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Aoga Fiamalamalama's special upgrade unveiled



Smiles from students of Aoga Fiamalamalama. (Photo: Vaitogi A. Matafeo)

The finished results of a project designed to totally overhaul the Aoga Fiamalamalama school's learning environment was unveiled on Friday.

A small ceremony was held at the school's compound at Alafua to mark the occasion. Attendees include the Minister of Education Sports and Culture, Seuula Ioane, German Consul to Samoa, Tagaloa Christa Szegedi, and Associate Minister Works Transport and Infrastructure, Niuava Eti Malolo.

The German Embassy in Wellington has funded a partnership project with Aoga Fiamalamalama School titled: "Improving and maintaining hygiene in the midst of COVID-19."



Minister of Education Sports and Culture, Seuula Ioane. (Photo: Vaitogi A. Matafeo)

The Embassy contributed just over \$14,600 worth of floor tiles, toilets and sinks for hand washing for the school's hall. Other equipment donated was a new washing machine and four new laptops for the school.

Minister of Education, Seuula said that this new venture is in line with our Government's goals of equal access in order to achieve quality education for all the children of Samoa.

"Also reflecting the vision of the Aoga Fiamalamalama school: inclusive, equity, and good quality life [for] all people with disability," he said.

Principal of Aoga Fiamalamalama, Sharon Suhren acknowledged the German Consul, Tagaloa and the German Government for this fund.

Ms. Suhren said that the school's COVID-19 prevention programme has benefited from the refurbishment done.

"The school hall which is a common space used for assemblies, physiotherapy, physical activities and end of year school functions was in dire need of some improvement," she said.



Minister of Education Sports and Culture, Seuula Ioane, German Consul to Samoa, Tagaloo Christa Szegedi, and Associate Minister Works Transport and Infrastructure, Niuava Eti Malolo. (Photo: Vaitogi A. Matafeo)

She said that the project has enabled the school to do some of the things that needed doing for the betterment of the school.

“The floors which were just plain concrete that we had to repaint over and over again and not easy to keep clean, now we have tiles which are a lot easier to clean and upkeep.

“The children love it and it’s a much nicer space for them to use during therapy.



Principal of Aoga Fiamalamalama, Sharon Suhren. (Photo: Vaitogi A. Matafeo)

“We were able to get basic stuff like mops, a bucket and some good steady brooms to help with the cleaning of the hall. Our two toilets and the shower though we could still use it, needed revamping.”

The School principal added that they have a lot of washing because sometimes the students do sports and outdoor activities like gardening and we end up with washing sometimes the children have an accident.

“It was great to be able to get a washing machine with the funding because it saves precious time needed for the students and it’s less work and more hygienic for the staff.



Some of the guests at the school hall launch. (Photo: Vaitogi A. Matafeo)

The four laptops we were able to get will be appreciated by the staff because it will make research on COVID-19 and anything to do with health so much easier. It will also help with the school's programme in the long run.”

Tagaloa extended greetings from the German Ambassador to Samoa, Stefan Krawielicki and also acknowledged Wera Hack from the German Embassy for her support towards this partnership project.

“The purpose of this partnership was to refurbish and upgrade the school hall which is used by the children, teachers, volunteers and caregivers.



Associate Minister Works Transport and Infrastructure, Niuava Eti Malolo among guests. (Photo: Vaitogi A. Matafeo)

“The Embassy contributed towards the building materials needed for the project while the school contributed the labour.

“The ultimate aim was to provide a cleaner and improved learning environment for the students and teachers.”

The German consul to Samoa added that they have successfully completed eight different projects especially in the area of education.

“I strongly believe in finding ways and providing resources to improve the standard of education for the children in Samoa.

“At the same it is vital that opportunities also be afforded to children with disabilities. This is one of the reasons why I am very happy that we were able to form this partnership with the school.”

She also expressed her admiration for the School Principal, Ms. Suhren, teachers and the school committee.

“I have had several opportunities to visit the school and see the great work that is done for the children," she said.

“The passion that everyone here at the school has for providing the best education possible is amazing; another thing that I find wonderful is always seeing the smiles and happiness of the school children.

“COVID-19 has shown that we all must work together to overcome its challenges. With this in mind, it is my hope that the partnership we have in place with the school can be used as an example for greater cooperation between Germany and Samoa.

“While our two countries have already shared an important history together, going forward there is still more work that needs to be done in the area of cooperation.”

She stressed that, at the end of the day, this partnership is for the students, "any work or assistance that is provided, we need to always remember that it must be in the best interest of the students."

“I can say with utmost confidence that what we have created today will be of great benefit for the school in the years to come.

“I also look forward to continuing working together with Aoga Fiamalamalama in finding ways to help and provide assistance in the years to come.”



By Adel Fruean, 11/09/2021