



# Visone

Ke hoko 'ae Potungaue kihe Ngaahi Ngaue Fakalotofonua koe taaimu'a 'i he 'ilo fo'ou 'oe fakalalakala fakasosiale, ke fo'u ai ha fa'unga malu fakasosiale lelei, fakasi'isi'i 'a e ngaahi faikehekehe fakasosiale, fakasi'isi'i e nofo masivesiva, fakaa'u e ngaahi sevesi kihe kakai, fakalalakala'i e to'utupu, mo hiki hake tu'unga mo'ui lelei moe mo'ui faka'aho 'ae kakai 'o Tonga

# Vision

The Ministry of Internal Affairs to lead the way in social innovation and development towards an effective welfare system, reduce inequalities, alleviate poverty, better access to services, enhance youth development and improve overall health and well-being for the people of Tonga.



## In this newsletter you can expect:

Key Milestone

May's Key Meetings Recap

Highlights from May Workshops

Community Engagement

Introducing Our New Employees





Hon. Prime Minister Lord Fakafanua officiated the launch of three landmark national documents focused on child poverty, disability inclusion, and welfare programs. The initiative was developed through collaboration between the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Social Protection and Disability Division, and international partners UNICEF, the World Food Programme (WFP), and P4SP DFAT.

The publications include Tonga's first national baseline report on child poverty, led by UNICEF; a study on the experiences of persons with disabilities in disasters and emergencies, conducted by WFP; and an operational manual for the Disability Welfare Scheme, developed in collaboration with P4SP DFAT. Collectively, these resources provide essential data and practical tools to inform and strengthen inclusive policies and programs.

These documents reflect Tonga's commitment to social equity and resilience. They call for stronger community involvement, improved disaster preparedness, and shock-responsive social protection systems ensuring dignity, opportunity, and support for all Tongan citizens.

In his keynote address, Hon. Prime Minister Lord Fakafanua emphasized the government's responsibility to act decisively: *"The three studies that we have launched today will help the government ensure that we are doing the right thing in terms of how we address those who are in need. These reports highlight Tonga's dedication to supporting all its citizens and underline the importance of guiding our efforts to put social safeguards in place before children and families reach crisis points."*

Following the Prime Minister's remarks, Hon. Minister for Internal Affairs, Fane Fotu Fituafae, reinforced the importance of these publications for shaping future policies: *"Together, these national documents mark a significant step forward in Tonga's efforts to address child poverty and promote the inclusion of persons with disabilities. They provide valuable insights and practical tools for building a more resilient and equitable society."*

Adding a regional perspective, Mr. Martin Nabola, Social Policy Specialist at UNICEF Fiji, highlighted the strength of partnerships behind the reports: *"These reports are a testament to our strong partnership. They reflect the leadership of the Government of Tonga, the contributions of national institutions and communities, and the close collaboration of development partners. We commend the Government of Tonga for its commitment to using evidence to guide decisions and strengthen systems for the future."*

This launch represents a landmark in Tonga's journey toward strengthening social protection and promoting inclusive development. By uniting government leaders, development partners, stakeholders, civil society organizations, community members, and most importantly children, who represent the future of Tonga.

The event underscores a shared determination to address child poverty, advance disability inclusion, and ensure equitable welfare support for all.

## \$2.4 Million Contract Signed for New Elderly Facility in Houma Tongatapu



This month marked another significant milestone with the signing of a \$2.4 million contract for the construction of an Elderly Facility in Houma, Tongatapu. The agreement was made between the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Ofa Construction, with funding provided by the ADB-Japan Integrated Aged Care Project.

The contract was officially signed by CEO Mrs. Polotu Paunga and Ofa Construction Services Director Heamasi Ofa, signaling an important step forward in enhancing aged care services in Hihifo District.

The project is under the Social Protection and Disability Division of the Ministry, highlighting the government's commitment to improving care for its elderly population.

The new facility will provide comprehensive services for the elderly residents of Hihifo district, focusing on promoting their well-being, fostering sustainability, and encouraging active community involvement.

This development marks an important step in enhancing quality of life for elderly in Tonga, demonstrating a strong dedication to their care and support.



# Key updates from NACGAD, International Cooperation, and National Development meetings

HIGHLIGHTS OF KEY MEETINGS IN MAY



## NACGAD Reviews Progress on Women’s Empowerment Policy

The National Advisory Committee on Gender and Development (NACGAD) held its second meeting for 2026 on Tuesday, May 5th, at the MIA 2 office conference room in the old Tonga Water Board Office. The meeting was chaired by Honourable Seventeen Toumoúa, Acting Minister for Internal Affairs.

The primary focus was on the progress of the Women’s Empowerment & Gender Equality Tonga III Policy 2026–2030. The committee also discussed efforts to translate the policy into Tongan, ensuring that everyone understands its content and can actively participate in its implementation.

The committee also highlighted the importance of collaboration among various government departments and partners to ensure the effective and timely implementation of the policy. They believe that working together is the best way to bring about real change for women and to achieve gender equality across Tonga.

## MIA CEO meeting with DPO/JPRM Mission and International Partners

Mrs. Polotu Paunga, the CEO of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA), met with the Development Policy Operation (DPO)/Joint Policy Reform Matrix (JPRM) mission and representatives from ADB, DFAT, EU, and MFAT on Tuesday, 5th May 2026, at the MIA main office conference room.

The meeting focused on key initiatives that will shape the future of our community. These include planned social assistance programs during the oil crisis, such as Vaka Sosiale, as well as important legal and regulatory reforms scheduled for 2026 and 2027. The discussion also covered the returnee policy and proposed amendments to existing laws.

This meeting represents a significant milestone in Tonga's development. With new initiatives aimed at strengthening communities and enhancing resilience, international partnerships are crucial in fostering sustainable and impactful progress.

## Hon Minister Engages in Key Talks with Australian Officials

Hon. Minister Fane Fotu Fituafe, CEO Mrs. Polotu Paunga, and the Ministry of Internal Affairs leadership team met with Ms. Elizabeth Peak, Deputy Secretary and Head of the Office of the Pacific at the Australia’s Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, accompanied by her delegation and Australia’s High Commissioner to Tonga, Mr. Brek Batley.

The meeting highlighted the strong partnership between Australia and the Ministry, with discussions covering shared priorities such as labor mobility, women’s empowerment, social protection, and support for people with disabilities among other important areas of cooperation.

Hon. Minister Fane Fotu Fituafe thanked Australia for its continued support and reaffirmed the importance of working together to build a brighter future for Tonga’s people.

## Debrief on Women Deliver Conference

The Minister for Internal Affairs, Hon. Fane Fotu Fituafe, led a debrief session with Tonga’s delegation following their participation in the Women Deliver Conference in Melbourne.

The meeting highlighted key lessons learned and stressed the importance of maintaining the strong partnerships built during the event.

The debrief brought together representatives from government agencies, Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), and donor partners. Participants expressed appreciation for the collaborative teamwork and collective efforts that enabled Tonga to effectively represent the country during the conference.

The session also highlighted the significance of ongoing partnership, coordination, and knowledge sharing to bolster future engagement and advocacy initiatives.





## Ako fakataukei ki hono fakaiviva fakaátamai mo fakasosiale á e Ngaue Fakafeauloto maáe fanau toútupu mo e ngaahi famili

Naé fakahoko é he UNICEF, mo e Tesi ‘a e Kau Taki Lotú (Church Leader’s Desk) ‘a ia óku fakamalumu i he Potungāue ki he Ngaahi Ngaue Fakalotofonua, ha polokalama ako áho é 6, fēkauáki mo e ngaahi tefito'i ngaue ke fakaiviva fakaátamai mo fakasosiale ‘a e Ngaue fakafeauloto (counseling) ma'ae fanau, to'utupu pea mo e ngaahi famili foki.

Ko e úluaki áho é 4 ó e ako naé fakahoko ia ki he loki konifelenisi á e Potungāue Tanaki Paānga Hu Mai Mo e Tute mei he áho 27 – 30 ó Epeleli pea ko e áho é 2 fakaosi na'e fakahoko ia ki he Ancient Tonga i he áho 5 moe 6 ó Me, 2026. Ko e ako ko éni naé fakahoko ia é Dr. Koen Sevenants, ko e mataotao i he malaé ó e moui lelei fakaátamai á e fanau mei he UNICEF.

Ko e taumu'a 'o e polokalamá ke fakaiviva 'a e kau akó 'aki ha ngaahi 'ilo makehe mo ha ngaahi pōto'i ngāue faka-polofesinale ki he mo'ui lelei faka-átamai mo e

tu'unga moui lelei fakalukufua 'o e longai fanau, to'utupu mo honau ngaahi famili.

Ko e ngaahi kaveinga ne fakatefito ki ai á e ako ko éni, ko e fakalalaka i he moui á e longai fanau mo e toútupu i he énau kei tupu hake, ko e ngaahi founa makehe ki he ngaue fakafeauloto (counseling), pea mo e ngaahi nunu'a kovi ó e ngauehala áki ngaahi faitoó (drugs).

Naé fakahoko foki ha ááhi á e kau akó ki he Mata'āho Kindergarten ke fakahoko ai énau ngaue maáe fanau ó ngaueáki á e ilo mo e taukei naá nau ako mei he polokalama ako ni. Naé ola lelei áupito á e ááhi ko éni á ia óku ne fakahaai mai heni á e mahuínga mo e áonga ó e polokalama.

Na'e tātuku áki á e polokalamá ako ni 'a hono foaki 'o e ngaahi tohi fakamo'oni ako (certificates) kiate kinautolu naá nau kau mai ki he polokalama ako ko éni.



## Gender Equality Mainstreaming Workshop Expands Across Government Ministries



The Women’s Affairs and Gender Equality Division (WAGED) has stepped up its work to promote gender equality in government. Since the launch of the WEGET III Policy on 26 March 2026, WAGED has hosted introductory training sessions with several ministries, including MEIDECCC, the Public Service Commission, MAFF, and the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

These workshops focused on building a shared understanding of gender equality and how it can be woven into everyday planning, service delivery, and decision-making. Staff and focal points came together to explore practical ways to apply gender-responsive approaches in their work. Discussions highlighted the vital role of women in areas such as climate change, agriculture, community development, and public service, while also stressing the importance of gender-responsive budgeting and collective action for fairer outcomes.

As Tonga’s National Women’s Machinery, WAGED is committed to strengthening collaboration with ministries and ensuring that gender equality principles are part of government at every level. Looking ahead, the division will continue rolling out these workshops to more ministries and outer islands, supporting a more inclusive and equitable public service that empowers women and advances sustainable development across Tonga.

# Polokalama áú tonu ki he ngaahi tukui kolo

## Mei he Vaá Maú Ngaue Ki Tuápuleánga



Í he mahina ni naé lava atu á e timi mei he Vaá Maú Ngaue ki Tuápuleánga ki he ngaahi tukui motu, ki 'Vavaú, Éua mo Haápai, í he énau polokalama ááhi angamaheni ki he fanau ma'u ngaue fakataimi ki Nu'usila mo Aositelelia, á ia 'oku fakahoko ma'u pe hé ta'u kotoa. Naé taki atu í he timi ááhi ko éni á e ófisa óku ne tokangá á e vaá ngaue, Leinolo Lakai.



Ko e taumuá ó e ááhi ko éni ke fakahoko á e Polokalama ako fakataukei áho é 2 ki he fanau óku ámanaki kenau folau atu í he polokalama maú ngaue ki tuápuleánga. Tanaki mo e ngaahi fakamatala mei hé fanau ngaue kuo kakato énau faha'í ta'u ngaue 'i Nu'usila (Debrief). Pea pehe foki ke áú tonu atu á e timi ó mamata ki hé ola ó e ngaahi taumu'a ngäue kuo áusia é kinautolu kuo nau kau atu 'i hé polokalama. A ia é hoko éni ko ha fakalotolahi kiate kinautolu 'oku nau lolotonga ma'u faingamälie 'i he polokalama ngaue mo kinautolu óku ámanaki ke kau atu ki he polokalama.



Naé kau fakataha atu foki á e Pule lahi ó e Potungäue ki he ngaahi ngaue fakalotofonua Polotu Paunga ki he polokalama ni, á ia naá ne fakahā heni, óku mahuínga áupito á e polokalama ááhi ko éni ke toe vaofi ange ai á e fengäueáki mo e kau maú ngaue pea maú foki heni mo e ngaahi fakamatala mahuínga ke tokoni ki he fakalalakaka á e fakahoko fatongia á e vaá ngaue ni mo e potungäue, ki he lelei fakalukufua ó e polokalama.



## Mei he Vaá Sipoti mo e Vaínga



Naé áú tonu atu foki á e timi Kau Mai Tonga Ketau Fakamalohisino mei he vaá sipoti ki he vahenga Tongatapu 9 & 10 ke fai hono akoí ó e niíhi mei he ngaahi tukui kolo í he ongo vahenga ni ki he fai fakamalohisino. Ko e taumuá ke malava pe é he niíhi ko éni ke fakahoko á e ngaahi polokalama fakamalohisino í honau ngaahi kolo takitaha.



Ko e polokalama Kau Mai Tonga Ke Tau Fakamalohisino, óku fengäueáki ai á e va'a sipoti mo e Tonga Moúí Lelei, ki hono tauí ó e ngaahi maháki íkai ke pipihi, áki hono teke mo fakaáíái á e kakai ó e ngaahi tukui kolo kenau manako ki he fakamalohisino kenau moúí lelei mo longomoúí foki.



Ko e taha pe éni í he ngaahi fatongia mahuínga ó e potungäue ki hono teke ó e moúí lelei á e kakai ó e fonua ó fakatatau ki he palani fakafonua á Tonga ki he moúí lelei mo e sipoti.

## Welcoming our newest members to the MIA family



**Koliniusi Lepa**  
Principal Sports Development Officer  
Sports and Active Recreation Division



**Sioka Faletau**  
Computer Operator Grate III  
Sports and Active Recreation Division



**Mele Mausia**  
Senior Executive Officer  
Social Protection and Disability Division

Fiefia ke talitali lelei heni á Koliniusi Lepa pehe kia Sioka Faletau ke tokoni ki he vaá sipoti mo e vaínga. Pehe kia Mele Mausia ke tokoni ki he ngaue óku fakahoko ki hono tokangaekina ó e kau toulekeleka mo e Vaá Ngaue ki he Malu mo e Hao á e Kakai Tuúlaveangofua ó e fonua. Ikai ko ia pe ka óku fiefia foki mo e vaá fakahoko ngaue (CSD), ke talitali lelei á Sela Patolo ke tokoni ki he fakahoko fatongia mei he íuniti á e HR. 🙌



**Sela Patolo**  
Clerk Class II  
Corporate Services Division

WELCOME EVERYONE! 😊