



AUSTRALIAN NGO COOPERATION PROGRAM - MONITORING, EVALUATION AND LEARNING FRAMEWORK

INTRODUCTION

The May 2012 Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Framework (MELF) for the Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP) was developed following consultation with Australian NGOs and the then AusAID over a five-month period during September 2011 to February 2012.

The MELF has been primarily designed as a tool to ensure satisfactory and consistent monitoring and reporting by Australian NGOs funded under ANCP. The MELF does not replace the more complex monitoring and evaluation systems of the Australian NGOs or their in-country partners. Rather the framework draws from those systems to present a summary of information primarily for the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) purposes of accountability, learning, communication and overall improvement of the ANCP.

BACKGROUND

Established in 1974, the Australian NGO Cooperation Program¹ is DFAT's longest running NGO program providing grants for DFAT accredited Australian NGOs to undertake international development programs. In 2015–16 ANCP provided 53 accredited Australian NGOs with annual funding to deliver over 500 projects in 58 countries.

ANCP is a distinct program of engagement between DFAT and Australian NGOs that is designed to supplement the NGOs' own activities as articulated in the ANCP Program Logic². The ANCP Goal contributes to the purpose of the aid program which is to promote Australia's national interests by contributing to sustainable economic growth and poverty reduction.³

The new goal statement for the ANCP is:

Through support to accredited Australian NGOs, improve the living standards and well-being of individuals and communities in developing countries.⁴

To realise the ANCP goal, there are three inter-related outcomes that ensure NGOs are positioned to deliver on the overarching goal:

- Outcome 1: Effective and value for money programming.
- Outcome 2: A diversity of ANGOs draw on funding and expertise from a range of sources.
- Outcome 3: Effective engagement with in-country partners.

Based on these outcomes, the program includes a diverse range of projects operating across many sectors in more than 50 countries across the world. Sectors include health, education, water and sanitation,

¹ For details about ANCP see <http://dfat.gov.au/aid/who-we-work-with/ngos/ancp/Pages/australian-ngo-cooperation-program.aspx>

² <http://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/Pages/ancp-program-logic.aspx>

³ <http://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/Pages/australian-aid-promoting-prosperity-reducing-poverty-enhancing-stability.aspx>

⁴ The reference in the goal to accredited Australian NGOs recognises that although funding is channelled through ANGOs, these organisations work with local NGOs, local government agencies, private sector agencies and social movements in developing countries. It is the intent of the program to benefit and strengthen the developing country partners of ANGOs to maximise their comparative advantage to reduce poverty.



governance and economic development. Funds are also used for design, monitoring and evaluation (DME) and administration of the program. The number of projects and range of sectors and countries varies from year to year due to the annual project cycle of this program.

In recognition of the importance of ANCP, a framework – the MELF – for monitoring, evaluation and learning of the program was developed and is outlined in this document. The MELF provides the evidence base to demonstrate that ANCP is an effective use of funds for delivering on the Australian aid program's purpose. Data from the MELF will also contribute to higher level Aggregate Development Results demonstrating how ANCP achieves results in poverty reduction.

FRAMEWORK PURPOSE AND APPROACH

The MELF was developed consultatively, drawing upon previous experience in assessment and reporting of Australian aid program funded NGO projects and programs. It serves multiple purposes for DFAT and NGOs and keeps formal reporting streamlined and efficient. The MELF is therefore guided by several principles, it will:

- establish common monitoring and evaluation processes for ANCP agencies, including indicators and data sets to capture results, whilst also recognising existing NGO monitoring, evaluation and learning systems, and utilising information available through these systems.
- utilise the existing quality control and aid effectiveness mechanisms (that is DFAT accreditation and ACFID Code of Conduct) to which Australian NGOs are already subject, avoiding duplication of these existing processes.
- streamline the formal reporting requirements for both NGOs and DFAT in order to increase development effectiveness through policy and program engagement.
- balance the multiple purposes with particular attention to accountability and learning to stakeholders and beneficiaries, in line with good quality monitoring and evaluation practice.
- recognise the diversity of Australian NGOs through this broad system of monitoring, evaluation and learning which can accommodate and value that diversity.

The MELF has several objectives, including:

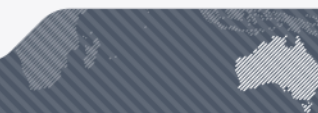
1. To provide accountability of DFAT funding to Australian NGOs in line with the objectives of ANCP.
2. To provide information about overall program performance of ANCP programs highlighting areas for improvement and further development;
3. To provide information about the range and scope of ANCP funded work;
4. To provide information about high-level outcomes achieved through the funding provided under ANCP, including reporting against the performance framework for the Australian aid program⁵;
5. To provide an opportunity to share learning about development effectiveness for both DFAT and Australian NGOs.

In order to meet these objectives the MELF will utilise a range of data collection mechanisms. As far as possible these will rely upon information drawn from existing NGO systems and procedures (e.g. information already compiled for accreditation) and in performance reports. Sometimes additional information may be sought.

EXISTING ANGO QUALITY ASSURANCE MECHANISMS

DFAT recognises the need for Australian aid to be targeted in many ways, including directly to poor communities and to civil society partners and organisations. ANCP is an efficient way to maximise impact by

⁵ <http://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/Pages/making-performance-count-enhancing-the-accountability-and-effectiveness-of-australian-aid.aspx>



funding professional Australian NGOs who have existing and long-term programs and relationships with communities and civil society partners in developing countries.

Australian NGOs funded through ANCP are subject to strict eligibility and quality control processes. These existing processes minimise risk and maximise the development effectiveness of ANCP.

DFAT Accreditation for Australian NGOs

In order to receive funding under ANCP, Australian NGOs are required to be accredited by DFAT⁶. The accreditation process is a rigorous assessment of NGO systems and management, undertaken every five years. Its specific intention is to provide assurance to the Australian Government and public that when DFAT funds these NGOs it is funding professional, well-managed, community-based organisations capable of delivering good development outcomes.

Accreditation acts as a front-end risk management process and ensures the accountable use of funding with minimal activity overview by DFAT. As a risk management strategy, accreditation covers the NGO's entire program as reflected in its recognised development expenditure (RDE)⁷ and is not limited to Australian aid program funded activities.

Accreditation specifically examines the monitoring and evaluation systems of NGOs and ensures that these systems are adequate for the purposes of accountability and program management.

Australian Council for International Development Code of Conduct

In addition to accreditation, Australian NGOs funded through ANCP are also signatories to the ACFID Code of Conduct⁸. The Code aims to enhance standards of operation throughout the Australian NGO community. It is a voluntary, self-regulatory industry code, focused upon the financial and accountability systems of NGOs. In addition the revised Code has been expanded to establish far-reaching standards for development effectiveness.

Taken together, the DFAT accreditation for Australian NGOs and the ACFID Code of Conduct self-assessment provide rigorous quality control of NGO systems and a strong indication of the development effectiveness of the NGO work. This is an important component of DFAT's risk management process for funding the work of these Australian NGOs.

This background is an important starting point for the MELF and is a critical precondition of the approach taken by the MELF. As a result of these two processes, DFAT already has detailed assurance that NGOs funded under ANCP have good quality monitoring and evaluation systems in place which are collecting and reporting against outcome data. DFAT can also be assured that the systems and processes operating within the NGOs are working towards increased development effectiveness. Rather than needing to collect detailed performance information DFAT is thus able to streamline performance reporting and complement that summary of information with more in-depth information in selected areas.

⁶ For full details about accreditation see <http://dfat.gov.au/aid/who-we-work-with/ngos/ancp/Pages/accreditation.aspx>

⁷ <http://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/Pages/recognised-development-expenditure-worksheet-explanatory-notes.aspx>

⁸ For full details see <https://acfid.asn.au/code-of-conduct>



DATA COLLECTION PROCESSES

NGO Annual Development Plans

Annually in June, each ANCP NGO submits an annual development plan (ADPlan) that provides a summary of the work that will be funded through ANCP for the next twelve months. It includes financial budgeting of the funds to be expended, outlines targets and milestones aiming to be achieved, and provides a narrative report on the NGO's ANCP program.

This plan provides accountability assurances to DFAT of how ANCP funds will be spent and also provides a baseline to measure progress against following implementation. DFAT posts have the opportunity to provide comments on ANCP ADPlans which also allows for context specific information to be incorporated into ANCP projects. NGOs identify whether evaluations will be conducted for each project in these reports.

NGO Performance Reports

Annually in September, each ANCP NGO submits a performance report that provides a summary of the work funded through ANCP for the previous twelve months. It includes a financial acquittal of the funds expended for that period as well as a narrative report on the NGO's ANCP program and its performance, including its contribution to longer term development outcomes.

This report serves a number of purposes, including accountability of ANCP funds; a summary of NGOs' progress, including achievements and outcomes; and information about challenges. It provides qualitative and quantitative information about the contribution being made by Australian NGOs under ANCP to the broader targets and benchmarks.

This report provides DFAT with the opportunity to synthesise and, in some cases, aggregate information about ANCP projects and programs in any given year, across the various sectors, themes and locations of operation. It enables Australian NGOs to present a summary of achievements to DFAT in one format and enables both DFAT and Australian NGOs to demonstrate the combined outcomes of ANCP on an annual basis to key stakeholders.

For the purpose of this report Australian NGOs are not expected to develop new monitoring systems but rather to adapt the information that is available through their current systems and the reporting from their partners. It is not expected that the report template would substitute the complex processes of negotiating and developing with communities and in-country partners appropriate indicators and monitoring approaches. Rather, the information from the report template draws from those existing systems into a simple format which enables the aggregation discussed above. As the liaison between partners and communities, Australian NGOs are in the best position to interpret the data that is made available and communicated to DFAT through the performance reporting template.

Aggregate Development Results

Aggregate Development Results (ADRs) are indicators of development impact that can be aggregated across the aid program to demonstrate the contribution of Australian aid to development outcomes in partner countries. As noted in the ANCP Manual⁹, ADRs are collected in addition to the unique indicators developed for ANCP, and are a way for DFAT to capture quantitative information about the contribution ANCP NGOs are making to DFAT's strategic goals. This quantitative information complements (and is not a substitute for) the qualitative information provided by NGOs on their projects and programs in annual reporting.

⁹ <http://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/Pages/australian-ngo-cooperation-program-manual.aspx>



Calculations of ADRs must be evidence based, clearly attributable to DFAT funding using a pro-rata approach, gender and disability disaggregated where reporting numbers of persons, and reported consistently year-on-year without gaps, overlaps or double counting. When ADRs and ANCP indicators are modified, they will be updated in the ANCP online reporting system, which also contains technical notes to assist with calculating beneficiary data.

NGO Evaluations

Evaluation is defined quite broadly within DFAT but differs from monitoring in particular because it serves to examine the worth or value of a particular project or program approach rather than simply measure its progress against objectives. ANCP demonstrates commitment to evaluation through the requirement for all accredited NGOs to undertake evaluation of projects and programs and by allowing up to 10% of funds to be allocated to design, monitoring and evaluation (DME) of ANCP activities.

For the purpose of the MELF, the intention of evaluations is to regularly capture the more in-depth and detailed assessments undertaken by NGOs to complement the summary data presented in the performance report. Australian NGOs are required to undertake evaluation of projects or programs funded under ANCP at least once every three years. Where projects or programs run for a shorter time the evaluation should be undertaken at the completion of the activity. Where the project or program runs beyond three years, further evaluation should be undertaken on a regular basis.

It is recognised that evaluations will be commensurate with the scope and financial commitment of the particular activity and may be undertaken through other agency assessment programs such as reviews, thematic evaluations, and so on. That is, given the maximum of 10% to be spent on DME for any particular project, the evaluation costs will not exceed the funding available under this arrangement. The evaluation should examine the project or program in light of its original intention. For example, it would be more likely to have participatory evaluations for many NGO projects/programs or evaluations that draw from partner and other stakeholder experience.

Beyond this, evaluations can draw from a range of approaches and methodologies. They can be conducted internally or externally as appropriate. They can be undertaken formatively or summatively. These are considerations for the NGO to decide. The details of the methodologies and approaches to these evaluations will not be required in advance.

Each NGO will be required to outline their planned/scheduled evaluations on an annual basis. While evaluations are based upon existing NGO processes, they will require NGOs to plan in advance their program of review and inquiry as far as possible in order to ensure that ANCP projects are reviewed on a regular basis.

The MELF requires that evaluations are documented in some form (this may be a creative process as appropriate for the particular project/program) and made available to DFAT. Such documentation may be a summary of findings and learning and may be different to internal or partner or community focused reporting. This documentation will be available publically as required under the DFAT commitment to transparency and all reporting should be prepared with this in mind.

This range of evaluative reports will provide insight into the way in which individual NGOs are assessing their strategies and approaches, learning from their experience and demonstrating change and development of their approach. Evaluations funded through ANCP provide an opportunity for NGOs to share learning and outcome information with DFAT, other NGOs and other interested stakeholders.

ANALYSIS OF DATA

The analysis of the data collected through the systems described above will be undertaken according to purpose, i.e. data will be extracted and utilised for the following reasons:



1. To present a summary of financial accountability as required under DFAT systems of ANCP funds.
2. To present a summary of the range and spread of ANCP projects and the people who benefit from those projects as required under *Making Performance Count: enhancing the accountability and effectiveness of Australian aid*¹⁰, including for Aid Quality Checks, Partner Performance Assessments and the Annual Aid Performance Report for the ANCP.
3. To contribute to the annual sector report on civil society engagement and annual results framework required under DFAT systems¹¹.
4. To provide opportunity for cross learning between NGOs and DFAT, in particular about how to undertake effective development work with civil society.
5. To respond to ad hoc requests from within DFAT, by other parts of the Australian Government and from other sources for current information about ANCP funding, such as location, sector, funding amount, project type and length, and examples of NGO achievements.

Information from consolidated performance reports, meta-evaluations and thematic reviews will be provided to ANCP funded Australian NGOs both individually and through the ACFID executive committee. The same information would also be provided to relevant sections of DFAT for further analysis, in particular the Office of Development Effectiveness, country programs, and relevant sectoral areas.

Where NGOs have additional significant information or experience from ANCP funded work which they want to share with DFAT, the Department welcomes this additional information and utilise it as far as possible within the consolidation analysis and reporting processes.

Meta-Evaluations of NGO Evaluations

To make the most effective use of the range of evaluation material, a meta-evaluation of completed NGO ANCP evaluations for the past two years will be undertaken on a biennial basis. The focus of this meta-evaluation will be to examine and report on lessons learned and overall quality and range of outcomes for ANCP. It is also expected to provide ongoing comment and insight into the strategy of ANCP itself. At a minimum, the outcomes of the meta-evaluation will serve as a basis for discussion between DFAT and Australian NGOs about the direction and management of ANCP, as well as point to opportunities for learning and communicate new insights. Annex A provides a detailed Terms of Reference for the meta-evaluation.

Other sections of DFAT may be interested in reviewing particular NGO projects for their own specific purposes. Where possible, the meta-evaluation will be utilised to align with these other evaluative or review processes to streamline the demands upon Australian NGOs and maximise the opportunity for harmonisation across DFAT. The timetable for the meta-evaluation will be negotiated in advance to ensure adequate DFAT resources are available for the task.

Thematic Reviews

ANCP covers a diverse range of projects operating in many sectors with important learning outcomes. While meta-evaluation of existing evaluation reports will contribute considerable overall learning, focusing upon a particular theme or sector of NGO work allows for more detailed and in-depth examination of that work.

The assessment process under ANCP offers the opportunity to identify and share some of this learning. This serves the MELF objective of demonstrating outcomes as well as facilitating learning. To facilitate this

¹⁰ Making Performance Count was published in November 2014 and is available on the DFAT website: <http://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/Pages/making-performance-count-enhancing-the-accountability-and-effectiveness-of-australian-aid.aspx>

¹¹ This is where information about broader DFAT performance with civil society and NGOs will be reported. It will provide the balance of accountability from DFAT and assessment of the agency quality in managing and working with NGOs and civil society.



learning, every two years a thematic review will be undertaken of ANCP funded projects. Combined with facilitated discussion and reporting, the purpose of these reviews will be to develop a more in-depth exploration of development effectiveness issues between DFAT and Australian NGOs.

The focus of the biennial thematic review (undertaken on the alternate year to the meta-evaluation) will be determined by DFAT in consultation with Australian NGOs. At a minimum the ANCP funded work of ten Australian NGOs will be explored in each thematic review. Annex B provides the methodological approach.

DFAT Monitoring and Engagement Visits

As part of managing ANCP, DFAT will conduct monitoring visits to test the application of the MELF, obtain data for corporate reporting and ensure compliance with DFAT policies. These visits and the data gathered will contribute to the continuous improvement of ANCP and civil society more broadly. DFAT will share monitoring visit reports for each project visited including recommendations to strengthen programming and provide space for NGO comment. Annex C provides the draft Terms of Reference and reporting templates.

DFAT EVALUATION GUIDELINES

DFAT guidelines for standards and requirements of evaluation are available on the DFAT website¹². The primary purpose of *evaluation under the MELF* is for learning and for common analysis and exploration of outcomes across ANCP agencies. For this reason, evaluation reports will be utilised mainly as part of a synthesis of information, primarily during the biennial meta-evaluation.

DAC Criteria

DFAT require all evaluations to give attention to the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) criteria for quality evaluations. That is to consider the project/program relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability¹³. For interventions with a significant humanitarian component, these criteria are varied slightly: relevance/appropriateness, connectedness, coverage, efficiency, effectiveness, and impact¹⁴.

MELF REVIEW

A review of the approach, principles and reporting mechanisms, including the indicators and other sections of the template, was undertaken at the end of 2012. The Office of Development Effectiveness (ODE) Evaluation of ANCP¹⁵ recognised that the MELF enhances the effectiveness of NGOs' work, leading to continuous improvement, some shared learning and improved reporting from local partners. ODE recommended building on the MELF to strengthen the role of qualitative, quantitative and geographic data in generating evidence for learning, policy and program improvement. The recommendations will be implemented in 2016-17. Further reviews of the MELF will be undertaken with ANCP NGOs as required.

¹² <http://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/Pages/dfat-monitoring-and-evaluation-standards.aspx>

¹³ For more information on these terms: http://www.oecd.org/document/22/0,2340,en_2649_34435_2086550_1_1_1_1,00.html

¹⁴ http://www.alnap.org/pool/files/eha_2006.pdf

¹⁵ <http://dfat.gov.au/aid/how-we-measure-performance/ode/odepublications/Pages/evaluation-of-the-australian-ngo-cooperation-program.aspx>



ANNEX A – META-EVALUATION

Definition

A meta-evaluation is broadly defined as a review or assessment of a range of evaluations with a view to either aggregating information from several individual evaluations, often along themes to highlight learning that may apply to other projects. Alternatively, it can be used as a tool to assess the quality of evaluations and range of evaluation approaches. Meta-evaluation can be valuable in developing new approaches to evaluation, building evaluation capacities and enhancing organisational learning.

Purpose

The MELF proposes a meta-evaluation of ANCP funded evaluations every second year. The primary purpose of the meta-evaluation will be to bring together information about outcomes (both expected and unexpected), evaluation approaches and about challenges arising from ANCP funded work. It will provide the detailed information that will assist DFAT and NGOs to explore the nature and shape of ANCP as a whole and make decisions about how to extend and improve the program. The meta-evaluation may also draw on other NGO evaluations where these are relevant to the theme. In this way it will serve to provide learning about development effectiveness for DFAT and NGOs.

Scope

The meta-evaluation scope will be determined by the available NGO evaluative reports. The analysis of the meta-evaluation will include attention to the ANCP objectives and the Australian aid program's priorities. In addition, it is expected that the meta-evaluation for any year will as far as possible serve multiple ends, matching interest from other areas of DFAT (in order to avoid duplication of processes) or taking into account other major aid and development milestones and events.

Management and Resourcing

The meta-evaluation will be managed by DFAT with a reference group made up of ANCP NGOs. This group will remain broad and representative of the ANCP. The meta-evaluation's intention is to promote learning and understanding of outcomes for all NGOs, not just those contributing evaluation reports that year.

The reference group and DFAT will be responsible for developing a specific Terms of Reference (TOR) for the meta-evaluation, giving attention to assessment against ANCP objectives and the Australian aid program strategic goals as well as any additional focus areas for the evaluation for that year. Specific reporting requirements, including learning events to emerge from the evaluation should also be specified in the TOR.

Analysis and Dissemination

Following reports and any associated learning events and document exploration, DFAT and ANCP NGOs will utilise the formal systems of the Committee for Development Cooperation (CDC)¹⁶ to explore any implications for ANCP funding, management and focus. This should provide a regular opportunity to contribute to improved effectiveness and increased outcomes for ANCP work.

¹⁶ Terms of reference for the CDC can be found at <http://dfat.gov.au/aid/who-we-work-with/ngos/cdc/Pages/committee-for-development-cooperation.aspx>



ANNEX B – BIENNIAL ANCP THEMATIC REVIEW

Background

As a collaborative learning exercise with the NGO sector, DFAT will undertake a Biennial Thematic Review of the Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP). It is proposed that each alternate year a thematic issue of contemporary mutual interest to the sector and to DFAT will be identified for exploration through this review process. This biennial exercise will contribute to development sector learning and practice and to DFAT's new approach to understanding the performance and achievements of the ANCP.

Purpose

The purpose of the Biennial ANCP Thematic Review process is to inform and improve development practice based on the experiences of NGOs and their ANCP activities and DFAT's experiences in managing ANCP.

Principles and Approach

The review will elicit lessons learnt from practice. The review will inform DFAT's understanding of the general performance of the ANCP with regard to the review theme, but it will not rate the performance or quality of individual NGOs or their ANCP activities. It is not a performance evaluation.

The methodology is based upon principles of shared learning and collaboration between DFAT and NGOs (including ACFID and its Development Practice Committee (DPC)). The formation of an NGO Reference Group is a critical element of the approach for these reviews. It is anticipated that DFAT, ACFID/DPC and participating NGOs will actively participate and engage throughout the process. This active collaboration will be an important contribution to the analysis of evidence throughout the review, to optimise shared learning and improve practice.

Theme and Analytical Framework

It is proposed that a theme of mutual development interest to DFAT and the NGO sector be chosen in consultation with ACFID/DPC for the Biennial ANCP Thematic Review.

Selection Process

A purposive sampling process will be employed.

It is anticipated that a minimum of 10 NGOs will be involved, offering 1-3 ANCP projects each (depending on scale and other factors). The selection will ensure that an appropriate mix of project type (including length of implementation, sector, and scale); geographic spread (including fragile states) and cross-cutting issues (such as gender, disability, and environment) are represented.

All NGOs will be able to participate in the reflection and learning process which follows the in-depth research of a smaller number of agencies.



Methods of Inquiry

The Thematic Review of the ANCP will be conducted over a number of stages which aim to affirm the collaborative approach described above. Not all of the steps will occur sequentially and the precise timing for the review will be agreed during the discussions on the methodology during stage 1.

Stage 1: Initial Consultations

Consultations take place between DFAT, ACFID and the DPC about the biennial theme, the review timing and the methodology.

Stage 2: Literature Review

The literature review will broadly scan current literature and related practice from other international donors, Australian and international NGOs and development agencies in order to contextualise the review. Further literature reviews may be undertaken to specifically seek more detailed or additional information from other sources to test, verify or counter the review findings.

Stage 3: Selection of participating NGOs and ANCP projects

As outlined above, accredited Australian NGOs will be invited to participate in the review as part of a Reference Group and to recommend ANCP projects for in-depth review. Once the final selection of the projects is made, DFAT and the participating NGOs will be asked to provide documentation for the subsequent stages of the review. This will be subject to the TOR and timelines which will have to be negotiated for each review at the beginning of the process.

The participating NGOs will remain engaged with the review at various stages as outlined below.

Stage 4: In-Depth Review of ANCP Projects

This stage of the review might involve all or some of the following:

4.1 *ANCP Desk Assessment*

This will involve a review of a range of ANCP related reports and documents relating to each ANCP project. This information will be provided by both the NGOs and DFAT and could include:

- Current and previous project documentation.
- Current and previous evaluation reports.
- Annual Development Plan (ADPlan) reports.
- Any internal reports or other information that NGOs wish to offer (not necessarily restricted to project documentation).
- Consultation with NGO and DFAT staff if required to clarify documents.

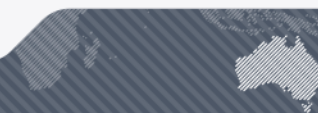
4.2 *Semi-Structured Interviews*

In-depth, semi-structured interviews will be conducted with the NGO program managers (and other staff if appropriate) responsible for the projects being reviewed. These interviews will use an 'appreciative inquiry approach' to explore success and challenges and links with broader organisational values, policies and strategies, addressing issues within the analytical framework identified above. Interviews may also be conducted with DFAT staff. This process may be further complemented by a joint workshop of the Reference Group to discuss and test preliminary findings and learning.

4.3 *Field based inquiry*

Subject to approval by DFAT and at an agreed time¹⁷, it is proposed that field visits may also take place. The key purpose of field visits is to ensure that the views of partners and communities are included in the overall analysis and that they also benefit from shared learning opportunities. This will typically involve in-country

¹⁷ The in-country component of the review process requires further consideration with DFAT and may be undertaken at a later stage utilising in-country expertise.



workshops and/or discussion groups with partner NGOs, CBOs and communities, visits to partner offices and participating communities. Semi-structured interviews and focus groups may also be conducted with NGO partner staff, CBOs, community members and other stakeholders.

It is expected, however, that fieldwork would likely include a mix of Australian and locally engaged consultants and a DFAT representative, and could extend to peers from NGOs/local NGOs and CBOs.

Participating NGOs will be closely consulted and involved in shaping this stage of the review.

Stage 5: Shared Learning Event/s

The details of this stage will be determined in consultation with DFAT and the NGOs as the review progresses. The primary objective of the shared learning event/s is to present and discuss findings of the review, including presenting the in-depth case studies to NGOs, their partner where possible, DFAT staff, other stakeholders and development actors as appropriate. The shared learning event will provide an opportunity to discuss, reflect, contest and validate within the broader context of the NGO sector.

It is expected that the NGOs in the Reference Group who contributed to the case studies would take an active role in this event either in Australia or overseas.

Validity

Ensuring validity is important in any qualitative study, and particularly so when attempting to make general statements based on the in-depth analysis of a small number of case studies. The rigour and validity for this review will be provided in a number of ways:

- The review, while a collaboration between DFAT and NGOs, will be led and conducted by independent consultants.
- Findings will be triangulated and cross-checked by accessing multiple sources of data—project documents, thematic reports, DFAT information on ANCP, Australian NGO and implementing partner information, interviews, literature and practice of other development organisations.
- In-depth case studies exploring development, organisational and management issues (and the links between them).
- Progressive analysis and cross-checking involving key stakeholders.
- Feedback to key stakeholders via a shared learning event to validate preliminary findings and collect further data.

Analysis and Reporting

The key findings of the analysis will be made available to the broader NGO community throughout the review for comment and reflection. Where feasible, preliminary findings will be provided to stakeholders as appropriate throughout the review process.

The specific details of the analysis and reporting will be determined as the review progresses.

A final report will be prepared after the shared learning event and presented to DFAT and to ACFID/DPC at a date to be agreed. It is also proposed that case studies developed during the review be more broadly disseminated and utilised for reporting, learning and communications purposes.



ANNEX C - DFAT MONITORING AND ENGAGEMENT VISITS

Draft Terms of Reference (ToR) ANCP Monitoring and Engagement Visit to Country X, month, 2016

DFAT staff participating in the monitoring and engagement visit	XX, NGO Programs Section
ANCP NGO and in-country partners	XX Australian NGO XX Local NGO
Country and dates in-country	Country X, X-X month 20XX

Purpose

1. The purpose of these monitoring and engagement visits is to obtain information to inform increased performance of the Australian Non-Government Organisation Cooperation Program (ANCP) and DFAT's wider engagement with civil society. The field visits will provide an opportunity to conduct field testing of the application of the ANCP Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Framework (MELF), obtain data for corporate reporting, ensure compliance with DFAT policies, and progress recommendations from the ANCP ODE evaluation and the ANCP Gender Thematic Review, specifically in relation to engagement with Post.
2. The ANCP monitoring and engagement visits will focus on [XX] separate ANGOS' projects in [country]: NGO A, NGO B, NGO C and NGO D. This will enable DFAT to collect information through project visits in the areas of x, y and z.

Rationale for the visit

3. These ANCP visits provide the opportunity to monitor and engage with NGOs and implementing partners. We will also examine compliance of ANCP funded NGOs with DFAT policies such as Child Protection, fraud and branding and provide a mechanism for dialogue with Australian NGOs and continuous improvement of ANCP projects.
4. In [FYXX-YY], the ANCP is delivered in [country] through [#] Australian NGOs implementing [#] projects (new and ongoing) with approximately \$XXXX in direct ANCP funding. Projects focus on these sector areas: Disability, Maternal and Child Health, Eye Health, Disaster Risk Reduction, Child Protection, Food Security, Rural Development, Water and Sanitation and Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (for example).

Key Objectives

5. The key objectives for this monitoring and engagement field visit are to:
 - a. strengthen the effectiveness and efficiency of ANCP projects by providing useful, strategic and well informed feedback to implementing partners (using both quantitative and qualitative data and analysis)
 - b. strengthen the ANCP MELF through lessons learnt during its application in-country



- c. ensure ANCP projects align with the overall purpose of Australia's aid program and complement bilateral country program policies and Aid Investment Plans
- d. increase the awareness of the ANCP with DFAT Posts, in-country NGOs (including in-country implementing partners), in line with recommendations from the ODE evaluation of ANCP
- e. capture key results and case studies for the purpose of DFAT corporate reporting (e.g. Aid Quality Checks, Annual Program Performance Reports and Partner Performance Assessments) and communication material
- f. share lessons between NGOs and DFAT through: the selected visits, the roundtable at Post for all ANCP NGOs implementing projects in [country], subsequent visit reports within 2 weeks of returning.

Example Draft Itinerary

Day/Date	AM	PM
Sunday X, Month	Arrive in country	
Monday X, Month	Meetings with Post/Security briefing	Travel to field/NGO A Project visit
Tuesday X, Month	NGO B Project visit	Report writing
Wednesday X, Month	NGO C Project visit	
Thursday X, Month	NGO D Project visit	Report writing
Friday X, Month	Debrief with Post	Roundtable
Saturday X, Month	Report writing	Return Australia



ANCP NGO MONITORING VISIT REPORT

COUNTRY, DATES (E.G. 10-15 SEPTEMBER 2015)

The purpose of this report is to provide DFAT with an overview of your monitoring and engagement visit in ANCP projects, with the Australian NGO and their implementing partner. The NGO will also have the opportunity to provide a comment in the final text box.

Partner	(NGO Name)
Project Name	(Draw from ANCP Online)
In-country partner	(Draw from ANCP Online)
Date Visited	
Attendees	E.g. DFAT Post E.g. NGO Country program manager

Summary

E.g. Provide a summary of the projects visited and who you met with (2-3 sentences)

Recommendations

E.g. Provide key recommendations for strengthening program delivery specific to this NGO. This can include encouraging ongoing practices that you saw during the visit

Results and Impact

E.g. Project is relevant to the need or context (consider complement or fit with bilateral program)

Project is results focused and deliverables are high quality and meet the objectives

Sound M&E systems are in place, including quantitative and qualitative evidence

Measures are in place to ensure sustainability of project outcomes

Value for Money

E.g. Project does not duplicate other work and adapts lessons learnt

Project appears to use cost effective options or thinks strategically about how it spends project funds

Collaboration, communication and responsiveness

E.g. Australian NGO communicates effectively with project stakeholders (including partner governments, other donors, private sector and in-country partner), works collaboratively, builds effective relationships and consults with DFAT on key developments and emerging issues

Australian NGO demonstrates appropriate flexibility and responsiveness to DFAT requests (including willingness to have DFAT visit) and addresses problems/issues openly and constructively when raised



Policy alignment, risk management and innovation

E.g. Partner takes appropriate account of DFAT policies including:

Gender equality, disability, child protection and environmental and resettlement safeguards

Has effective systems for identifying and managing risk, fraud and corruption

Is following branding guidelines and promotes visibility of Australian Government funded aid investments

Implements innovative development approaches and/or leverages new partnerships/sources of finance

Effective partner personnel

E.g. The in-country partner has staff with appropriate skills and experience to manage projects effectively

The in-country team has enough direction and support from the Australian NGO

Staffing issues managed effectively

NGO comment

This box provides the NGO the ability to respond to the recommendations in terms of how they will action them and note any specific context issues related to the report.

Please note: NGOs should be provided the chance to correct errors of fact before finalising the report.

