

Office of the Ombudsman
National Human Rights Institution
Samoa

CORPORATE PLAN

FY2021/22-2024/25



OMBUDSMAN
NHRI SAMOA



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National Human Rights Institution Samoa

Corporate Plan

FY 2021/2022 - 2024/25

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Introduction

The Office Corporate Plan amplifies the *Goals*, and *Outcomes* presented in the Office Strategic Plan 2020/21 – 2024/25.

The Plan objective aims to meet the expectations inherent in the *Ombudsman (Komesina o Sulufaiga) Act 2013*.

We will continue to execute our functions effectively by being:

- **Mandate focused** - to be clear what high level outcomes we want to focus on while maintaining alignment to our mandate, Strategy for the Development of Samoa FY2021/22 – FY2025/26 (PDS) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 5 and 16 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
- **Outcomes and Results focused** – being an Office that delivers and operates in a responsive way while enhancing key outcomes and showing measurable impact
- **Service focused** – our services are of high quality, continuously improving, fair and efficient
- **Partnerships focused** – actively engaging and working collaboratively at both operational and strategic levels with our partners and stakeholders resulting in a coordinated and integrated approach; and enhanced performance across all key outcome areas
- **Sustainability focused** – embed financial accountability and performance in terms of maximizing value for money and planning for the future and managing risks well and focusing on opportunities
- **People focused** – building an Office of capable, adaptable and engaged people so as to ensure every person that engages with the office feels highly satisfied
- **Leadership focused** – building leaders at every level creating and driving the work programs of the Office and improving communication and relationship management.

Mandate

The Office of the Ombudsman also Samoa's National Human Rights Institution operates under the *Ombudsman (Komesina o Sulufaiga) Act 2013* as well as the Constitution.

Our operations are determined independently of the government and we report directly to Parliament.

Our role is to ensure the **integrity in governance and respect for human rights** in Samoa – investigating and finding practical and just solutions to issues of concern, promoting compliance with international standards on human rights, good governance and rule of law, advocating for systemic change and raising awareness across all sectors of the community.

Our Vision, Mission & Values

VISION: Integrity in governance and respect for human rights

MISSION: To lead in strengthening transparent and accountable public institutions and the promotion and protection of human rights by:

- providing effective, timely and independent dispute resolution services on matters of maladministration and misuse of authority by prescribed disciplinary forces
- empowering all people to understand and exercise their human rights and responsibilities
- holding government accountable to good governance and human rights standards and obligations
- build and strengthen partnerships that encourages action on good governance and human rights

VALUES AND PRINCIPLES:

Our work will be constantly guided by our core values and principles including **respect**, **fairness**, **integrity**, **professionalism**, **independence** and upholding the **rule of law** – all of which helps foster **integrity** in governance and encourage respect for **human dignity** and our Fa'asamoa.

Strategic Goals

The Office aims to reach three key goals over the period of its Strategic Plan FY 2021/2022–2024/25. These are realized through the various strategic, intermediate, cross-cutting and supporting outcomes. The three goals include:

- i. Strong institutions that are transparent and accountable
- ii. Rights and freedoms respected and part of everyday life
- iii. Improved access to information and complaints resolution services

Performance

We measure our success in maintaining the confidence of the public, public institutions including prescribed disciplinary forces we oversee, civil society and parliament through the following performance criteria and measures:

CRITERIA	MEASURE
1. We assist the public to resolve complaints against state agencies and public institutions including prescribed disciplinary forces we oversee	quality of our service and our information
2. We are responsive to the public when they contact us	quality of our service and our information
3. We improve public awareness of our role in influencing practice in public administration on good governance and effective human rights protection	quality of our service and our information
4. We are responsive in our dealings with state agencies and public institutions including prescribed disciplinary forces, as well as civil society groups on good governance and human rights matters	effectiveness of our influence and our engagement
5. We influence improvements in public administration and public institutions including prescribed disciplinary forces practices, as well as human rights compliance of all state institutions we deal with	effectiveness of our influence and our engagement
6. We effectively deliver our awareness and capacity building programs on effective complaints handling, good governance and human rights mainstreaming for public institutions including prescribed disciplinary forces, civil society groups and community	effectiveness of our influence and our engagement, as well as impact
7. We maintain the confidence of Parliament	quality and responsiveness of our advice/ reports

8. We improve our cooperation with international and regional mechanisms and agencies in promoting good governance best practices and protecting human rights

effectiveness of our engagement and delivery of our international obligations

It is important that we deliver our functions measured by the performance criteria as effectively as possible supported by clear, well-informed and evidence-based recommendations, delivered in a timely manner.

Our performance against each of the criteria will be demonstrated through a combination of qualitative analysis and quantitative metrics.

The complexities of the COVID-19 pandemic has and will continue have a profound impact on both our capacity and ability to deliver our

services and programmes. Therefore, it is imperative that we stay as fine-tuned as possible and aligned to our core functions and mandates by lifting productivity, being smart in our use of resources, demonstrate value for money and find innovative ways of delivering our mandate and services. We will continue to monitor our work and adjust accordingly. Despite the uncertainty presented by COVID-19 we will endeavor to undertake our activities the best we can in a modified way especially for specific functions.

Outcomes

Strategic and Intermediate Outcomes

The Office's Corporate Plan will pursue five strategic outcomes supported by intermediate outcomes in line with its Strategic Plan FY 2021/2022 - 2024/25.

Integrity in governance

1. More effective, efficient and equitable public governance

- 1.1. Improved quality of public administrative systems and processes for managing complaints
- 1.2. Timely and fair handling of complaints to the reasonable satisfaction of the public
- 1.3. Public's confidence and trust in public institutions maintained

2. Improved compliance with good governance standards and rule of law

- 2.1. Public institutions including prescribed disciplinary forces understand and adhere to good governance principles displayed through practices and policies
- 2.2. Rule of law strengthened and access to justice ensured for all
- 2.3. Address misconduct in prescribed disciplinary forces

Focus – over the next four years, the Office aims to continue strengthening processes for complaints handling and promote good governance principles and best practices through awareness and trainings for public institutions including disciplinary forces we oversee. The Office will also continue to monitor, review and initiate when necessary investigations to ensure systemic improvement in public administration.

Respect for human rights

3. Greater protection of rights and freedoms

- 3.1. Human rights based approach observed and practiced in policy development and project implementation
- 3.2. Engagement with national and international partners on human rights protection strengthened
- 3.3. Amicus curiae function promoted and utilized

4. Greater compliance with human rights obligations and standards

- 4.1. Implementation of human rights obligations and recommendations (national and international) improved
- 4.2. Legislative and policy interventions consistent with human rights standards
- 4.3. Participation in human rights reporting processes improved
- 4.4. Conditions and management of places of detention improved

5. Established and improved human rights culture consistent with Fa'asamoa

- 5.1. Public's understanding of rights and responsibilities enhanced
- 5.2. Public especially vulnerable communities empowered to exercise their rights and responsibilities

Focus – over the next four years, the Office aims to continue strengthening its work on human rights education and awareness, strengthen partnerships both local and international on human rights work, provide practical and effective policy advice on human rights issues, encourage human rights compliance and implementation of human rights based approaches and obligations, inquire into systemic human rights issues and, effectively monitor human rights issues through stakeholder engagement.

Cross-cutting Outcomes

There are also cross-cutting outcomes that inform the overall work of the Office. These include,

- i. **Gender mainstreaming:** gender equality and the empowerment of women integrated in the Office's policies, procedures, programmes and projects
- ii. **Partnerships:** strengthened partnerships to assist and support the public and government on matters relating to good governance and human rights
- iii. **Coordination and coherence:** improved coordination and coherence observed and integrated into programme work and projects to ensure effective execution of mandates and the delivery of services
- iv. **Relevance:** strengthened relevance and alignment of Office priorities and programmes to our mandate, strategic plan, PDS and SDGs to ensure effective impact and consistency with context

Supporting Outcomes

To support the overarching five key strategic outcomes listed above which go towards the core mandates of the Office, supporting outcomes provide for systems and processes enabling better coordination of whole of Office activities, efficient administrative systems and effective service delivery, and most importantly an efficient and capable workforce. The two supporting outcomes include:

Supporting Outcome 1:

6. Robust administrative processes and systems enabling effective and responsive delivery of operations and services

- 6.1. Responsive and improved service delivery
- 6.2. Monitoring and reporting on Office operations improved
- 6.3. Strengthened Corporate Services and Human Resources

Focus – over the next four years, the Office aims to further improve service delivery and strengthen human resources through constantly reviewing its administrative processes and policies and utilize technology to ensure efficiency as well as seek opportunities for staff development to effectively execute their roles.

Supporting Outcome 2:

7. Enhanced public awareness of our key roles, services and processes that enables increased access and engagement

- 7.1. Enhanced awareness about the Office and its roles
- 7.2. Effective engagement and communication with the public, NGOs etc.
- 7.3. Efficient coordination and effective delivery of office engagement activities.

Focus – over the next four years, the Office aims to ensure enhanced awareness among public institutions and members of the public about the Office and its roles, and the efficient coordination and effective delivery of office engagement activities through the ‘One-Ombudsman’ approach and guided by our Stakeholder Consultation & Engagement Policy.

Quantitative metrics

Each of the performance criteria will be assessed using a combination of qualitative analysis and measurement against particular quantitative targets. These targets are overseen by Directors of each Unit and then reported in the annual report.

The following table outlines the outcomes and performance criteria and the quantitative metrics (which only tells part of our performance) applicable to each one, to be complemented by qualitative analysis.

Performance criteria: outcomes and projections over the next four years

Performance criterion	Goal	Strategic outcomes	Intermediate outcomes	Confidence Measure	Applicable quantitative measures and targets	2021-22	2022-23	2023-34	2024-25
1	3	1	1.1, 1.2, 1.3	People	Percentage of people who contacted the Office providing a rating of 'satisfied' (or better) with our services in response to complainant satisfaction surveys.	55%	Analysis against 2021–22 results	Analysis against 2022–23 results	Analysis against 2023–24 results
	3	1	1.1, 1.2, 1.3		Percentage of complainant satisfaction survey responses with a rating of 'satisfied' (or better) evaluating our independence.	55%	Analysis against 2021–22 results	Analysis against 2022–23 results	Analysis against 2023–24 results
2	3	1	1.2, 1.3	People	Percentage of service standards met	90%	90%	90%	90%
3	3	5	5.1, 5.2	People	Increase in the total number of enquiries and complaints (relating to maladministration and human rights), and Facebook hits compared to the previous reporting period	150	Count and analysis against 2021–22 results	Count and analysis against 2021–22 results	Count and analysis against 2021–22 results
4	3	5	5.1, 5.2	Public institutions and agencies, and civil society	Percentage of satisfaction survey responses from agencies demonstrating a rating of 'satisfied' (or better) with the quality of our work	70%	75%	80%	90%
	3	5	5.1, 5.2		Percentage of feedback responses from participants in trainings and awareness events demonstrating a rating of 'satisfied' (or better)	65%	70%	80%	85%
	2, 3	3	3.3		Instances where the Office engages with the court on human rights cases	Annual count	Analysis against 2021–22	Analysis against 2022–23	Analysis against 2023–24
5	1	2, 3	2.1, 2.2, 3.1	Public institutions and agencies	Percentage of recommendations in public reports on investigations accepted by the public institution and/or agency	80%	80%	80%	80%
	2	2, 3, 4	2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 4.1, 4.3		Percentage of recommendations in human rights reports accepted by the State and relevant state agencies (and other actors/ organizations)	75%	75%	75%	75%
	1, 2	3, 4	3.1, 4.4		Number of detention inspections and spot-checks conducted annually	Annual count	Analysis against 2021–22	Analysis against 2022–23	Analysis against 2023–24

	1, 2	2, 3, 4	2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 4.1, 4.4		Percentage of recommendations in detention inspection reports accepted relevant agencies	65%	65%	65%	65%
	2, 3	4	4.3		Number of reports submitted to human rights mechanisms by the State and civil society	Annual count	Analysis against 2021–22	Analysis against 2022–23	Analysis against 2023–24
	1, 2	4	4.2		Number of legislative and policy interventions made to national committees	Annual count	Analysis against 2021–22	Analysis against 2022–23	Analysis against 2023–24
6	1, 2, 3	2, 3, 4, 5	2.1, 2.2., 3.1, 4.1, 4.3, 5.1, 5.2	Public institutions and agencies, civil society, and community	Percentage of outputs delivered e.g. awareness and trainings for public institutions, civil society, schools and community	75%	75%	75%	75%
7	1, 2, 3	3		Parliament	Number of reports published	Annual count	Analysis against 2021–22	Analysis against 2022–23	Analysis against 2023–24
	1, 2, 3	4	4.2		Number of submissions made to, and appearances before, parliamentary committee processes	Annual count	Analysis against 2021–22	Analysis against 2022–23	Analysis against 2023–24
	1, 2, 3	2, 3, 4			Percentage of reports delivered within statutory timeframes	100%	100%	100%	100%
8	1, 2,	3, 4	3.2, 4.3	Partners	Number of submissions made to, and appearances before, international mechanisms processes	Annual count	Analysis against 2021–22	Analysis against 2022–23	Analysis against 2023–24
	1, 2, 3	3	3.2		Number of projects where regional and international partners are engaged	Annual count	Analysis against 2021–22	Analysis against 2022–23	Analysis against 2023–24
	1, 2, 3	3	3.2		Number of projects where local partners (government, court, and civil society) are engaged	Annual count	Analysis against 2021–22	Analysis against 2022–23	Analysis against 2023–24
	2	3, 5	3.2, 5.1, 5.2		Number of Advisory Council meetings and/or Tribunals	Annual count	Analysis against 2021–22	Analysis against 2022–23	Analysis against 2023–24
	1, 2, 3	3	3.2		Percentage of satisfaction survey responses from partners demonstrating a rating of ‘satisfied’ (or better) with the quality of our work	65%	Analysis against 2021–22 results	Analysis against 2022–23 results	Analysis against 2023–24 results

Environment

Our role, as an independent oversight agency for good governance and human rights compliance is to ensure the integrity in governance and respect for human rights in Samoa – through timely investigations, effective policy interventions, and impactful education and awareness.

Our jurisdiction gives us the authority to oversee public institutions including prescribed disciplinary forces in relation to promoting good governance in administrative decisions. More broadly, as the National Human Rights Institution of Samoa we monitor compliance of the State and Government with its international human rights obligations. This also extends to acts of non-state actors including private sector agencies.

Our work is both at the policy and operational level – engaging with government, the public, civil society and the media to ensure the realization of fundamental human rights and compliance with good governance principles. Our work also involves cooperation and partnerships with international bodies and agencies to share experiences and best practices relating to human rights work, investigations and good governance.

Our governing law provides the power to require the production of information or documents, to examine witnesses, including under oath or affirmation, and the power to enter premises for the purposes of our functions. However, in practice cooperation from public institutions is preferred without the need to exercise such formal powers.

Strengthening partnership and cooperation with our stakeholders is key in producing meaningful and sound results that deliver impact. Partnership building and strengthening is an area

we aim to prioritize to ensure we effectively carry out our mandate.

From addressing individual complaints on maladministration including the misuse of authority by prescribed disciplinary forces, to engaging with government on policy issues relating to human rights, the Office is tasked to ensure the effective promotion and protection of human rights as well as build transparent, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

Factors within our control

Management of additional or expanding functions

As an independent institution we have flexibility in setting out our priorities and utilize our resources to deliver systemic improvement in public administration and human rights compliance.

Future projection – Informed by recent development and events, we project that in the next four to six years, the Office will be taking on further complementary activities with appropriate resources. For example, National Preventative Mechanism under OPCAT, appeal authority under freedom of information law currently in development, and grievance mechanism for privacy breaches under the National Identification law soon to be finalized, and involvement in set up of National Fraud Office currently in consultations. Any additional or expanded functions are a policy decision for government.

Service to the public

The Office continues to adopt a service and people-focused approach to ensure that every

person that engages with us feels highly satisfied with our services. We are focused on providing outcomes for individuals and the broader community that are of high quality and timely and we are committed to providing regular, easy to understand information to the general public. We strive for continuous improvement in our services.

In addition to face-to-face service delivery we also aim to further maximize this through information technology.

Future projection – We will consider the results of internal reviews combined with the results of annual feedback surveys from our stakeholders, to identify further opportunities to improve the services we provide.

Stakeholder engagement

Through our outreach and education awareness programmes and trainings, the Office works towards improving complaints handling processes in public institutions including disciplinary forces we oversee, improve compliance of all state institutions with human rights obligations and standards, as well as improved human rights culture consistent with Fa’asamoa among all stakeholders – government and the public alike.

In 2020 following a capacity assessment 2018, the Office established the Engagement and Communications Unit to ensure effective coordination and coherency in programme delivery and stakeholder engagement.

Future projection – through the ‘One-Ombudsman’ approach and guided by our Stakeholder Consultation & Engagement Policy and Communications Strategy we look to engage and build the capability of the public institutions including disciplinary forces we oversee on good governance best practices and human rights mainstreaming, as well as knowledge of the

public on our function thereby increasing confidence in the integrity of our processes.

Diversity and inclusion

The Office values diversity and inclusion and recognizes its importance to staff and our work. We will continue to promote diversity and inclusion both internally and externally.

Factors outside our control

Decision-making by public institutions including disciplinary forces we oversee

While we seek to influence public institutions including disciplinary forces we oversee, their decision-making is outside of our control. This is an important factor that contributes to the complaints and investigations that we conduct and initiate.

Therefore, the Office will endeavor to ensure improved partnerships with public institutions including disciplinary forces we oversee to ensure that we maintain our influence.

COVID-19

COVID-19 presented a major challenge that was beyond our control. Internally, the complexities of the COVID-19 has and will continue have a profound impact on both our capacity and ability to deliver our services and programme. To ensure that we still execute our mandate effectively, we aim to lift productivity, be smart in our use of resources, demonstrate value for money and continue to find innovative ways of delivering our mandate and services.

Future projection – we anticipate that the factors outside our control will continue to persist over the reporting period. We will continue to monitor and develop appropriate and necessary responses to such issues.

Risk oversight & management

We foresee that we will come across various risks that are inherent in our functions. Some of these risks types include: **external** – public, public institutions including disciplinary forces, civil society groups and parliament; and **internal** – human and financial resources, and ICT.

Our risk oversight and management will be guided by our risk management strategy, policy and procedures.

We will continue to assess and manage risks at various levels including project, structural and strategic. These will be recorded, reviewed and reported in our risk register. All risks will continue to be reviewed at least on a quarterly basis.

Future projection – the Office anticipates our external and internal risk types will remain current over the four year reporting period.

Capability

To deliver on our goals and outcomes, the Office continues to focus on enhancing two organizational capabilities – our people and ICT.

People

Achieving and delivering our functions is dependent on having a highly committed, respected, and professional team that constantly delivers well above expectations. Our continued success is reliant on attracting and developing a highly skilled workforce that remains adaptive, dynamic and engaged.

Leadership

Strong and effective leadership is critical to overall performance of the Office. We encourage exercising of leadership and are committed at building leaders at every level to create and drive our work programmes. We will continue to focus on developing leadership skills of staff to ensure effective succession and strong leadership foundations exist across the Office. Our senior executive and staff at all levels will work together to achieve the targets set out in this plan.

Workforce planning

Ensuring that a workforce is adequately equipped with the skills and expertise to effectively execute our mandate is crucial. We undertake annual reviews of staff performance through performance appraisals to identify their needs for continuous professional development. Our soon to be finalized Human Resource Manual will help identify entitlements and promote a flexible working environment for staff.

Learning and development

We nurture staff aptitude at all levels and are committed in building employee capabilities and create career opportunities for staff. We will continue to facilitate opportunities for staff learning and development with the assistance of our local and international partners. Our soon to be finalized Human resource Manual will include a strategy for Staff Capacity Development which will set out avenues for staff development.

Diversity and inclusion

Valuing diversity and inclusion are integral to our goals and ensuring our staffing profile is reflective of our values and principles of fairness and equality.

Our measure of success is an inclusive workplace where all staff feel valued and able to contribute to the best of their ability.

ICT

COVID-19 highlighted the importance of flexible working and the ability to work remotely for accommodating complaints as well as raising awareness. It is therefore crucial that we are able to store information about complaints

securely, as well as efficiently disseminate information on awareness.

We recently engaged an opportunity to assist with the effective management of data with the hope to building a centralized database to manage our information including digitization of our records. We will continue to seek opportunities through technology to better facilitate our data management.

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