

Press release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Samoa Strengthens National Health Security with Launch of New High-Temperature Incinerator at Tafaigata**

**APIA, Samoa – 23 July 2025** – The Government of Samoa, in partnership with UNOPS and with funding from the World Bank, has officially launched a new high-temperature medical waste incinerator at Tafaigata, Upolu. The launch, held on Tuesday, 22 July 2025, marks a significant milestone in enhancing the nation's healthcare system resilience, improving environmental safety, and strengthening public health infrastructure.

The new facility is a key component of the “Design of Public Health Laboratory and Procurement and Installation of Incinerators” project, implemented by UNOPS. It will enable the safe and efficient disposal of hazardous medical waste, including sharps, pathological waste, and contaminated materials, significantly reducing the risk of infection and environmental pollution.

The high-level launch event was officiated by Prime Minister Honourable Fiame Naomi Mataaafa. She was joined by the Minister for Health, the Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries, and senior officials from the Ministry of Health to mark the important occasion. In her keynote address, the Prime Minister emphasized the long-term value of the investment.

"This facility will benefit our people in the long run, not just in terms of waste management, but also in how we deliver safer and more responsive healthcare across the country," said Prime Minister Fiame Naomi Mataaafa. "We thank the World Bank for their funding support and UNOPS for their steadfast partnership in making this happen."

The project is part of the broader Samoa COVID-19 Emergency Response and Health Preparedness Program. UNOPS managed the procurement, delivery, and installation of the state-of-the-art incinerator, while the Ministry of Health (MOH) contracted All Electrical Company to construct the secure housing for the facility.

"UNOPS is proud to partner with the Government of Samoa and the World Bank to deliver this essential infrastructure," said UNOPS Project Manager Shekhar Kumar Shrestha. "This incinerator is a tangible result of our shared commitment to building a more resilient and sustainable future for the people of Samoa, ensuring that health services can be delivered safely and effectively for years to come."



*Group photo with Prime Minister, Minister of Health, World Bank Representative, MOH staff, UNOPS, and UNICEF Representative*

The overall project, which began in February 2024 and is scheduled for completion in August 2025, also includes the construction of a Biosafety Level 2 (BSL-2) Public Health Laboratory, a new Clinical Diagnostic Laboratory, and the installation of a second incinerator in Vaiaata, Savaii. These combined efforts will revolutionize Samoa's diagnostic capabilities and healthcare waste management capacity.

The commissioning of the Tafaigata incinerator is more than an infrastructure upgrade; it represents a foundational step towards a healthier and more secure future for all Samoans. This successful collaboration serves as a powerful example of partnership in action, delivering sustainable solutions that will benefit communities for generations to come.

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Notes to the editors:

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