.</p>	<p>There is an informal or draft policy that authorizes the examination; or there is a formal policy that is not available.</p>	<p>There is a formal policy that authorizes the examination, available upon request or with restricted access.</p>	<p>There is a formal policy that authorizes the examination, publicly available online to anyone interested.<sup>2</sup></p>
<p>There is no examination, or the examination is not standardized.</p>	<p>The examination is at most partially standardized at the country level, or has minimum procedures in place to ensure standardization.</p>	<p>The examination is at least partially standardized at the country level, with at least some procedures in place to ensure standardization.</p>	<p>The examination is fully standardized at the country level, and a variety of procedures are in place to ensure standardization.<sup>3</sup></p>
<p><b>ENABLING CONTEXT 2:</b> <i>Having leadership for the examination</i></p>			
<p>There is no examination, or the country does not have leadership for the examination.</p>	<p>The country has weak leadership for the examination.</p>	<p>The country has strong leadership for the examination, from an individual person or from a stakeholder body.</p>	<p>The country has strong leadership for the examination from both an individual person and a permanent stakeholder body.<sup>4</sup></p>

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<p><b>LATENT</b></p> <p>● ○ ○ ○</p>	<p><b>EMERGING</b></p> <p>● ● ○ ○</p>	<p><b>ESTABLISHED</b></p> <p>● ● ● ○</p>	<p><b>ADVANCED</b></p> <p>● ● ● ●</p>
<p><b>ENABLING CONTEXT 3:</b> <i>Having regular funding for the examination</i></p>			
<p>There is no examination, or there is no funding allocated for the examination.</p>	<p>There is irregular funding for the examination, or the funding is not allocated by law or regulation.<sup>5</sup></p>	<p>There is a regular funding for the examination that is allocated by law or regulation.</p>	<p>This option does not apply to this dimension.</p>
<p>There is no examination, or there is no funding coming from the government, student fees, or donors.</p>	<p>The funding for the examination comes primarily from donors or loans.</p>	<p>The funding for the examination comes primarily from the government or student fees.<sup>6</sup></p>	<p>This option does not apply to this dimension.</p>
<p>There is no examination, or there is no funding to cover activities.</p>	<p>There is funding to cover at least some of the core activities.</p>	<p>There is funding to cover all or most core activities.<sup>7</sup></p>	<p>There is funding to cover all core activities, plus research and development.</p>
<p><b>ENABLING CONTEXT 4:</b> <i>Having institutional capacity for the examination</i></p>			
<p>There is no examination, or there is no examination unit.</p>	<p>There is a temporary unit, or a unit with minimum experience, in charge of the examination.</p>	<p>There is a permanent unit with some experience in charge of the examination.<sup>8</sup></p>	<p>There is a permanent unit with vast experience in charge of the examination.</p>
<p>There is no examination, or it is not clear to which body the examination unit is accountable.</p>	<p>This option does not apply to this dimension.</p>	<p>The examination unit is accountable to a clearly recognized body.<sup>9</sup></p>	<p>This option does not apply to this dimension.</p>
<p>There is no examination, or the examination unit does not have facilities to carry out the examination.</p>	<p>The examination unit has only a few of the required facilities to carry out the examination.</p>	<p>The examination unit has all of the required facilities to carry out the examination.<sup>10</sup></p>	<p>The examination unit has up-to-date versions of all required facilities to carry out the examination.</p>

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<b>LATENT</b> 	<b>EMERGING</b> 	<b>ESTABLISHED</b> 	<b>ADVANCED</b> 
<b>ENABLING CONTEXT 5:</b> <i>Having human resources for the examination</i>			
There is no examination, or there is no staff allocated to the examination unit.	The examination unit has an inadequate number of staff to carry out the examination. <sup>11</sup>	The examination unit has an adequate number of staff to carry out the examination, with some quality problems.	The examination unit has an adequate number of staff to carry out the examination, with no quality problems.
There is no examination, or the country offers no annual opportunities to learn about the examinations.	The country offers very few annual opportunities to learn about the examinations.	The country offers some annual opportunities to learn about examinations to the examination staff. <sup>12</sup>	The country offers a wide range of annual opportunities to learn about examinations. These opportunities are available to a broad audience, including the examination staff.
There is no examination, or teachers have no opportunities to learn about the examination, and are not involved in examination-related tasks.	Teachers have at least some opportunities to learn about the examination, or are involved in at least some examination-related tasks.	Teachers have at least some opportunities to learn about the examination, and are involved in at least some examination-related tasks.	Teachers have opportunities to learn about different aspects of the examination, and are involved in most examination-related tasks. <sup>13</sup>



**SYSTEM ALIGNMENT**

*Degree to which the assessment is coherent with other components of the education system.*





<p><b>LATENT</b> ● ○ ○ ○</p>	<p><b>EMERGING</b> ● ● ○ ○</p>	<p><b>ESTABLISHED</b> ● ● ● ○</p>	<p><b>ADVANCED</b> ● ● ● ●</p>
<p><b>SYSTEM ALIGNMENT 1:</b> <i>Aligning the examination with learning goals</i></p>			
<p>There is no examination, or the examination is not aligned with official learning goals or curriculum.</p>	<p>The examination is weakly aligned with official learning goals or curriculum, or there are no regular reviews to ensure alignment.</p>	<p>The examination is at least sufficiently aligned with official learning goals or curriculum, and regular reviews of the examination take place to ensure alignment.<sup>14</sup></p>	<p>The examination is fully aligned with official learning goals or curriculum, and regular external reviews take place to ensure alignment.</p>
<p>There is no examination, or there the material to prepare for the examinations is available to a small number of students at most.</p>	<p>The material is accessible to less than half of the students.</p>	<p>There is comprehensive material to prepare for the examination that is accessible to most students.</p>	<p>There is comprehensive material to prepare for the examination that is widely accessible to all or almost all students.<sup>15</sup></p>
<p>There is no examination, or the examination is not consistent with other assessment activities.</p>	<p>The examination is minimally consistent with other assessment activities.</p>	<p>The examination is sufficiently consistent with other assessment activities.</p>	<p>The examination is fully consistent with other assessment activities.<sup>16</sup></p>

**ASSESSMENT QUALITY**

*Degree to which the assessment meets technical standards, is fair, and is used in an effective way.*

<p><b>LATENT</b> ● ○ ○ ○</p>	<p><b>EMERGING</b> ● ● ○ ○</p>	<p><b>ESTABLISHED</b> ● ● ● ○</p>	<p><b>ADVANCED</b> ● ● ● ●</p>
<p><b>ASSESSMENT QUALITY 1:</b> <i>Ensuring the quality of the examination</i></p>			
<p>There is no examination, or there are no formal mechanisms in place to ensure the quality of the examination.</p>	<p>There are minimal formal mechanisms in place to ensure the quality of the examination.</p>	<p>There are some formal mechanisms in place to ensure the quality of the examination.<sup>17</sup></p>	<p>There are a variety of formal mechanisms in place to ensure the quality of the examination.</p>
<p>There is no examination, or there is no documentation about the technical aspects of the examination.</p>	<p>There is some documentation about the technical aspects of the examination.</p>	<p>There is a comprehensive technical report about the examination available upon request or with restricted access.</p>	<p>There is a comprehensive technical report about the examination publicly available online.<sup>18</sup></p>
<p><b>ASSESSMENT QUALITY 2:</b> <i>Ensuring fairness</i></p>			
<p>There is no examination, or the majority of the students may not take the examination because of language, gender, or other equivalent barriers.</p>	<p>A significant proportion of students may not take the examination because of language, gender, or other equivalent barriers.</p>	<p>A small proportion of students may not take the examination because of language, gender, or other equivalent barriers.</p>	<p>All students can take the examination; there are no language, gender or equivalent barriers.<sup>19</sup></p>
<p>There is no examination, or student results are not confidential, or inappropriate behavior surrounding the examination is high.</p>	<p>Student results are not confidential, and there is some inappropriate behavior surrounding the examination.</p>	<p>Student results are confidential, and inappropriate behavior surrounding the examination is low.</p>	<p>Student results are confidential, and there is no inappropriate behavior surrounding the examination.<sup>20</sup></p>

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<p><b>LATENT</b></p> 	<p><b>EMERGING</b></p> 	<p><b>ESTABLISHED</b></p> 	<p><b>ADVANCED</b></p> 
<p><b>ASSESSMENT QUALITY 3:</b> <i>Ensuring appropriate uses of the examination</i></p>			
<p>There is no examination, or student results are not perceived as credible, or are not recognized by any broader certification or selection system.</p>	<p>Student results are perceived as credible by at least some stakeholders.</p>	<p>Student results are perceived as credible by most stakeholders, and are nationally recognized.</p>	<p>Student results are perceived as credible by most stakeholders, and are internationally recognized.<sup>21</sup></p>
<p>There is no examination, or there are no options in the education system for students who do not perform well on the examination.</p>	<p>There are very few options in the education system for students who do not perform well on the examination.</p>	<p>There are some options in the education system for students who do not perform well on the examination.<sup>22</sup></p>	<p>There are a variety of options in the education system for students who do not perform well on the examination.</p>
<p>There is no examination, or there are no mechanisms in place to monitor the examination.</p>	<p>This option does not apply to this dimension.</p>	<p>There are some mechanisms in place to monitor the examination.<sup>23</sup></p>	<p>There are a variety of mechanisms in place to monitor the examination.</p>

**Examinations:** *Development-level rating justifications*

1. The Samoa Secondary Leaving Certificate was first implemented as the Pacific Senior Secondary Certificate in 1989 and became a national examination and known as the Samoa Secondary Leaving Certificate in 2013. It is administered every year to Year 13 students in English and other optional subjects, which include Samoan, History, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Mathematics, Accounting, Economics, Agricultural Science, Computer Studies, Geography, Food & Textiles, Design Technology, Physical Education & Health, Arts, and Music.
2. The Samoa National School Assessment Policy Framework document, authorized in 2010 by the MESC, authorizes the Samoa Secondary Leaving Certificate. This document is available online and copies are disseminated to schools.
3. The examination is fully standardized. Assessment design, administration, scoring, and reporting are the same for all students taking the examination. In addition, there are a variety of procedures in place to ensure the standardization. For example, examination papers or tasks are the same or are equivalent for all students and the same scoring criteria are used to correct the examination papers and tasks.
4. The MESC, which consists of a permanent body of stakeholders, provides leadership for the examination. The MESC has pushed for the development of the examination and has influence and power in determining the examination agenda in the country.
5. There is regular funding for the examination allocated at the discretion of the government or donors.
6. Government resources constitute the most significant source of funding for the examinations. In addition, there is a small student fee for the examination.
7. Funding allocated for the examination covers examination design and administration and data analysis. The CMAD annual budget covers staff salaries, research and development, and data reporting.
8. The Curriculum, Materials, and Assessment Division (CMAD) within the MESC has had full control of the Samoa School Leaving Certificate since 2013 and partial control since 2010.
9. The examination unit is accountable to a National Assessment Council that belongs to the same broader institution as the examination unit.
10. The examination unit has up-to-date computers for all technical staff, top-level security for its building, top-level storage facilities, and up-to-date computer servers and communication tools.
11. According to a recent study, the "Institutional Capacity Analysis of Samoa Assessment and Examinations Unit," conducted by the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER), the Assessment and Examinations Unit (AEU) requires higher staff numbers to strengthen the research and training function of their unit.

12. The country offers some annual opportunities to learn about examinations. For example, there are specific courses in pre-service teacher training which cover all areas of assessment, including learning specifically about the examinations used in Samoa. In addition, the MESC hosts annual workshops for Year 12 and Year 13 teachers which include some focus on examinations. In addition to the examination unit, university teachers and students, teachers or educators, and assessment specialists benefit from opportunities to learn about examinations.
13. Teachers have opportunities to learn about the content and skills measured by the examination as well as other aspects. For example, at the beginning of each academic calendar year, the MESC hosts a workshop for all Year 12 and Year 13 teachers to review the previous year's exams, discuss exam preparation, and improve pedagogical practices. In addition, teachers are involved in most examination-related tasks, including selecting or creating examination questions and scoring guides, administering and scoring the examination, supervising examination procedures, and resolving inconsistencies between examination scores and school grades.
14. The examination is strongly aligned with the content and skill areas of the learning goals or curriculum. In addition, the examination is aligned with pedagogical approaches or activities compatible with the learning goals or curriculum. For example, in order to ensure alignment with the official learning goals or curriculum, the Chief Examiner is instructed to use the curriculum as the key reference tool for setting the exam. In addition, there are regular internal reviews to assess that the examination is aligned with what it is intended to measure.
15. Comprehensive materials to prepare for the examination, such as examples of the types of questions that are on the examination and information on how to prepare for the examination, are available and accessible to all students. In addition, the framework document explaining what is measured on the examination is available. An examiner report is also prepared after each exam and submitted to schools.
16. It is not possible to tell whether the School Leaving Certificate is consistent with the national and international large-scale assessments that the country has carried out because the examination is administered at the secondary level, while the large-scale assessments are administered at the primary level. At the same time, since classroom assessment practices are varied across schools in Samoa, it is unclear whether the examination is consistent with such practices.
17. There are some formal mechanisms in place to ensure the quality of the examination. For example, all proctors or administrators are trained according to a protocol. In addition, the "Examination, Assessment, and Certification: Rules and Procedures" document provides standardized instructions for administration and data processing of the examination. There is also double data scoring, and double processing of data. In addition, scorers are trained to ensure high reliability and the MESC AEU staff act as internal observers for the examinations.
18. There is a comprehensive technical report, the Examiner's Report, for each subject, which is sent to schools and made available at the MESC offices. According to policy, the report is supposed to be made available online.
19. Regardless of background, location, and ability to pay, all students may take examination.

20. Only the student and persons with a legitimate, professional interest in the test taker can know the results. There is no inappropriate behavior surrounding the examination. For example, copying from other candidates and intimidation of examination supervisors, markers, or officials do not occur during the examination process.
21. Results are perceived as credible by most stakeholder groups.
22. Students who do not perform well on the examination may opt for less selective schools, universities, or tracks or repeat the school year. Student may retake the examination once they have repeated the school year. However, students do not have the option to attend remedial education or take preparatory courses.
23. The National Assessment Council is in place to monitor the examination in terms of impact, acceptance, and credibility. In addition, conferences are in place to discuss the examinations. However, there is no permanent oversight committee or funding for independent research on the examination. There are no studies that are updated regularly, or regular focus groups or surveys of key stakeholders.

**SAMOA**  
***National (or System-Level) Large-Scale Assessment (NLSA)***





**ENABLING CONTEXT**

*Overall framework of policies, leadership, institutional arrangements, fiscal and human resources in which the assessment takes place in a country, and the extent to which that framework is directly conducive to, or supportive of, the assessment activity.*

<p><b>LATENT</b> ● ○ ○ ○</p>	<p><b>EMERGING</b> ● ● ○ ○</p>	<p><b>ESTABLISHED</b> ● ● ● ○</p>	<p><b>ADVANCED</b> ● ● ● ●</p>
<p><b>ENABLING CONTEXT 1:</b> <i>Setting clear policies for the NLSA</i></p>			
<p>No NLSA has taken place in the country.</p>	<p>The NLSA has been operating on an irregular basis.</p>	<p>The NLSA has been operating regularly.<sup>1</sup></p>	<p>This option does not apply to this dimension.</p>
<p>There was no NLSA, or there was no policy document pertaining to NLSA.</p>	<p>There was an informal or draft policy document that authorized the NLSA.</p>	<p>There was a formal policy document that authorized the NLSA, available upon request or with restricted access.<sup>2</sup></p>	<p>There was a formal policy document that authorized the NLSA that is publicly available online to anyone interested.</p>
<p>There was no NLSA, or there was no assessment schedule for future NLSAs.</p>	<p>There was a common, informal understanding that there would be an NLSA in the future.</p>	<p>There was an official assessment schedule for future NLSAs, albeit lacking in details.</p>	<p>There was a publicly available official assessment schedule for future NLSAs, specifying when (year), who (grade level) and what (subject areas) would be assessed.<sup>3</sup></p>
<p><b>ENABLING CONTEXT 2:</b> <i>Having leadership for the NLSA</i></p>			
<p>There was no NLSA, or the country did not have leadership for the NLSA.</p>	<p>The country had weak leadership for the NLSA.</p>	<p>The country had leadership for the NLSA from an individual person or from a stakeholder body.</p>	<p>The country had leadership for the NLSA from both an individual person and a permanent stakeholder body.<sup>4</sup></p>

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<p><b>LATENT</b></p> 	<p><b>EMERGING</b></p> 	<p><b>ESTABLISHED</b></p> 	<p><b>ADVANCED</b></p> 
<p><b>ENABLING CONTEXT 3:</b> <i>Having regular funding for the NLSA</i></p>			
<p>There was no NLSA, or there was no funding for the NLSA.</p>	<p>There was funding for the NLSA.<sup>5</sup></p>	<p>There was regular funding for the NLSA that was allocated by law or regulation.</p>	<p>This option does not apply to this dimension.</p>
<p>There was no NLSA, or there was no funding for the NLSA from internal or external sources.</p>	<p>The funding for the NLSA came only or primarily from loans or external donors.</p>	<p>The funding for the NLSA came primarily or only from the country's internal funding sources.<sup>6</sup></p>	<p>This option does not apply to this dimension.</p>
<p>There was no NLSA, or there was no funding.</p>	<p>There was funding to cover at least some minimum core activities of the NLSA.<sup>7</sup></p>	<p>There was funding to cover all or most core activities of the NLSA.</p>	<p>There was funding to cover all core activities, plus research and development.</p>
<p><b>ENABLING CONTEXT 4:</b> <i>Having institutional capacity for the NLSA</i></p>			
<p>There was no NLSA, or there was no NLSA team.</p>	<p>There was a temporary or ad hoc team in charge of the NLSA, or other equivalent.</p>	<p>There was a permanent team, at least nationally recognized, with at least some experience in NLSA.<sup>8</sup></p>	<p>There was a permanent team, internationally recognized, with vast experience in NLSA.</p>
<p>There was no NLSA, or it was unclear to which body the NLSA unit was accountable.<sup>9</sup></p>	<p>This option does not apply to this dimension.</p>	<p>The NLSA unit was accountable to a clearly recognized body.</p>	<p>This option does not apply to this dimension.</p>
<p>There was no NLSA, or the NLSA unit did not have facilities to carry out the assessment.</p>	<p>The NLSA unit had only a few of the required facilities to carry out the assessment.</p>	<p>The NLSA unit had all of the required facilities to carry out the assessment.</p>	<p>The NLSA unit had up-to-date versions of all required facilities to carry out the assessment.<sup>10</sup></p>

(CONTINUED)

<p><b>LATENT</b></p> <p>● ○ ○ ○</p>	<p><b>EMERGING</b></p> <p>● ● ○ ○</p>	<p><b>ESTABLISHED</b></p> <p>● ● ● ○</p>	<p><b>ADVANCED</b></p> <p>● ● ● ●</p>
<p><b>ENABLING CONTEXT 5:</b> <i>Having human resources for the NLSA</i></p>			
<p>There was no NLSA, or there was no NLSA staff.</p>	<p>The NLSA team had an inadequate number of staff to carry out the NLSA.<sup>11</sup></p>	<p>The NLSA team had an adequate number of staff to carry out the NLSA, with some quality problems.</p>	<p>The NLSA team had an adequate number of staff to carry out the NLSA, without quality problems.</p>
<p>There was no NLSA, or the country did not offer annual opportunities to learn about NLSA.</p>	<p>The country offered very few annual opportunities to learn about NLSA.<sup>12</sup></p>	<p>The country offered some annual opportunities to learn about NLSA, albeit only to the NLSA team members.</p>	<p>The country offered a wide range of annual opportunities to learn about NLSA. These opportunities were available to a broad audience, including the NLSA team members.</p>
<p>There was no NLSA, or teachers did not have annual opportunities to learn about the NLSA.</p>	<p>This option does not apply to this dimension.</p>	<p>Teachers had annual opportunities to learn about the content and skills measured by the NLSA.</p>	<p>Teachers had annual opportunities to learn about different aspects of the NLSA.<sup>13</sup></p>

**SYSTEM ALIGNMENT**

*Degree to which the assessment is coherent with other components of the education system.*

<p><b>LATENT</b></p> <p>● ○ ○ ○</p>	<p><b>EMERGING</b></p> <p>● ● ○ ○</p>	<p><b>ESTABLISHED</b></p> <p>● ● ● ○</p>	<p><b>ADVANCED</b></p> <p>● ● ● ●</p>
<p><b>SYSTEM ALIGNMENT 1:</b> <i>Aligning the NLSA with learning goals</i></p>			
<p>There was no NLSA, or the country did not have official learning goals or curriculum, or the NLSA was not aligned with the official learning goals or curriculum.</p>	<p>The NLSA was minimally aligned with official learning goals or curriculum.<sup>14</sup></p>	<p>The NLSA was sufficiently aligned with official learning goals or curriculum, and a regular internal review took place to ensure alignment.</p>	<p>The NLSA was fully aligned with official learning goals or curriculum, and a regular external review took place to ensure alignment.</p>
<p>There was no NLSA, or students had no previous exposure to the type of content and skills measured by the NLSA.</p>	<p>Students had limited previous exposure to the type of content and skills measured by the NLSA.</p>	<p>Students had sufficient previous exposure to the type of content and skills measured by the NLSA.<sup>15</sup></p>	<p>Students had extensive previous exposure to the type of content and skills measured by the NLSA.</p>
<p>There was no NLSA, or the NLSA was not consistent with other assessment activities.</p>	<p>The NLSA was minimally consistent with other assessment activities.</p>	<p>The NLSA was sufficiently consistent with other assessment activities.<sup>16</sup></p>	<p>The NLSA was fully consistent with other assessment activities.</p>

**ASSESSMENT QUALITY**

*Degree to which the assessment meets technical standards, is fair and is used in an effective way.*

<p><b>LATENT</b> ● ○ ○ ○</p>	<p><b>EMERGING</b> ● ● ○ ○</p>	<p><b>ESTABLISHED</b> ● ● ● ○</p>	<p><b>ADVANCED</b> ● ● ● ●</p>
<p><b>ASSESSMENT QUALITY 1:</b> <i>Ensuring the quality of the NLSA</i></p>			
<p>There was no NLSA, or there were no mechanisms to include all student groups in the NLSA.</p>	<p>There were informal or ad hoc mechanisms to include all student groups in the NLSA.</p>	<p>There were some formal mechanisms to include all student groups in the NLSA.</p>	<p>There were a variety of formal mechanisms to include all student groups in the NLSA.<sup>17</sup></p>
<p>There was no NLSA, or there were no formal mechanisms in place to ensure the quality of the NLSA.</p>	<p>There were very few formal mechanisms in place to ensure the quality of the NLSA.</p>	<p>There were some formal mechanisms in place to ensure the quality of the NLSA.<sup>18</sup></p>	<p>There were a variety of formal mechanisms in place to ensure the quality of the NLSA.</p>
<p>There was no NLSA, or there was no technical documentation about the NLSA.</p>	<p>There was some documentation about the technical aspects of the NLSA.</p>	<p>There was a comprehensive technical report for the NLSA, available upon request or with restricted access.</p>	<p>There was a comprehensive technical report for the NLSA, publicly available online.<sup>19</sup></p>

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ASSESSMENT QUALITY 2: <i>Ensuring effective uses of the NLSA</i>			
There was no NLSA, or country results and information were not disseminated.	Country results and information were disseminated using some communication strategy, excluding dissemination to schools. <sup>20</sup>	Country results and information were disseminated using a variety of communication strategies, including dissemination to most schools.	Country results and information were disseminated using a variety of communication strategies, including dissemination to most schools.
There was no NLSA, or NLSA results and information were not covered by the media. <sup>21</sup>	NLSA results and information had hardly any coverage in the media.	NLSA results and information were covered by some media outlets.	NLSA results and information were covered by a wide variety of media.
There was no NLSA, or results from the NLSA were not used to inform decision making in the country.	Results from the NLSA were minimally used to inform decision making in the country.	Results from the NLSA were used in some ways to inform decision making in the country. <sup>22</sup>	Results from the NLSA were used in a variety of ways to inform decision making in the country. <sup>22</sup>
There was no NLSA, or there were no mechanisms in place to monitor the NLSA.	This option does not apply to this dimension.	There were some formal mechanisms in place to monitor the NLSA. <sup>23</sup>	There were a variety of formal mechanisms in place to monitor the NLSA.
There was no NLSA or clear evidence or consensus about the positive impact of the NLSA on education quality.	This option does not apply to this dimension.	There is a general consensus about the positive impact of the NLSA on education quality.	There is evidence of the positive impact of the NLSA on education quality. <sup>24</sup>

***National (of System-Level) Large Scale Assessment (NLSA): Development-level rating justifications***

1. The Samoa Primary Education Literacy Level (SPELL) was first introduced in 1993 and is implemented every year to all students in years 4 and 6. The assessment is administered to monitor education quality at the country level, support schools and teachers, hold governments or political authorities accountable, and inform policy design, evaluation, or decision making. The assessment covers English, Samoan, and Numeracy.
2. Although there is no stand-alone policy document pertaining to SPELL, the assessment is referenced in the National School Assessment Policy Framework.
3. The National Exam Calendar specifies the year of future assessments, years to be tested, and subject areas. The National Exam Calendar is provided to schools and is available online.
4. The MESc, and particularly the Chief Education Officer and the assistant Chief Education Officers, represent the recognized leaders for SPELL.
5. There is regular funding for SPELL allocated based on a law or regulation through the MESc's examination budget.
6. The funding for SPELL comes primarily from the country's internal funding sources.
7. Funding for SPELL covers data analysis. While the cost of assessment design is considered an initial investment cost, administration and reporting are the responsibility of the AEU within the CMAD and are covered within their budget.
8. CMAD, within the MESc, nationally recognized as an authority in student assessment in Samoa, is in charge of the SPELL. The CMAD has been in charge of the SPELL since 1993.
9. The NLSA unit, which is the AEU, was not accountable to a clearly recognized body. AEU is accountable to the MESc Core Executive and the National Assessment Council.
10. The AEU has up-to-date computers for all technical staff, top-level security for the building, top-level storage facilities, up-to-date generation computer servers, and up-to-date communication tools.
11. The AEU has an inadequate number of staff to carry out national large-scale assessments. The Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) recently conducted an "Institutional Capacity Analysis of Samoa's Assessment and Examinations Unit" and found that the AEU requires a higher number of staff to strengthen the research and training functions of its unit. However, there were no quality problems identified with the performance of the team responsible for the NLSA.

12. There are courses in pre-service teacher training on assessment, which cover assessments administered in the country. In addition, the MESC hosts workshops for Year 4 and Year 6 teachers and principals on the SPELL. These opportunities are available to CMAD employees and assessment specialists, School Review Officers, university students, and school principals and teachers.
13. In workshops hosted by the MESC, Year 4 and Year 6 teachers had opportunities to learn about the content and skills measured by the NLSA, as well as other aspects of the assessment.
14. Samoa introduced a new primary curriculum for the 2013 academic year. Therefore, SPELL does not align with the content, skill areas, and pedagogical approaches of the new official learning goals or curriculum.
15. Textbooks or other learning resources, as well as teachers, covered content and skills similar to those covered by the NLSA. Further, students were exposed to more basic content and skills in class than those covered by the NLSA.
16. SPELL is consistent with the international large-scale activities in Samoa. However, it is unclear whether SPELL is consistent with classroom assessment since classroom assessment is diversely practiced across schools. It is also unclear whether SPELL is consistent with examinations since there are none administered at Year 4 or 6, the levels at which the SPELL is administered.
17. Accommodations or alternative assessments are provided for students with disabilities. For example, SPELL has been administered at special schools for children with vision and hearing impairments. In addition, special plans were made to ensure that SPELL was administered to students in hard-to-reach areas and offered in the language of instruction for almost all student groups.
18. There are some formal mechanisms in place to ensure the quality of SPELL. For example, there is a standardized manual for large-scale assessment administrators, double data scoring, double processing of data, and internal reviewers or observers.
19. There is a comprehensive technical report for SPELL which is sent to schools. In addition, copies are available at the MESC office.
20. Country results and information are disseminated through an annual SPELL report and a *Statistical Digest* (available online). The annual SPELL report and the *Statistical Digest* are also sent to schools and available from the MESC office. In addition, results are presented during teacher and principal workshops.
21. SPELL results and information are not usually covered by the media. However, there are infrequent op-eds about the results in newspapers.
22. Results from SPELL are used for tracking the impact of reforms on student achievement levels. In addition, results are used to inform curriculum improvement, teacher training programs, resource allocation, and other assessment activities in the system.

23. There were some formal mechanisms in place to monitor the SPELL, including an expert review group and a Literacy Task Force. Teacher and principal workshops provide an opportunity to monitor SPELL on an annual basis and gauge efficacy in terms of impact, acceptability, and credibility. In addition, there is funding for independent research on the SPELL.
24. There are some data demonstrating that children at risk have improved outcomes in later years, which likely has some correlation with SPELL and other related interventions.







**SAMOA**  
***International Large-Scale Assessment (ILSA)***

**ENABLING CONTEXT**

*Overall framework of policies, leadership, institutional arrangements, fiscal and human resources in which the assessment takes place in a country, and the extent to which that framework is directly conducive to, or supportive of, the assessment activity.*

<p><b>LATENT</b> ● ○ ○ ○</p>	<p><b>EMERGING</b> ● ● ○ ○</p>	<p><b>ESTABLISHED</b> ● ● ● ○</p>	<p><b>ADVANCED</b> ● ● ● ●</p>
<p><b>ENABLING CONTEXT 1:</b> <i>Setting clear policies for the ILSA</i></p>			
<p>The country has not participated in an ILSA in the last 10 years.</p>	<p>The country has participated in, but not completed, an ILSA in the last 10 years.<sup>1</sup></p>	<p>The country has completed one ILSA in the last 10 years.</p>	<p>The country has completed two or more ILSAs in the last 10 years.</p>
<p>The country is not currently participating in an ILSA or has not taken concrete steps to participate in an ILSA in the next 5 years.</p>	<p>This option does not apply to this dimension.</p>	<p>The country is currently participating in an ILSA or has taken concrete steps to participate in at least one ILSA in the next 5 years.<sup>2</sup></p>	<p>This option does not apply to this dimension.</p>
<p>There was no country-level policy document that addressed participation in the ILSA.<sup>3</sup></p>	<p>There was an informal or draft country-level policy document that addressed participation in the ILSA.</p>	<p>There was a formal country-level policy document that addressed participation in the ILSA that was available upon request or with restricted access.</p>	<p>There was a formal country-level policy document that addressed participation in the ILSA that was publicly available online to anyone interested.</p>
<p><b>ENABLING CONTEXT 2:</b> <i>Having sufficient funding for the ILSA</i></p>			
<p>There was no funding for participation in the ILSA, discretionary or otherwise.<sup>4</sup></p>	<p>Funding for the ILSA activities was primarily allocated at the discretion of the country's government.</p>	<p>Funding for the ILSA activities was primarily allocated by law or regulation.</p>	<p>This option does not apply to this dimension.</p>
<p>There was no funding from loans, external donors, or internal sources.</p>	<p>There was funding only or primarily from loans or external donors.<sup>5</sup></p>	<p>There was funding primarily from the country's internal funding sources.</p>	<p>There was funding only from the country's internal sources.</p>
<p>There was no funding for core items or research and development.</p>	<p>The ILSA funding covered at least minimum core items of the ILSA.</p>	<p>The ILSA funding covered most core items.<sup>6</sup></p>	<p>The ILSA funding covered most core items, plus research and development.</p>

(CONTINUED)

<p>LATENT</p> 	<p>EMERGING</p> 	<p>ESTABLISHED</p> 	<p>ADVANCED</p> 
<p><b>ENABLING CONTEXT 3:</b> <i>Having effective institutional and human capacity for the ILSA</i></p>			
<p>There was no ILSA unit or team.</p>	<p>There was at least one person in charge of the ILSA.<sup>7</sup></p>	<p>There was a recognized unit or team with at least some experience in international assessments that carried out the ILSA in an effective way.</p>	<p>There was an internationally-recognized unit or team with vast experience in international assessments that carried out the ILSA in an effective way.</p>
<p>There was no ILSA unit, or the unit did not have the required facilities to carry out the ILSA.</p>	<p>The ILSA unit had only a few of the required facilities to carry out the ILSA.</p>	<p>The ILSA unit had all of the required facilities to carry out the ILSA.</p>	<p>The ILSA unit had up-to-date versions of all of the required facilities to carry out the ILSA.<sup>8</sup></p>
<p>The country offered no opportunities to learn about ILSAs.</p>	<p>The country offered minimal opportunities to learn about ILSA.<sup>9</sup></p>	<p>The country offered adequate opportunities to learn about ILSA.</p>	<p>The country offered adequate opportunities to learn about ILSA to a broad audience, including the ILSA team and educators.</p>

**SYSTEM ALIGNMENT**

*Degree to which the assessment is coherent with other components of the education system.*

<p><b>LATENT</b> ● ○ ○ ○</p>	<p><b>EMERGING</b> ● ● ○ ○</p>	<p><b>ESTABLISHED</b> ● ● ● ○</p>	<p><b>ADVANCED</b> ● ● ● ●</p>
<p><b>SYSTEM ALIGNMENT 1:</b> <i>Aligning the ILSA with learning goals for the country</i></p>			
<p>The ILSA was not aligned with the country's official learning goals, or the country did not have official learning goals.</p>	<p>The ILSA was partially aligned with the country's official learning goals.</p>	<p>The ILSA was sufficiently aligned with the country's official learning goals.<sup>10</sup></p>	<p>The ILSA was fully aligned with the country's official learning goals.</p>
<p>Students were not previously exposed to the type of content and skills measured by the ILSA.</p>	<p>Students had limited previous exposure to the type of content and skills measured by the ILSA.</p>	<p>Students had sufficient previous exposure to the type of content and skills measured by the ILSA.</p>	<p>Students had extensive previous exposure to the type of content and skills measured by the ILSA.<sup>11</sup></p>
<p>The ILSA was not consistent with the country's other assessment activities.</p>	<p>The ILSA was minimally consistent with the country's other assessment activities.</p>	<p>The ILSA was generally consistent with the country's other assessment activities.<sup>12</sup></p>	<p>The ILSA was fully consistent with the country's other assessment activities.</p>

**ASSESSMENT QUALITY**

*Degree to which the assessment meets technical quality standards, is fair and is used in an effective way.*

<p><b>LATENT</b> ● ○ ○ ○</p>	<p><b>EMERGING</b> ● ● ○ ○</p>	<p><b>ESTABLISHED</b> ● ● ● ○</p>	<p><b>ADVANCED</b> ● ● ● ●</p>
<p><b>ASSESSMENT QUALITY 1:</b> <i>Ensuring the technical quality of the ILSA</i></p>			
<p>The country did not meet sufficient technical standards to have its data presented in the international report or an annex.</p>	<p>The country met sufficient technical standards to have its data presented beneath the main display of the international report or in an annex.</p>	<p>The country met all technical standards required to have its data presented in the main displays of the international report.<sup>13</sup></p>	<p>This option does not apply to this dimension.</p>
<p><b>ASSESSMENT QUALITY 2:</b> <i>Ensuring effective uses of ILSA</i></p>			
<p>Country results and information were not disseminated in the country.<sup>14</sup></p>	<p>Country results and information were disseminated using at least one communication strategy.</p>	<p>Country results and information were disseminated using some communication strategies.</p>	<p>Country results and information were disseminated using a variety of communication strategies, including dissemination to most schools.</p>
<p>Country results and information were not covered by media in the country.</p>	<p>Country results and information were covered by one media outlet in the country.</p>	<p>Country results and information were covered by some media outlets in the country.</p>	<p>Country results and information were covered by a variety of media outlets in the country.</p>
<p>Results from the ILSA have not been used to inform decision making.</p>	<p>Results from the ILSA have been used in a very limited way to inform decision making in the country.</p>	<p>Results from the ILSA have been used in some ways to inform decision making in the country.</p>	<p>Results from the ILSA have been used in a variety of ways to inform decision making in the country.</p>
<p>There is no clear evidence or consensus about the positive impact of the ILSA on education quality.</p>	<p>This option does not apply to this dimension.</p>	<p>There is a general consensus about the positive impact of the ILSA on education quality.</p>	<p>There is evidence of the positive impact of the ILSA on education quality.</p>

***International Large Scale Assessment (ILSA): Development-level rating justifications***

1. Samoa has participated in an ILSA in the last 10 years, but has not completed the entire assessment round. It has not completed an ILSA through to the final phase of reporting and communicating the assessment results to stakeholders.
2. Samoa participated in the Pacific Island Literacy and Numeracy Assessment (PILNA) for 2012, in which 14 countries in the Pacific region participated.
3. There was no country-level policy document in Samoa that addressed participation in the ILSA; however, the Secretariat of the Pacific Board for Educational Assessment (SPBEA), a regional body, received a regional mandate from the Pacific Forum Education Ministers Meeting (FEdMIM) in 2006 to develop the PILNA.
4. There was funding allocated by donors.
5. Funding was allocated by the Australian Aid Programme and Secretariat of the Pacific Board for Educational Assessment (SPBEA).
6. The ILSA funding covered most core items, including implementation of the assessment exercise in the country, and processing and analyzing of data collected. In addition, funding covered reporting and disseminating the assessment results in the country and attendance at international meetings. ILSA funding did not cover international participation fees, research and development, or staff salaries.
7. There was a national coordinator for the PILNA in Samoa, a School Coordinator who managed the administration at the school level for selected schools, and Test Supervisors, teachers who administered the assessment at the classroom level in selected schools. In addition, for each assessment area, literacy and numeracy, there was a panel responsible for marking the assessments. Although this was the first time that this team was in charge of an ILSA, there were minimal quality problems identified with carrying out the PILNA in Samoa. For example, it was noted that there were delays in data processing and scoring which was largely due to Cyclone Evan, which struck in December 2012.
8. The ILSA unit had up-to-date computers for all technical staff, top-level security and storage facilities, and up-to-date computer servers and communication tools.
9. ILSA team members and assessment specialists were able to benefit from opportunities to learn about the PILNA during presentations held at the MESC. Key personnel also participated in workshops organized by the SPBEA for all PILNA participating countries. In addition, the SPBEA provided in-country training on scoring to scorers.
10. The PILNA was aligned with content and skills areas of Samoa's official learning goals or curriculum. In addition, the PILNA was aligned with pedagogical approaches or activities compatible with Samoa's official learning goals or curriculum.
11. In Samoa, textbook and learning resources, as well as teachers, cover content and skills similar to those covered by the PILNA. Furthermore, students are exposed to content and skills more advanced than that covered by the PILNA.

12. It is unclear whether the ILSA is fully consistent with classroom assessment practices since they are conducted at the school level and can be diverse across schools. However, the ILSA was fully consistent with the national large-scale assessment in Samoa.
13. Samoa has complied with all technical standards, and it is expected that its results will be presented in the main section of the PILNA international report.
14. Since PILNA results have not yet been approved by the FEDMM, they have not been disseminated in Samoa.

## Acknowledgements

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This report focuses specifically on policies in the area of **student assessment**.

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