

## OUTCOMES SUMMARY

# All Abilities Abroad Project

## ABOUT

The All Abilities Abroad (AAA) project provided a platform for four Lifetime Support Scheme (LSS) participants to mitigate the negative impact on self-esteem and self-reliance from an acquired brain injury (ABI) and disability by travelling to Tonga to share their skills and knowledge across capacity gap areas identified by a Tongan partner, Naunau 'o e 'Alamaite Tonga Association Inc (NATA).

AAA was delivered by Scope Global for LSA.

## ACTIVITIES

The LSS participants spent 25 days in Nuku'alofa, Tonga exchanging skills, stories and experiences with NATA staff and members, and with people with and without disability in the local community. The participants completed a four day training program before mobilising, as well as in-country orientation when they arrived in Tonga. Training components included risk, safety and health protocols, community development, storytelling and cross-cultural considerations. The project finished with a series of workshops that were designed and delivered by the LSS participants and aligned to identified capacity gaps of NATA and the local community.

## PROJECT TEAM

|                               |  |
|-------------------------------|--|
| <b>Project Manager</b>        | Alex Kay                                     |
| <b>Team Leader</b>            | Ben Clare                                    |
| <b>In-Country Manager</b>     | Emma Somyden-Davey                           |
| <b>In-Country Coordinator</b> | Mateaki Tuipulotu                            |
| <b>Local partner</b>          | Naunau 'o e 'Alamaite Tonga Association Inc  |
| <b>Other partners</b>         | Globe Medical, ABC International Development |

## OUTCOMES

Three key factors influenced the project's peer-to-peer model: the **relationships developed**, the **cross-cultural insights** and the **individual growth** of the LSS participants. The project evaluation demonstrated the following key project outcomes:

- All LSS participants **gained confidence** through the experience
- The most valuable and meaningful aspects for the LSS participants were the **relationships they established with local partners** which enabled skills and story exchange to occur
- The LSS participants found **positivity and inspiration** relating to the Tongan participants, and also within their own team
- Exposure and engagement to new cultural settings and circumstances in Tonga was a catalyst for **self-reflection** for the LSS participants
- Limited technical skills were transferred to NATA staff, but the relationships developed became a driving force for other valuable outcomes and **soft skill development** such as patience, active listening, public speaking, adaptability, teamwork and open mindedness – soft skills that are considered very important for employability
- The NATA staff, members and Tongan participants had their **perspectives on disability altered** and they gained new awareness and understanding of 'invisible disability' from the LSS participants
- The workshops facilitated further storytelling, which was highly valued by all participants and **united the advocacy efforts** of Tongan Disabled People's Organisations.

## LESSONS LEARNT

- Guidance and leadership from the Team Leader and In-Country Manager contributed significantly to the project outcomes and with working through project challenges
- Further collaboration is required to co-design the project framework with people with ABIs/LSA
- Increased consultation is required with in-country partners to reduce risk of project falling into 'voluntourism' category
- Increased staff resourcing to manage the project, including a wellbeing/social work staff member for the implementation phase.