

# The Samoa Umbrella for Non-Governmental Organisations Inc.

## - SUNGO -

**National President:**  
Lavea Peseta Lua Nafoi

**National Treasurer:**  
Taule'ale'ausumai F Toni T

**National Secretary:**  
Mataafa Faatino Utumapu

**Chief Executive Officer**  
Fuimaono Vaitolo Ofoia

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14<sup>th</sup> November 2023

## PRESS RELEASE

### Successful Launch of Historic Meeting on Civil Society and Youth Engagement in OACPS-EU Partnership Agreement

*Taumeasina Island Resort, Moata'a, APIA* – The eagerly anticipated meeting on Civil Society and Youth Engagement in the OACPS-EU Partnership Agreement kicked off with a short prayer and a warm welcome from SUNGO President, Lavea Lua Nafoi. The event, graced by the presence of Her Excellency Jutta Urpilainen, the European Commissioner, saw significant enthusiasm and engagement from approximately 60 participants, both in-person and online.

In her address, Her Excellency Jutta Urpilainen emphasized the critical need for a robust mechanism to promote youth engagement in dialogues and discussions addressing cross-cutting issues at the National, Regional, and international levels. Her remarks underscored the commitment to ensuring that the voices of the youth are not only heard but actively shape the discourse on matters of global significance.

Participants, comprising representatives from civil society, youth groups, and various sectors, engaged in robust discussions highlighting the tangible effects and implications of the Samoa Agreement on their respective domains. These insights serve as a crucial foundation for shaping the collaborative and inclusive implementation of the Agreement.

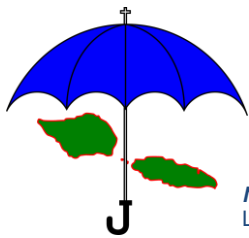
#### **Key points raised during the discussions included:**

**Inclusive Decision-Making:** Participants underscored the importance of inclusive decision-making processes, emphasizing the need for mechanisms that ensure the active involvement of diverse stakeholders. This inclusivity, they argued, is vital for the Agreement's success and its ability to address the unique challenges faced by different groups.

**Youth Empowerment:** Youth representatives expressed their aspirations for increased opportunities and empowerment within the framework of the Partnership Agreement. They highlighted the importance of creating platforms for youth to actively contribute to policy discussions and implementation strategies.

**Community Impact:** Civil society organizations shared insights on the potential impact of the Agreement at the community level. They stressed the need for localized approaches to implementation, considering the unique needs and contexts of different communities.

**Resource Allocation:** Stakeholders sought clarification on the allocation of resources, expressing interest in understanding how funds would be distributed among different regions and sectors.



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The transparency and equity of resource allocation were identified as critical factors influencing the success and fairness of the Agreement.

**Access to Funding for Youth Initiatives:** Given the emphasis on youth engagement, participants were keen to know about the specific provisions and mechanisms in place for youth-led initiatives to access funding. Questions revolved around the criteria, application processes, and support available for youth-driven projects.

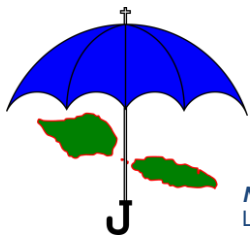
In closing, SUNGO CEO Fuimaono Ofoia expressed gratitude towards all participants, speakers, and organizers for their invaluable contributions to this historic event. The collaborative effort demonstrated the commitment to creating an inclusive platform for dialogue. He particularly acknowledged Siale, Executive Director of PIANGO and Vani (Moderator) for their outstanding support throughout the meeting.

Fuimaono encouraged all participants to carry forward the spirit of collaboration and inclusivity that defined the meeting. He highlighted the significance of diverse perspectives and strengths in ensuring the success of the Partnership Agreement. He remarked, "The success of the Partnership Agreement hinges on our ability to harness the diverse strengths and perspectives of our stakeholders. Together, we can ensure that this agreement becomes a beacon of progress, leaving no one behind."

The event not only set the stage for meaningful discussions on youth engagement but also marked a milestone in the ongoing efforts towards inclusive governance and decision-making. As the meeting concluded, participants left with a shared commitment to foster collaboration and inclusivity in the implementation of the OACPS-EU Partnership Agreement.

## End of Release





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