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PRESS RELEASE

State Chuuk Office of Public Auditor's performance assessed

Weno, Chuuk (30 September 2019) - The Public Audit Office of the State of Chuuk in the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) was accorded an assessment by a review team from the Pacific Supreme Audit Institution (PASAI) to measure their performance against international standards.

Referred to as the SAI Performance Measurement Framework (PMF), the assessment is an opportunity for the Public Audit Office to review its core functions, legal framework, internal governance that will be able to allow the Audit Office to confidentially communicate with its internal and external stakeholders.

This is the final SAI PMF assessment for this round of evaluation in the PASAI region which was implemented as part of the activities of the *Strengthening Public Finance Management and Governance in the Pacific Project* funded by the European Union (EU) and implemented by the United Nations Development Programme Pacific Office in Fiji. PASAI is a responsible party to the project and delivers the Supreme Audit Institution (SAI) component and contributes to the strengthening of the budget oversight capacities of PAC from the perspectives of SAIs.

The assessment included interviews with the Public Auditor, Mr Manny San Jose Jr and a series of evidence-based enquiries and documentary reviews throughout the two-week assessment process.

Mr San Jose, who has been in office for just over 18 months said, "I'm looking forward to the report from this assessment to set an objective platform for me to work on in improving the Office's performance."

He added, "As a SAI with a small number of staff who, at present, is able to complete only a limited number of audits each year, I am most hopeful that the results of the SAI PMF will help us progress as a team and an office."

Mr San Jose Jr says that he is particularly keen to learn how to demonstrate to all our stakeholders, including Chuuk's citizens, that the Public Auditor plays a valuable role in strong governance and the close inspection of public expenditure.

As manager of the SAI PMF initiative across the whole PASAI region, PASAI's Director of Practice Development Sinaroseta Palamo-Iosefo said, 'Every SAI presents its own unique set of circumstances and challenges, and it is our role as assessors to ensure that the SAI PMF assessment generates the most helpful and pertinent feedback for the SAI.'

"We are very grateful to the Chuuk Public Auditor and his team for their openness and responsiveness to the whole SAI PMF process," she added, "and trust that this will impact positively on the SAI's performance into the future.'

The Chuuk SAI PMF review team comprised of Sina Palamo-Iosefo and the Audit Manager from FSM State Pohnpei Office of the Public Auditor, Alice Etse. They presented a summary of key findings from the assessment and provided an overview of the framework to all staff for their understanding about the relevance of the assessment to their individual role within the Office.

PASAI extends its gratitude to EU and UNDP for their support through the ‘Strengthening PFM’ project, and to development partners MFAT and DFAT for their ongoing support and contributions to PASAI’s core funding.

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Background: The ‘Strengthening of Public Finance Management and Governance in the Pacific Project’ aims to strengthen oversight over public financial management in the Pacific region through improving the budgetary scrutiny, public financial oversight and accountability capacities of parliaments, supreme audit institutions and civil society within the region, aligning with international public financial oversight and accountability standards, and fostering citizen engagement and oversight. The Project is funded by the European Union (EU) and implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in partnership with the Pacific Association of Supreme Audit Institutions (PASAI).

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Front row (l-r): Manny San Jose Jr and Troy Chiwi

(back row l-r) Alice Etse, Gina Lokopwe, Sina Palamo-Iosefo

