

Mid-term evaluation of Australia Awards in Africa: Evaluation Report

Final Report

22 February 2019

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Abbreviations

DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (Australia)
GESI	Gender equality and social inclusion
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MEF	Monitoring and Evaluation Framework
PWD	People with disabilities
TVET	Technical and vocational education and training
WILN	Women in leadership network

Executive Summary

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) commissioned the Australia Awards in Africa mid-term evaluation (the evaluation) to review the design and operations of Australia Awards in Africa to ensure it remains a well targeted, fit-for-purpose investment for the remainder of this current phase.

Overall conclusions

The evaluation finds Australia Awards in Africa is being effectively delivered and is on-track to meet its end-of-program outcomes. The managing contractor, Palladium, has developed strong relationships with stakeholders and strives to demonstrate flexibility and responsiveness in meeting DFAT's expectations of program delivery.

Australia Awards in Africa is proving to be a valuable mechanism for Australia to build goodwill and contribute to skills development in African countries. There are vibrant, active and dynamic alumni across the African continent who are contributing to the success of Australia Awards in Africa.

The evaluation heard from coordinating authorities and alumni alike that the merit-based, gender equality and disability-inclusive ethos of Australia Awards in Africa resonates strongly with them and distinguishes Australia Awards in Africa from other scholarship programs in their countries. Australia's appreciation of, and commitment to, alumni was also noted.

Posts expressed differing experiences of efficient and effective delivery of Australia Awards in Africa. The delivery of Australia Awards in some of their countries of accreditation is working well, while for others it is challenging. Variances in experiences across the countries may be due in some part to different operating contexts and resource levels at Post. There are also different levels of understanding and experience of Post staff with the scholarship modality of aid delivery. Four of the posts consulted expressed a need for greater support from DFAT's Africa Branch and Palladium in order to efficiently and effectively fulfil their roles. Increased coordination between Africa Branch and Posts and improved understanding of roles and responsibilities may assist the consistency of Posts' experiences in supporting the delivery of Australia Awards in Africa.

Significant learning is being generated through feasibility studies and pilots, including on private sector engagement. It is important for Africa Branch to document, and disseminate, reasons behind deciding to progress, or not, with any feasibility study or pilot. This is valuable information for the next design phase. With the current phase of Australia Awards in Africa scheduled for completion in March 2020, an efficient use of Palladium resources may be to consolidate implementation and monitoring of existing successful elements of the program, rather than establish new pilots or new areas of thematic research.

The Australia Awards in Africa design preceded the Australia Awards Global Strategy (which is currently under evaluation) and Australia's Global Alumni Engagement Strategy. Palladium and DFAT Canberra have demonstrated an ability to adapt the implementation of the Australia Awards in Africa design to fit the current strategic and practical realities of Australia's aid program in Africa. It is timely to update the program logic (namely Outcome 2) to bring it in line with the relevant global strategies and enable DFAT and Palladium to better measure Australia Awards in Africa outcomes.

It is also timely to consider the investment design process and timing for Australia Awards in Africa post-completion of the current design in 2020. Several considerations relevant to the design process emerged during the evaluation consultations. To allow sufficient time¹ for the necessary design process and procurement arrangements to be completed prior to the end of this current phase of Australia Awards in Africa, it is suggested that DFAT and Palladium utilise the option period end date included in the contract term to extend the current contract arrangements to 31 March 2022.

Findings

- › The evaluation finds that Australia Awards in Africa is on track to meet its end of program outcomes. There is evidence of alumni using skills, knowledge and networks to contribute to sustainable development (Outcome 1). The evaluation heard emerging evidence of African countries viewing Australia as a valued partner (Outcome 2), with stronger evidence from DFAT staff of the high strategic value of Australia Awards to Australia's relationships with countries across the African continent. Evidence of Alumni having positive on-going links with Australia (Outcome 3) is more variable with low ongoing linkages with Australia and Australians met while studying in Australia.
- › The expected results from Australia Awards in Africa are likely to be achieved or exceeded – except for the participation of people with disabilities which remains low compared to Australia Awards in Africa's informal target.
- › The mix of Australia Awards modalities is serving DFAT and target countries well. Small differences in participating countries' preferences for Australia Awards scholarships or short courses are noted, though these are not of a magnitude that would warrant a change in the composition of the modalities on offer under Australia Awards in Africa. The postdoctoral fellowship pilot is showing benefits for fellows and African Universities. Discussion about inclusion of postdoctoral fellowships as a permanent modality for the next design of Australia Awards in Africa is warranted.
- › There is evidence that alumni engagement activities undertaken by Palladium are assisting DFAT to meet its alumni engagement objectives. DFAT posts are responsible for taking the lead in alumni engagement and are getting some good results. The evaluation heard tangible, consistent examples of the public diplomacy benefits for Australia from engaging with alumni, as well as sporadic economic diplomacy benefits.
- › Posts and coordinating authorities alike noted that the annual country profile process is a useful mechanism to discuss priority sectors for Australia Awards scholarships and short courses with each of the participating countries. Stakeholders put forward suggestions for additional sectors; though they noted the current sectors are also meeting skills needs.
- › Australia Awards in Africa has tried various approaches to engage with the private sector, some of which have successfully seen private sector engagement in the delivery of short courses. There is however, a lack of clarity on both the strategic and functional intent of engaging with the private sector beyond seeking their assistance with promotions and participation in short course delivery.
- › Improved internal DFAT coordination and information-sharing, as well as improved coordination and information-sharing between DFAT and Palladium would further enhance the effectiveness of Australia Awards in Africa.

¹ Depending on the desired design and contractual processes, it may require up to two years to complete a robust design process, procure a managing contractor and mobilise an implementation team.

- › The key elements of the scope of services are well covered, with Palladium meeting key deadlines around planning, selection, mobilisation, reintegration and alumni engagement (including the small grants scheme).
- › Overall financial management of Australia Awards in Africa is solid, and expenditure is tracking well at this mid-point in the contract. Palladium has demonstrated flexibility to assist DFAT's budget management across financial years and responsiveness to meet DFAT's expectations of program delivery.
- › Palladium has efficiently delivered a higher number of awards under Australia Awards in Africa in a timely manner with restricted human and financial resources. One key area for improving efficiency is clarifying roles and responsibilities across Posts and Palladium, particularly in relation to promotions, including the development of promotions materials.
- › Palladium is providing the necessary planning and reporting documents to inform decision-making and meet DFAT's accountability obligations. The evaluation notes DFAT and Palladium are working constructively to improve the clarity and quality of reporting to meet DFAT's information needs.
- › Australia Awards in Africa is undertaking an impressive variety of M&E activities which are generating quantitative and qualitative data sets. Approaching data analysis and reporting on a multi-year basis would add depth to the current M&E arrangements by building a body of evidence of impact over the life of the program.
- › While DFAT is the primary audience for Palladium's program reports, there is benefit in DFAT and Palladium considering how to package information and distribute reports to ensure that information needs/interests of a larger group of stakeholders (for example, short course providers, alumni and coordinating authorities) are being met. This would add to the accountability of Australia Awards in Africa.
- › For the most part Palladium's engagement with Posts is highly valued, with many noting the support provided by Palladium alleviates the administrative burden of tasks such as managing selections processes and alumni small grants.
- › The evaluation heard that different Posts want different levels of engagement with, and support from, Palladium on various aspects of the program. The largest variances across Posts expectations relate to communications and public diplomacy support required from Palladium, and the level of detail and notice required for activities scheduled in the annual work plan.
- › Meeting these varied expectations requires strong planning processes, coordinated communication between Desk, Post and Palladium, and clear decision-making accountabilities.
- › DFAT's Africa Branch and Palladium have demonstrated an ability to adapt the implementation of the design to fit the current strategic and practical realities of Australia's aid program in Africa. It is timely to update Outcome 2 to bring it in line with the relevant global strategies and allow both DFAT and Palladium to better measure the outcomes.
- › The mix of Australia Awards scholarships and short courses appears sound for developing a cadre of alumni that fit with the intentions of the Foreign Policy White Paper.
- › It is timely to consider the investment design process for Australia Awards in Africa post-completion of the current design in 2020.
- › An on-going challenge for Australia Awards in Africa is to increase the number of applications from eligible female candidates and people with disabilities. While a continued focus on increasing the number of applications is warranted, it is noted that separate consideration of applications from women and men at the selection and interview stages is pivotal to achieving gender balance in Australia Awards in Africa. Participation of people with disabilities is variable from year to year.

- › DFAT and Palladium are actively engaging to mitigate negative impacts from structural barriers beyond the control of Australia Awards in Africa that affect the participation of women, PWD and sufferers of chronic illness.
- › Palladium's GESI strategy includes considerations of gender equality and disability-inclusion. Broadening the concept of social inclusion to address geographic barriers to women, men and PWD participating in Australia Awards in Africa is warranted.

Recommendations

Strategic

1. DFAT to use the option in the Scope of Services Agreement with the managing contractor to extend the end date of the contract by two years, from 31 March 2020 to 31 March 2022.
2. Africa Branch lead a strategic discussion about the outcomes of the postdoctoral fellowship pilot at the September 2019 Program Management Group meeting to inform the design of the next phase of Australia Awards in Africa.
3. Africa Branch to clarify the strategic and functional intent of private sector engagement and development to inform the design of the next phase of Australia Award in Africa.

Operational

4. Palladium and Posts use the annual work plan process to further strengthen alignment of alumni engagement activities delivered by Palladium with: (i) the Australia Awards in Africa Alumni Engagement Strategy; and, (ii) Posts economic and public diplomacy strategies.
5. Africa Branch increase its coordination of information sharing between relevant sections in Canberra, Palladium and Posts to (i) ensure policy and operational decisions are communicated to all stakeholders; and (ii) create regular opportunities for shared learning.
6. Africa Branch, Posts and Palladium management team to review the current documented roles and responsibilities, discuss any changed expectations and revise the document accordingly.
7. Africa Branch consider stakeholder suggestions for improvements as summarised in Appendix H and discuss with Palladium.

Monitoring, evaluation and communications

8. DFAT and Palladium consider the suggested modifications to the MEF and progress reports included at Appendix I.
9. DFAT and Palladium agree on distribution plans for each of the key reporting and evaluation products.
10. DFAT and Palladium use the annual planning process to clarify: timing and content of specific communications products to be developed for each Post (in conjunction with the promotions plans); level of assistance required for each Post to maintain any alumni contact register; and, other issues as raised by Post with the Africa Branch.
11. Amend the Outcome 2 wording to read 'Alumni view Australia, Australians and Australian expertise positively'.
12. Palladium adjust how it reports on disability-inclusion to give a clearer indication of the participation of PWD in Australia Awards in Africa.

1 Introduction

Chapter 1 (Introduction) provides background information on Australia Awards in Africa and the context in which it operates. Chapter 2 (Methodology) details the key evaluation questions and approach which guided the evaluation. Chapter 3 (Findings) examines each key evaluation question in turn providing an assessment, findings and proposing recommendations. Chapter 4 (Conclusions) contains concluding remarks. Chapter 5 (Recommendations) summarises the recommendations presented throughout Chapter 3.

1.1 Australia Awards in Africa

Australia Awards in Africa is a four-year (2016-2020) investment of over \$100 million which contributes to African leadership and human capacity development in areas of critical skills shortages specifically extractives, agriculture and public policy (objective one of Australia's Sub-Saharan Africa Aid Investment Plan).

Australia Awards in Africa's end of program outcomes are:

- › alumni are using their skills, knowledge and networks to contribute to sustainable development.
- › targeted countries in Africa view Australia as a valued partner.
- › alumni have positive ongoing links with Australia.

Australia Awards in Africa comprises Australia Awards scholarships (at master's level), short course awards, Australia Awards fellowships² and a pilot program of postdoctoral fellowships. Based on current funding for financial year 2018-19, DFAT expects to offer up to 450 awards across Sub-Saharan Africa including, 155 master's, 260 short courses and 10 postdoctoral fellowships. DFAT aims to offer 50 per cent of awards to women.

Geographic focus:

- › Applications for masters' scholarships and short courses are accepted from 11 African countries: Botswana, Ghana, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania and Zambia.
- › Applications for short courses are accepted from another 10 countries: Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Namibia, Rwanda, Senegal, Somalia, South Sudan, Uganda, and Zimbabwe.
- › Applicants from Ethiopia, Rwanda, Somalia and South Sudan are eligible for courses offered wholly in Africa.
- › Applications from other African countries may be considered on the recommendation of Heads of Mission at Australia's diplomatic missions on the African continent.

² Australia Award Fellowships are currently on hold, pending the outcome of a global review. The Scholarships and Alumni Branch have previously funded up to 90 Australia Award Fellowships per year in Sub-Saharan Africa.

A restructure within DFAT in late 2018 resulted in Africa Branch acquiring responsibilities for two Australian diplomatic missions in North African (Cairo and Rabat) each with countries of accreditation that may be considered for Australia Awards in a future phase of the program.

The managing contractor, Palladium, is responsible for managing promotion, selection, mobilisation, monitoring, evaluation, alumni engagement and reporting required under Australia Awards in Africa for an initial four years (from 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2020).³ An option to extend the Agreement for up to two years is available pending the findings of this evaluation. Palladium has staff located across three offices in Pretoria (South Africa), Nairobi (Kenya) and Brisbane (Australia).

Australia Awards in Africa is a regional program with the financial delegations managed by DFAT's Africa Branch in Canberra. The governance arrangements include: a biannual Program Management Group meeting with Palladium senior managers, the Assistant Secretary Africa Branch, the Director, Pan Africa and Effectiveness section, and the Australia Awards in Africa Program Manager; an annual planning meeting with Palladium, Africa Branch and representation from Australia's seven diplomatic missions in Africa (herein referred to as Posts); and monthly meetings between Palladium and Africa Branch.

1.1.1 Australian Government Policy Context

Policy issues driving change across scholarships investments include the whole-of-government Foreign Policy White Paper and a DFAT-wide commitment to more consistent scholarships policy implementation. Key elements of the Foreign Policy White Paper pertinent to Australia Awards in Africa include leveraging the soft power potential of Australia's higher education system to build people-to-people links in Sub-Saharan Africa to broaden Australia's global influence, promoting private sector engagement and supporting Australian commercial interests.

The Soft Power, Communications and Scholarships Division has and is developing several global awards policies including the Australia Awards Linkages Framework, Private Sector Engagement, Short Course Governance Framework, the Awards Selection Policy, the Reintegration Framework, the Australia Global Alumni Engagement Strategy and the Australia Global Alumni Engagement Monitoring and Evaluation Framework. Where available, the evaluation report draws on these documents.

The design document for Australia Awards in Africa was developed prior to the development of all the above-mentioned global Awards policies and frameworks. As such, Australia Awards in Africa has had to be flexible and responsive to ensure its implementation, and strategic focus, is consistent with the global Australia Awards directions set in Canberra.

³ Some alumni engagement activities and monitoring and evaluation activities (such as surveys) include pre-2016 alumni. Palladium reporting also includes information and data, where appropriate, prior to 2016.

2 Methodology

2.1 Purpose

The evaluation is an opportunity to review the design and operations of Australia Awards in Africa to ensure it remains a well-targeted, fit-for-purpose investment for the remainder of this current phase. The evaluation considers progress against objectives, assesses the performance of the managing contractor, reviews the design and implementation approach to ensure strategic focus, efficiency of implementation and continuing alignment with foreign policy and program objectives.

2.1.1 Audience

The evaluation has a broad intended audience, ranging from senior decision makers within DFAT, to implementers of Australia Awards in Africa in Australia and across the African continent. The evaluation will be used to inform DFAT's considerations to either extend the current contract for a further two years (2020-2022) with minor changes to the scope of services or to design a new five-year phase of Australia Awards in Africa (1 April 2020 to 31 March 2025).

2.2 Evaluation questions

2.2.1 Effectiveness of the program

- › To what extent are the three Australia Awards in Africa outcomes being achieved or are likely to be achieved?
 - » Is the program targeting the highest priority countries and sectors?
 - » Is the program engaging with Australia Awards in Africa scholars and alumni to maximise program outcomes around public diplomacy and people-to-people links?
 - » Is the balance of award types⁴ optimal?
 - » To what extent are private sector engagement objectives being achieved?
 - » What are the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the outputs and/or outcomes?

2.2.2 Efficiency of program implementation

- › Is the managing contractor delivering efficiently on all aspects of the scope of services, including timelines and budget?
- › Are the managing contractor's program reports of good quality, providing fit-for-purpose program data and information that is well targeted to DFAT's accountability and program decision-making requirements?

⁴ Master's, short course and postdoctoral pilot. Fellowships were previously available (delivered through DFAT's Scholarships and Alumni Branch) but are currently on hold pending the outcome of a review.

- › Is the managing contractor’s engagement with Africa posts done in such a way as to minimise administrative burden and maximise public and economic diplomacy opportunities? Are there options to streamline processes?

2.2.3 Relevance and alignment with new policy and aid priorities

- › Is the Australia Awards in Africa design and MEF fit-for-purpose and targeting the right outcomes and modalities to best support achievement of the Foreign Policy White Paper priorities?
 - » Does the current approach to private sector engagement have clear realistic objectives?

2.2.4 Gender equality and social inclusion (GESI)

Assessment of the steps taken by Australia Awards in Africa to identify and reduce barriers to inclusion, and whether they have been successful.

2.3 Approach

The evaluation used a mixed methods methodology, with qualitative data collected during consultations supplemented with quantitative data from existing sources (scholar and alumni data provided by Palladium, Australia Awards tracer studies, Australia Awards in Africa outcomes study reports).

The evaluation process followed included: evaluation planning with DFAT in Canberra and Posts, culminating in an evaluation plan; a literature and data review; data collection, including in-country consultations in South Africa, Ghana and Kenya; analysis of qualitative data collected during consultations, and quantitative data from existing sources; testing out recommendations (via the aide memoire) with DFAT and Palladium to add a level of contestability to any proposed changes going forward; and reporting writing. Appendix A further details the evaluation approach and process. A list of stakeholders consulted is at Appendix B.

2.4 Limitations

Not all interviews were conducted confidentially with the independent evaluator.⁵ The non-confidential nature of the discussions however did not appear to unduly influence stakeholders’ responses which appeared frank and constructive. Some consideration to the non-confidential nature of these conversations has been taken into account in the data collection phase, with the evaluator seeking additional evidence to verify positive claims.

Over the course of the evaluation, it became apparent there were differing views across DFAT regarding the utility and value-for-money of undertaking this evaluation. The evaluator has tried to focus the evaluation process and report on capturing divergent views and sharing information that can be of use to a variety of audiences.

Whilst not a limitation per se, it is important to note the data reported in this document differs from that reported in the literature and data review.⁶

⁵ DFAT officers were present at interviews conducted with some (not all) government representatives from African countries, Australian Government representatives and two of the alumni roundtable.

⁶ The literature and data review used an Excel spreadsheet from the July 2018 six-monthly progress report. Palladium subsequently provided the evaluator with a database of scholar information as at 11 November 2018.

3 Findings

3.1 Effectiveness

3.1.1 To what extent are the three Australia Awards in Africa outcomes being achieved or are likely to be achieved?

Australia Awards in Africa is performing well against its intended outcomes, as evidenced by:

- › **Alumni using skills, knowledge and networks to contribute to sustainable development** (Outcome 1) in the following ways:
 - » The vast majority of alumni who responded to the survey for the 2017 and 2018 outcomes studies reported making some kind of development contribution, with nearly all attributing that contribution to a great or certain extent to skills acquired during their award.⁷
 - » Most of these development contributions are occurring at the organisational level in alumni's workplaces, with nearly two thirds relating to changes to workplace practices (that is, operational approaches or techniques used in the workplace).⁸ The 2017 and 2018 outcomes studies note recent returnees (12-18 months) are most likely to contribute through skills transfer; alumni are passing on award acquired skills and knowledge on return to work and are supported in their workplace to do so. However, policy contributions take longer to emerge, with those returnees in the 24-30 months cohort most likely to make policy contributions. The outcomes studies rightly conclude the type of development contribution alumni make is not static and will change over time.
 - » The 2017 outcomes study notes practice contributions are from all fields of study, although some sectors, for example agriculture and health, are more likely to result in more immediate development contributions through skills transfer. Policy contributions are most likely to be made by alumni working in education and or areas related to public policy.
 - » Although the outcomes studies show high percentages⁹ of alumni reporting that they are using awards-acquired knowledge and skills to promote gender equality and social inclusion, it is noted many examples provided relate to what alumni say they will do or hope to change rather than what has been achieved. This contrasts with the more substantial changes described by alumni in Palladium's case studies and during the evaluation consultations.¹⁰
- › **Targeted countries in Africa viewing Australia as a valued partner** (Outcome 2):

⁷ 73 per cent (n=270) of respondents made some form of development contribution with 98 per cent (n=265) of those attributing it to a greater or certain extent to skills acquired on award (2017 outcomes study). 98 per cent (n=61) reported using the skills and knowledge gained from the award to contribute to development outcomes (2018 outcomes study).

⁸ Types of contributions include: practice contributions (changes in operational approach or technique) – 64 per cent (2017) and 54 per cent (2018); skills transfer (for example, training or coaching) – 18 per cent (2017) and policy contributions (for example, developing/amending specific plans or frameworks) – 15 per cent (2017).

⁹ 73 per cent (n=270) and 76 per cent (n=47) respectively in the 2017 and 2018 outcomes studies.

¹⁰ For example, some of the small grants are directly addressing issues of gender inequality and social exclusion.

- » In the absence of substantive bilateral aid programs¹¹ in African countries, Posts noted the strategic value of Australia Awards in Africa in advancing Australia's interests in select African countries. Some Posts acknowledged that factors¹² outside the control of Australia Awards in Africa may negatively affect how African countries view Australia as a partner. The six Posts consulted noted that Australia Awards scholarships and short courses are creating greater visibility of Australia (particularly through public diplomacy opportunities to showcase Australian expertise). They described tremendous goodwill towards Australia because of its long-running scholarship program in Africa. Palladium and Posts are actively working to extend and capitalise on this goodwill (see further below for discussion on alumni engagement).
- » The evaluation heard from coordinating authorities¹³ and alumni alike that the merit-based, gender equality and disability-inclusive ethos of Australia Awards in Africa resonates strongly with them and distinguishes Australia Awards in Africa from other scholarship programs in their countries. Alumni also positively noted Australia's appreciation of and commitment to alumni on return to their home countries. Comments from coordinating authorities and alumni alike confirmed that Australia Awards in Africa is generating goodwill towards Australia.
- » The evaluation notes the wording for this outcome could be refined to better align with global awards and alumni strategies (see section 3.3.1 for further discussion on this point).
- › There is variable evidence regarding **alumni's positive on-going links with Australia** (Outcome 3).
 - » On the one hand, Australia Awards in Africa outcomes studies show alumni reporting low levels of on-going links between alumni and Australian students or Australian organisations (around one third of alumni who responded to the survey).¹⁴ Organisational links between alumni's home institutions and Australian organisations were even lower (less than a quarter of alumni who responded to the survey).¹⁵ The Australia Awards Global Tracer Facility survey of 2016-2010 alumni shows lower proportions of respondents from Africa have developed a professional link (35 per cent¹⁶) when compared with those from South and West Asia (49 per cent) and East Asia (57 per cent). These differences are "statistically significant and offer some interesting insights into the potentially different circumstances that alumni face in terms of making professional connections with Australia. Interestingly, among these regions the further geographically from Australia they are, the less likely an alumnus is to have established a professional link with Australia."¹⁷

¹¹ In addition to Australia Awards in Africa, Australia provides small grants through its Direct Aid Program and funds global and regional programs including humanitarian assistance, Australian Volunteers, the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research and the Australian NGO Cooperation Program.

¹² For example, visa restrictions for citizens of some African countries to travel to Australia and the significant reduction in Australia's aid program funding to Africa in the financial year 2015-2016.

¹³ Coordinating authorities are representatives from the African government agencies who are responsible for human resource development in their country.

¹⁴ 30 per cent (n=82) of alumni who responded to the 2017 outcomes study reported positive on-going links with Australian students and 35 per cent (n=95) with other Australian organisations. The study found the strength of the links with Australia and Australians decreases the longer alumni are home.

¹⁵ The 2017 outcomes study reported organisational links between alumni's home institutions and Australian organisations was low, with less than a quarter of alumni reporting that such a link existed.

¹⁶ 32 of the 91 alumni from African countries who responded to the tracer survey.

¹⁷ Australia Awards Global Tracer Facility, 2017. Tracer Survey Report Year 1 - 2016-17, Alumni of 2006 to 2010, p. 26.

- » By contrast, linkages with Australian academics and institutions and with other African or international students are much higher (up to three-quarters of alumni).¹⁸ The evaluation notes there is perhaps more complexity to relationships, networks and linkages than the global tracer and outcome study survey questions may be capturing. In the words of one scholar at the pre-departure briefing “we go to Australia to meet the world”. This was a sentiment echoed by many alumni (master’s and short course) consulted during the evaluation. Alumni interviewed felt a strong connection to Australia¹⁹, and a strong appreciation for the networks and linkages created within their country and across the region – with a clear recognition of the roles Palladium and Posts are playing in facilitating those linkages.
- » DFAT’s Australia Awards Linkages Framework (under development) is aimed at developing a coordinated and coherent approach to help Australia Awards scholars establish personal and professional links (including connecting scholars to Australian leaders in the private sector and government) while studying in Australia. The Australia Awards Linkages Framework will be an important global awards influence in future implementation of Australia Awards in Africa and the achievement of this Outcome 3. It is likely to change how enrichment activities are offered, with the possibility of a shared platform and a shared resourcing basis to all scholars throughout their time in Australia being pursued.²⁰ The extent to which this Linkages Framework may require expanded responsibilities for Palladium (and other Australia Awards managing contractors) was not fully clear at the time of writing this report.

The Australia Awards in Africa design includes a set of results the program is expected to achieve by 2020. The results statements were subsequently updated in the 2018-2019 Annual Work Plan. For the most part, the results statements are numerical targets that have either been achieved or look on track to be achieved (see Appendix C for results statements and data as at November 2018). The exception relates to the participation of people with disabilities in Australia Awards scholarships and short course awards which remains low compared to the informal target. See section 3.4 of this report for further discussion on participation of people with disabilities.

Geographical focus, sectors and award types²¹

The highest number of recipients over the past three years across both Australia Awards scholarships and short courses (Table 1) have come from Kenya, Nigeria and Ghana. Appendix D shows comparative figures for all countries, by award type. The evaluation notes questions within some Posts around how decisions are made regarding the inclusion of more countries for the master’s level scholarships given the lack of documented criteria on this issue.²² This is an important issue for consideration in the lead-up to the design of any next phase of Australia Awards in Africa. In the meantime, the flexibility offered by the Post allocation for exceptional candidates²³ is welcome.

¹⁸ Alumni reported that while they were on-award, they were more likely to form links with other African students (76 per cent, other international students (70 per cent) and with Australian academics and institutions (63 per cent), 2017 outcomes study.

¹⁹ It is acknowledged a positive bias is likely as alumni self-selected to participate in the evaluation consultations.

²⁰ DFAT (2018), Australia Awards Linkages Framework 2018-21, Discussion Paper – 23 September 2018.

²¹ Awards types include master’s, short courses and postdoctoral fellowships (pilot). Fellowships were previously available (delivered through DFAT’s Scholarships and Alumni Branch) but are currently on hold pending the outcome of a review.

²² The Australia Awards in Africa design notes “the countries eligible for awards will be consolidated, located primarily to Eastern and Southern Africa and to a small number of countries elsewhere in Sub-Saharan Africa where Australia has compelling national interests.”, p. 4.

²³ The Post allocation for exceptional candidates involves reserving a limited number of places for long-term awards (up to 15) and short course awards (up to 24) each year. The window currently applies to seven sub-Saharan Posts: Abuja,

Although the implementation of this mechanism has been inconsistent across Posts in the past, greater clarity is emerging on how to administer it²⁴ and Post staff consistently noted it is a valuable mechanism for Australia to engage with African countries whose citizens are otherwise not eligible to apply for Australia Awards.

Table 1 Countries (in order of number of Awards received) for Australia Awards scholarships (2016-2019) and short courses (2016-2018)

Country		Number of recipients		
		Female	Male	Total
Australia Awards scholarships, 2016-2019				
1	Kenya	37	34	71
2	Ghana	25	33	58
3	Zambia	23	34	57
4	Nigeria	26	27	53
5	Tanzania	20	32	52
6	Malawi	22	23	45
7	Botswana	27	15	42
8	Mozambique	14	27	41
9	South Africa	11	14	25
10	Madagascar	11	8	19
Short courses, 2016 -2018				
1	Kenya	55	36	91
2	Nigeria	44	43	87
3	Ghana	23	45	68
4	Zimbabwe	21	39	60
5	Uganda	23	32	55
6	Tanzania	16	34	50
7	Cameroon	18	30	48
8	Madagascar	22	15	37
9	Malawi	7	23	30
10	Zambia	6	19	25

Posts and coordinating authorities alike noted that the annual country profile process is a useful mechanism to discuss priority sectors for Australia Awards scholarships and short courses with each

Accra, Addis Ababa, Harare, Port Louis, Nairobi and Pretoria for countries of accreditation that are eligible for travel to study in Australia. Posts have discretion as to which countries to approach for nominations.

²⁴ The guidelines were updated in October 2018 and clarify that Posts are to identify and pre-screen applicants before forwarding nominations to Palladium.

of the participating countries. While agriculture, extractives and governance/public policy dominate the priority sectors (as per the design document), DFAT's Africa Branch and Palladium are responding to feedback from Posts and African countries about emerging priority sectors (as demonstrated in Table 2). It is noted these sectors are consistent with the global Awards sector priorities.²⁵

This flexibility around additional sectors for Australia Awards scholarships and short courses is welcomed by coordinating authorities. The evaluation notes consistent messages from coordinating authorities around technical and vocational education and training (TVET) skills being important for the economic growth aspirations of African countries.²⁶ Australia Awards in Africa has responded to this feedback by introducing a TVET short course in 2019.

The flexibility to add in more sectors is proving useful to support the full of objectives of Australia Awards in Africa. For example, women are under-represented in the agriculture and extractives sectors compared with men, but the inclusion of health and governance/public policy sectors sees their participation rates increase (see Appendix D).

Table 2 Australia Awards scholarships by priority sector, Intakes 2016 – 2019

Sector	2016	2017	2018	2019	Total	% of total (2016-2019)
Agriculture	13	38	43	51	145	29%
Governance/public policy	11	25	34	30	100	21%
Health	9	30	25	31	95	19%
Extractives	8	16	13	17	54	11%
Environment	4	13	14	15	46	9%
Education		3	10	7	20	4%
Other		5	5	10	20	4%
Water and Sanitation	1	4	7	3	15	3%
Disability			1	1	2	0.4%
Total	46	134	152	165	497	

Table 3 Short courses by priority sector, 2016 – 2018

Sector	2016	2017	2018	Grand Total	% of total (over four years)
Governance	69	102	88	259	37%
Agriculture	73	70	89	232	33%
Extractives	106	51	56	213	30%
Total	248	223	233	704	

²⁵ DFAT, 2016. Australia Awards Global Strategy, p. 7.

²⁶ It is noted that other donors, such as the World Bank, are investing in this area. For example, see <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2018/10/30/world-bank-approves-293-million-to-boost-regional-integration-and-technical-training-in-east-africa>

Views expressed by coordinating authorities and Posts regarding the modalities on offer were reasonably consistent, with consensus that the mix of long-term awards and short courses is appropriate. Master's level study at Australian tertiary institutions is highly appreciated by participating countries with coordinating authorities noting long-term awards are an important mechanism for supporting national government aspirations for post-graduate level qualifications across their public services. For some countries, the use of short course awards was seen as more valuable than long-term awards for reaching out to people in the private sector and civil society organisations. Some Posts noted it is common for people working in the private sector and civil society organisations to have a master's degree already (and hence be ineligible to apply for an Australia Awards scholarship). The flexibility to target more sectors through the short courses is also regarded as useful. Palladium and DFAT's Africa Branch have been responsive to suggestions from Posts for the inclusion of additional sectors (for example, TVET) and more specific courses to target the involvement of private sector (for example the artisanal mining short course). The public diplomacy and stakeholder engagement benefits to Post of hosting short courses are also noted. Coordinating authorities and alumni alike commented on the hands-on, practical nature of the short courses being highly valuable, and a point of differentiation between Australia's scholarship program and those of other donors. The overall sentiment was that the current mix of modalities is serving countries well (though the inclusion of doctorate level study was raised by coordinating authorities).

The Australia Awards in Africa design document encourages the exploration of different modalities, for example distance education and split-site degrees.²⁷ Although it was found not to be feasible to explore this option beyond the literature review undertaken in 2017²⁸, it is an encouraging practice that thoughtful, structured consideration is being given to using fit-for-purpose modalities.

One promising pilot under Australia Awards in Africa is the postdoctoral fellowships pilot (information regarding the postdoctoral fellowships pilot can be found at Appendix E). Postdoctoral fellowships were offered to 18 people (11 male/7 female) in 2017 and 2018. The fellowships range in duration from three to 12 months at an Australian tertiary institution. Fellows and supervisors noted the following benefits have been derived through participation in the postdoctoral fellowship pilot:

- › Working with internationally-renowned researchers in agriculture, animal sciences, climatology, planetary and space science.
- › Access to laboratory facilities and/or techniques and tools not available at home institutions. For example, climate modelling software and plant genetics diagnostic tools.
- › Enhanced knowledge through exposure to Australia tertiary institution research and teaching practices, and opportunity to co-supervise doctorate candidates.
- › Establishing new and deepening existing research collaborations with Australian tertiary institutions: most of the research projects involved new collaborations with Australian tertiary institutions, with four projects linked to an existing research collaboration involving an Australia tertiary institution. Two of the research projects involve more than one African University.

It is suggested a strategic discussion regarding the postdoctoral fellowship pilot occur at the September 2019 Program Management Group meeting with a view to taking forward a design of

²⁷ DFAT, 2015. Australia Awards in Africa (2016-2020) Investment Design, p. 23.

²⁸ Australia Awards in Africa six-monthly report #2 notes information-technology infrastructure limitations and the lack of established linkages between Australian and African universities at the level required to facilitate joint learning as key reasons for not exploring this further.

postdoctoral fellowships as a permanent modality for the next design of Australia Awards in Africa (see Appendix E for further information).

Engaging with Australia Awards in Africa scholars and alumni to maximise program outcomes around public diplomacy and people-to-people links

Australia's Global Alumni Engagement Strategy details the high value of alumni to Australia, describing them as a 'vital diplomatic asset' for Australia.²⁹ Examples of Palladium facilitating alumni engagement include, among others:

- › Facilitating a small number of selected alumni to participate in forums and continuing professional development (CPD) opportunities³⁰ as requested by DFAT.
- › Bringing alumni (including alumnae and those with a disability) to participate in pre-departure briefings for master's scholars.³¹
- › Supporting the African Women in Leadership Network (WILN)³² through support to alumnae to attend leadership workshops convened through Palladium and Nairobi Post and attendance of alumnae at international conferences in South Africa (see Appendix D for details).
- › Administering an alumni small grants scheme. Grants are provided through Alumni Associations for small grants of \$5,000-10,000 for either continuing professional development or development projects. As at end October 2018, \$254,471.41 in small grants had been dispensed covering 28 small grants in 14 countries (see Appendix D for financial summary of grants by country).
- › Partnering with Alumni Associations³³ to reach out to Australia Awards alumni and private full fee-paying alumni of Australian universities to either sign up or update their personal, contact and employer information on the alumni database. Assisting DFAT with access to the alumni database.
- › 'Stay Connected' workshops to support scholars with successful reintegration.³⁴
- › Coordinating with Alumni Associations and other networks to facilitate mentoring arrangements, including scholar-to-scholar mentoring, alumni-to-alumni mentoring and peer-to-peer mentoring.

This work is generally perceived by Posts as helpful, timely and highly relevant for assisting DFAT meet its alumni engagement objectives. Some Posts would like more assistance from Palladium on knowing who alumni are, while other Posts are managing alumni contact details well. Expanding the network to include full fee-paying alumni is a priority for all Posts. The evaluation heard examples of DFAT and Palladium staff working with Alumni Associations to assist with this. Where Alumni Associations are active, this partnership is working well. Alumni Associations consulted noted

²⁹ DFAT, 2016. Australia Global Alumni Engagement Strategy, p. 5.

³⁰ Examples include leveraging off international in-Africa conferences such as Investing in African Mining Indaba and in-Australia forum such as Africa Down Under.

³¹ For example, in 2017, 24 recently returned alumni participated at the 2017 pre-departure briefings in eight locations to share their on-award experience with scholars preparing to depart for Australia.

³² The WILN was established in 2013 as a forum to support the advancement of alumnae and to strengthen women's leadership.

³³ Alumni Associations are independent from Australia Awards-Africa and registered with the relevant government authority in their country. Their membership typically includes Australia Awards alumni and privately-funded alumni who have studied in Australia or participated in a short course.

³⁴ These workshops occur in Australia, usually in the semester prior to a scholar completing their award. The format of the workshops was updated following the new approach to reintegration outlined in the 2018/19 work plan. The workshops were held in Brisbane (May 2018) and Sydney (June 2018) with 86 per cent of scholars returning mid-year 2018 attended one of the workshops.

difficulties experienced in reaching out to alumni outside of major cities in their countries. They also gratefully acknowledged the efforts of DFAT and Palladium staff in encouraging alumni to join Alumni Associations.

Post-led alumni engagement is a strong element of Australia Awards in Africa, and appears to be serving Australia's public diplomacy, and to some extent economic diplomacy, objectives well.³⁵ Examples of alumni engagement include:

- › Professional development opportunities. For example, supporting 56 alumnae across 15 countries to attend the Strathmore Business School's Women in Leadership training.
- › Using networks to enhance dialogue on development issues. For example, Nairobi Post brought together Kenyan alumni exposed to Australia's TVET system for a networking opportunity with relevant Kenyan Government officials.
- › Supporting Alumni Associations to address development issues in their countries.³⁶
- › Heads of Mission launching Alumni Associations and hosting functions for alumni when visiting accredited countries.
- › Working with Alumni Associations to celebrate alumni. For example, Port Louis post worked with the Alumni Association to launch a publication celebrating alumni's contributions to development in Mauritius (to coincide with celebrations for Mauritius' 50 years of independence).³⁷

Close consultation between Palladium and Posts in developing the annual work plan is important to ensure alumni engagement activities delivered by Palladium align with both the Australia Awards in Africa Alumni Engagement Strategy and Posts economic and public diplomacy strategies.

The evaluation heard from alumni in Ghana, Kenya and South Africa that they value access to grant funding to pursue professional development opportunities, networking (within sectors, countries and across the region) and mobilising personal and professional resources within their networks to address development issues in their communities or countries. Strong personal commitment from individual alumnus and groups of alumni (for example, the WILN) were evident during the evaluation consultations. Conversely, the evaluation heard from some alumni of the time and financial pressures from high levels of alumni engagement, as well as a desire to receive more follow-up on what happens to information when they participate in surveys and evaluations.

Private sector engagement

The Australia Awards in Africa design sets out expectations that there will be increased and new ways of working with the private sector.³⁸ These expectations are reflected in the contract between DFAT and Palladium. Minutes of the Program Management Group meetings between DFAT and Palladium, and Palladium's six-monthly progress reports outline a number of steps and different strategies that have been used to try and engage with the private sector under Australia Awards in Africa, including:

³⁵ Posts reported using Direct Aid Program allocations and alumni engagement allocations from Africa Branch and the Scholarships and Alumni Branch in DFAT Canberra to support Post-led alumni engagement activities.

³⁶ For example, the Australia-South Africa Alumni Association's partnership with three girls' high schools in the Soweto township near Johannesburg.

³⁷ Can be found at <https://mauritius.embassy.gov.au/files/plut/Alumni%20in%20Mauritius%20Publication.pdf>

³⁸ "[the program] will pilot an innovative public-private partnership scheme seeking contributions from reputable Australian companies to increase the number of places available to African government and civil society participants, open up short course awards to company employees and improve training outcomes by fostering engagement and networking between public, private and civil society participants" (p.4).

- › Developing a Private Sector Engagement Strategy (November 2016) which proposed the piloting of a range of programs with the extractives sector. Three pilots (designed to partner with the extractives and related value-chain industries) were detailed in the strategy.
- › In early 2017 DFAT Canberra agreed that Palladium would focus on three activities under a private sector engagement pilot (these are different to the original three pilot activities suggested in the Private Sector Engagement Strategy). Briefly summarised, these three activities were: (i) a short course in strategic partnering; (ii) private sector professional placements and mentoring for selected master's scholars, and (iii) enhanced industry participation and funding of short courses.

While progress was made against these activities, none of them fully progressed to their desired outputs. There have been instances of using alumni and networks from the private sector to assist with promoting Australia Awards, and good participation of the private sector in the delivery of some short courses. See Appendix E for further details on these points.

In addition to some practical/logistical issues noted regarding engaging with the private sector³⁹, there are some strategic considerations that stand out from Australia Awards in Africa's experience to date with private sector engagement:

- › It is important to have clarity on both the strategic and functional intent of Australia Awards in Africa engagement with the private sector, and Australia's private sector development objectives in Africa to which Australia Awards in Africa is expected to contribute.
- › Dialogue with potential private sector actors takes time and private sector expectations may not necessarily be aligned with those of Australia Awards in Africa. There is an expectation of a transactional relationship rather than one grounded on shared values.
- › DFAT leads on liaison with the private sector, with Palladium relying on DFAT Posts to convey a private sector perspective from their engagement with business. However, some Posts require Palladium's support for promotions outreach to the private sector.

The evaluation notes DFAT is developing a global Australia Awards private sector engagement strategy which could inform a private sector engagement approach in the design of a future phase of the program.

Participation of private sector applicants in Australia Awards in Africa

Australia Awards in Africa is contributing to private sector development through skills and knowledge development of individuals working in the private sector. Since 2016, 79 awards have been offered to private sector applicants (37 female/42 male, including one male with a disability):

- › Over the period 2016-2019 45 applicants from the private sector (20 female/25 male, including one man with a disability) received an Australia Awards scholarship (9 per cent of Australia Awards scholarships offered during this period).
- › Over the period 2016-2018 34 applicants from the private sector (17 female/17 male) participated in a short course (four per cent of short course awards offered during this period).
- › 29 per cent of awards were offered in the extractives sector, followed by 24 per cent in the public policy sector, 19 per cent in agriculture, and 11 per cent in health.

The majority of private sector applicants receiving an Australia Awards scholarship were from:

- › Nigeria: 9 scholars (4 female/5 male)

³⁹ For example, Palladium reporting notes the mentoring pilot in cooperation with the Australia-Africa Minerals & Energy Group was affected by time constraints on industry members, the lack of structure of the mentoring program, and a lack of professional guidance on what makes good mentorship.

- › Ghana: 8 scholars (1 female/7 male)
- › Mozambique: 8 scholars (4 female/4 male)
- › Kenya: 6 scholars (3 female/3 male)

The majority of short course participants from the private sector were from:

- › Nigeria: 8 scholars (2 female/6 male)
- › Kenya: 8 scholars (7 female/1 male)

See Appendix D for further details.

Factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the outputs and/or outcomes

As a regional program operating across diverse countries with multiple stakeholder groups involved in its implementation, it is unsurprising one of the most notable factors raised with the evaluation as influencing the effectiveness of Australia Awards in Africa is coordinated sharing of information and decision-making. All stakeholders consulted noted a need, and willingness, to improve information-sharing to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of Australia Awards in Africa.

The evaluation heard of the following examples of good flows of information to inform decision-making and build relationships between stakeholders:

- › Coordinating authorities consulted were consistently satisfied with the information provided by Palladium, via Posts, regarding the selection process for Australia Awards scholarships. They were pleased with the level of detail and timeliness of information regarding promotional materials, applicants who would be interviewed, and the interview process itself.
- › The annual planning meeting between Palladium, Africa Branch and a representative from each Post is effective for collaboratively discussing the different needs of Posts and working through the details (timing and responsibilities) of the annual cycle to get a shared understanding of the work program for the year ahead.⁴⁰
- › Regular communications (phone calls, email, face-to-face meetings) between Palladium and DFAT staff at most Posts. While two Posts noted more regular communication would be welcome, the sentiment from the other Posts was that Palladium staff are approachable, responsive and that productive working relationships with Posts are in place based on regular communication and professional respect. The evaluation heard examples from Post staff where they were able to talk with Palladium staff to positively resolve a range of sensitive issues.
- › Productive and collaborative working relationships between Palladium staff and short course providers are also noted.⁴¹

At the same time, gaps in information sharing were evident, as was a lack of awareness of scholarship processes which is affecting how some stakeholders are fulfilling their roles. The evaluation also heard of internal DFAT coordination challenges affecting the implementation of Australia Awards in Africa. Stakeholder suggestions for improving information sharing and awareness of how to implement Australia Awards in Africa include:

- › DFAT Canberra to assist new staff at Post to understand scholarship delivery as an aid modality.

⁴⁰ The effectiveness of this mechanism is significantly reduced if there is not a representative from each Post.

⁴¹ The evaluation heard from short course providers that working relationships with Palladium are strong and they appreciate opportunities such as the 2018 short course workshop in Brisbane to come together and share experiences and good practice (for example, how to incorporate gender equality and social inclusion into short courses).

- › Palladium staff spending time with new staff at Post to explain the specific processes and timeframes related to their countries of accreditation.
- › A monthly or quarterly teleconference between Africa Branch and Posts to keep Posts informed of decisions, key dates for the upcoming period, and encourage information sharing between Posts.
- › Sharing learning from monitoring and evaluation activities, for example:
 - » Palladium discussing the reintegration implications of findings from outcome studies with short course providers.
 - » Palladium (or where relevant DFAT) forwarding alumni the reports, or notification of availability of information, from surveys and debriefs in which they participate. This is important for recognising alumni's time commitment to participate in surveys. It will also enhance alumni's experience in engaging with Australia Awards in Africa.
 - » Palladium, via Posts, providing coordinating authorities with a digest of annual statistics related to Australia Awards scholars and short course participants from their countries, as well as timely notice of return dates of scholars.⁴²

Other factors noted as affecting the achievement of Australia Awards in Africa outcomes include the length of time required to get partner government approval for selected short course participants. Palladium, short course providers and Posts alike commented on the difficulties of mobilising participants within short timeframes, attrition rates of priority short course participants, and delays in processing visas, all of which contribute to scenarios of the full complement of scholarships not being awarded, or participants arriving stressed at the beginning of courses because of issues with visas and late notification of travel arrangements.

Some important influential factors are outside the direct control of the program include: visa processing times and immigration policies; increasing costs of overseas student health insurance premiums, the on-award experience of scholars in Australia. It is noted these are all issues that Africa Branch and Palladium discuss at the Program Management Group meetings with a view to mitigating any negative impact from these external factors.

Findings

- › The evaluation finds that Australia Awards in Africa is on track to meet its end of program outcomes. There is evidence of alumni using skills, knowledge and networks to contribute to sustainable development (Outcome 1). The evaluation heard emerging evidence of African countries viewing Australia as a valued partner (Outcome 2), with stronger evidence from DFAT staff of the high strategic value of Australia Awards to Australia's relationships with countries across the African continent. Evidence of Alumni having positive on-going links with Australia (Outcome 3) is more variable with low ongoing linkages with Australia and Australians met while studying in Australia.
- › The expected results from Australia Awards in Africa are likely to be achieved or exceeded – except for the participation of people with disabilities which remains low compared to Australia Awards in Africa's informal target.
- › The mix of Australia Awards modalities is serving DFAT and target countries well. Small differences in participating countries' preferences for Australia Awards scholarships or short courses are noted, though these are not of a magnitude that would warrant a change in the composition of the modalities on offer under Australia Awards in Africa. The postdoctoral fellowship pilot is showing benefits for fellows and African Universities. Discussion about inclusion

⁴² The annual statistics report Palladium provides to Posts could be the basis for this digest to coordinating authorities (after removal of any confidential information).

of postdoctoral fellowships as a permanent modality for the next design of Australia Awards in Africa is warranted.

- › There is evidence that alumni engagement activities undertaken by Palladium are assisting DFAT to meet its alumni engagement objectives. DFAT posts are responsible for taking the lead in alumni engagement and are getting some good results. The evaluation heard tangible, consistent examples of the public diplomacy benefits for Australia from engaging with alumni, as well as sporadic economic diplomacy benefits.
- › Posts and coordinating authorities alike noted that the annual country profile process is a useful mechanism to discuss priority sectors for Australia Awards scholarships and short courses with each of the participating countries. Stakeholders put forward suggestions for additional sectors; though they noted the current sectors are also meeting skills needs.
- › Australia Awards in Africa has tried various approaches to engage with the private sector, some of which have successfully seen private sector engagement in the delivery of short courses. There is however, a lack of clarity on both the strategic and functional intent of engaging with the private sector beyond seeking their assistance with promotions and participation in short course delivery.
- › Improved internal DFAT coordination and information-sharing, as well as improved coordination and information-sharing between DFAT and Palladium would further enhance the effectiveness of Australia Awards in Africa.

Recommendations

Africa Branch to lead a strategic discussion about the outcomes of the postdoctoral fellowship pilot at the September 2019 Program Management Group meeting to inform the design of the next phase of Australia Awards in Africa.

Africa Branch to clarify the strategic and functional intent of private sector engagement and development to inform the design of the next phase of Australia Awards in Africa.

Palladium and Posts use the annual work plan process to further strengthen alignment of alumni engagement activities delivered by Palladium with: (i) the Australia Awards in Africa Alumni Engagement Strategy; and, (ii) Posts economic and public diplomacy strategies.

Africa Branch increase its coordination of information sharing between relevant sections in Canberra, Palladium and Posts to (i) ensure policy and operational decisions are communicated to all stakeholders; and (ii) create regular opportunities for shared learning.

3.2 Efficiency of program implementation

3.2.1 Is the managing contractor delivering efficiently on all aspects of the scope of services, including timelines and budget?

DFAT's 2018 Partner Performance Assessment for Palladium notes that in 2017 Palladium delivered a higher number of awards under Australia Awards in Africa in a timely manner with restricted human and financial resources. The evaluation finds this level of efficiency has continued into 2018, with Palladium delivering against the expected number of Australia Awards.

Aside from delays experienced in mobilising some short course participants (as mentioned above), stakeholders noted that short courses are being delivered in a timely manner. The Scholarships

Branch in DFAT noted that Palladium is doing well in meeting deadlines related to Australia Awards scholarships, with some information being supplied in advance of deadlines.⁴³

Earlier concerns raised by Africa Branch regarding expenditure reporting have been addressed by Palladium. Expenditure is on track⁴⁴ with the largest variances within program costs involving reductions in alumni engagement and monitoring and evaluation costs (combined \$1,054,000) and an increase for delivery of short courses (\$1,040,000) which are currently subject to DFAT approval.⁴⁵

Examples of Palladium demonstrating flexibility and responsiveness to meet DFAT's expectations of program delivery include bringing forward or deferring short courses across financial years to assist Africa Branch management of the annual bilateral allocation and assisting Posts with ad hoc requests regarding alumni engagement.

The procurement of suites of short courses that run over multiple years, rather than single short courses, meant procurement timelines were longer and more complex at the beginning of this current phase of Australia Awards in Africa. However, Palladium has noted this arrangement is providing efficiency and flexibility in their on-going procurement arrangements, and reducing operational overheads related to procurement. Short course providers also spoke positively of the multi-year contracting arrangement as allowing them greater opportunity to implement continuous improvement of short courses and develop on-going linkages with provider partners in Africa.

There is evidence of Palladium and the Africa Branch using the Program Management Group meeting to collaboratively resolve issues affecting efficient and effective implementation of Australia Awards in Africa.⁴⁶

Areas for improved efficiency include:

- › Some Posts noted the process in relation to promotions does not appear to be consistent year-to-year, and clarification from the Palladium communications team was required. Differing experiences and expectations across Posts in relation to the timeliness of promotions materials, and division of tasks during promotions and other key activities were noted. It may be timely to revisit the document roles and responsibilities and adjust accordingly.
- › Short course participants and providers noted that the alumni portal (where reintegration action plans are to be submitted and progress reported against) continue to be problematic to access and use. It is noted Palladium is making updates to the alumni portal.
- › The evaluation heard of attempts to improve efficiency resulting in miscommunication. Where Africa Branch and Palladium agree changes to processes to improve efficiency, the change must be consulted with, or at least conveyed to, all Posts.
- › Post staff, coordinating authorities, alumni, short course providers and participants, master's scholars and postdoctoral fellows interviewed for the evaluation provided suggestions for improvements to processes and systems (for example, the application process, alumni portal, travel arrangements) which are summarised in Appendix H. Some of the suggestions relate to

⁴³ For example, mobilisation information for Australia Awards scholars.

⁴⁴ Palladium's expenditure report to the Program Management Group meeting in October 2018 shows as of 30 September 2018 (63 per cent of the contract duration), the program has 53 per cent of the total contract value. By 30 June 2019 (81 per cent of the contract duration) the program will have spent 75 per cent of funds. Significant variances within program costs include proposed reductions in alumni engagement and monitoring and evaluation costs (combined ~\$1,054,000) and an increase for delivery of short courses (~\$1,040,000).

⁴⁵ Program Management Group Meeting Paper #2, Financial Performance, October 2018.

⁴⁶ For example, a new guideline to clarify an updated process for the implementation of the post allocation for exceptional candidates was approved when inconsistent processes were noted as affecting the quality of application received.

global Australia Awards policy, others are within the parameters of DFAT's Africa Branch and Palladium to consider.

- › Significant learning is being generated through feasibility studies and pilots. It is important for DFAT to capture, and internally disseminate, reasons behind deciding not to progress with a feasibility study or pilot. This is valuable information for the next design phase. At this stage of implementation, it may be a more efficient use of Palladium resources to deepen or broaden the implementation of existing successful elements of the program, rather than piloting new approaches.

Findings

- › The key elements of the scope of services are well covered, with Palladium meeting key deadlines around planning, selection, mobilisation, reintegration and alumni engagement (including the small grants scheme).
- › Overall financial management of Australia Awards in Africa is solid, and expenditure is tracking well at this mid-point in the contract. Palladium has demonstrated flexibility to assist DFAT's budget management across financial years and responsiveness to meet DFAT's expectations of program delivery.
- › Palladium has efficiently delivered a higher number of awards under Australia Awards in Africa in a timely manner with restricted human and financial resources. One key area for improving efficiency is clarifying roles and responsibilities across Posts and Palladium, particularly in relation to promotions, including the development of promotions materials.

Recommendations

Africa Branch, Posts and Palladium management team to review the current documented roles and responsibilities, discuss any changed expectations and revise the document accordingly.

Africa Branch consider stakeholder suggestions for improvements as summarised in Appendix H and discuss with Palladium.

3.2.2 Are the managing contractor's program reports of good quality, providing fit-for-purpose program data and information that is well targeted to DFAT's accountability and program decision-making requirements?

Palladium prepares many program reports that feed into DFAT's accountability and decision-making requirements. Of most significance, their six-monthly reports and Program Management Group meeting papers are comprehensive and designed to meet feedback from DFAT on its information needs. A strong feature in Palladium's reporting is the detail around lessons learnt and specific recommendations for addressing issues or improving practice. DFAT has raised issues of quality of documents with Palladium, who in turn has responded with measures to improve the quality and clarity of reporting. Issues around the quality of communications materials related to promotions (including translations into Portuguese and French) were noted by all but one Post. These are ongoing conversations, with the evaluation noting DFAT's efforts to provide clarity around the information it requires and Palladium exercising flexibility to respond. Additional measures and resources engaged by Palladium are expected to improve the clarity and accessibility of information provided in Palladium's reporting and communications products.⁴⁷

⁴⁷ For example, Palladium started using infographic executive summaries in reports to respond to DFAT's need for data presented in a succinct, easily-digestible form.

The literature and data review undertaken for this evaluation identified some issues with data in the MEF annexes in the six-monthly progress report. These include: lack of cumulative data reporting in MEF tables limiting the ability of the reader to understand how Australia Awards in Africa is tracking against its outputs; inconsistent data disaggregation; calculations errors in statistical tables and unclear reporting on the participation of people with disabilities.⁴⁸ Suggested modifications to the MEF and progress reports are included in Appendix I. It is noted many of these modifications were discussed with DFAT and Palladium during the evaluation process and are likely to be operationalised shortly (if not already).

Palladium's significant M&E activities are generating valuable quantitative and qualitative data sets. For example, it administers an annual survey of alumni⁴⁹ to produce an annual outcome report. These data sets are being used to underpin Palladium's reporting, decision-making and communications products. However, it is suggested that approaching data analysis and reporting on a multi-year basis would add depth to the current M&E arrangements by building a body of evidence of impact over the life of the program (see Appendix I for details).

As noted in section 3.1.1 suggestions from stakeholders for improvements in the delivery of the program relate to receiving more information from DFAT and/or Palladium. It is an opportune time for DFAT and Palladium to discuss information dissemination to a broader group of stakeholders in Australia Awards in Africa. This may involve key reports having an agreed distribution plan.

Findings

- › Palladium is providing the necessary planning and reporting documents to inform decision-making and meet DFAT's accountability obligations. The evaluation notes DFAT and Palladium are working constructively to improve the clarity and quality of reporting to meet DFAT's information needs.
- › Australia Awards in Africa is undertaking an impressive variety of M&E activities which are generating quantitative and qualitative data sets. Approaching data analysis and reporting on a multi-year basis would add depth to the current M&E arrangements by building a body of evidence of impact over the life of the program.
- › While DFAT is the primary audience for Palladium's program reports, there is benefit in DFAT and Palladium considering how to package information and distribute reports to ensure that information needs/interests of a larger group of stakeholders (for example, short course providers, alumni and coordinating authorities) are being met. This would add to the accountability of Australia Awards in Africa.

Recommendations

DFAT and Palladium consider the suggested modifications to the MEF and progress reports included at Appendix I.

DFAT and Palladium agree on distribution plans for each of the key reporting and evaluation products.

⁴⁸ The evaluation notes the scope of services includes a performance indicator for the inclusion of people with disability which DFAT will amend.

⁴⁹ Using a survey instrument that is aligned with the DFAT's Global Tracer Facility survey instrument. A notable advantage of the Australia Awards in Africa outcomes study is that, unlike the Global Tracer Facility survey, it includes short course alumni.

3.2.3 Is the managing contractor's engagement with Africa posts done in such a way as to minimise administrative burden and maximise public and economic diplomacy opportunities? Are there options to streamline processes?

Posts welcome the support provided by Palladium in delivering Australia Awards and appreciate the strong, professional relationships with the Palladium team. Posts acknowledged Palladium is trying to meet different expectations across many countries and value the work done by Palladium to meet the needs of each Post. Posts noted they do not have resources to manage administrative tasks associated with key Australia Awards processes and are pleased these are done by Palladium.

The evaluation heard differing views across Posts about the value of Palladium's communication products in assisting them to undertake promotions work and public diplomacy. Two of the Posts consulted were satisfied with the content of communications products, but most noted that country specific content is more valuable than content regarding scholars or alumni from other African countries. Regular discussions within DFAT and with Palladium are required to determine what tailored solutions for communications products can be adequately accommodated within the resources of the contract. This is a discussion best had as part of the annual planning process, as there are resource implications for developing country specific communications content.

Posts acknowledged the support provided by Palladium to facilitate public diplomacy events and alumni engagement. As mentioned earlier, Posts undertake a range of alumni engagement/public diplomacy events without Palladium support as a normal part of doing business. In order to do this effectively, Posts require accurate, up-to-date information regarding alumni. Some Posts are managing this well, others require support from Palladium in this area. As noted earlier, reaching out to non-Australia Award alumni is an ongoing challenge that Posts and Palladium are trying to address in collaboration with Alumni Associations.

Scholarships are a process driven aid modality, with the benefit of the annual planning process enabling key tasks and dates/time periods to be specified well in advance. Notwithstanding unforeseeable events disrupting the schedule, this should be a smooth cycle with good information available to Posts to allow for appropriate planning. However, the evaluation heard examples of Post staff not being informed of what they perceive to be key dates and/or decisions made by the Africa Branch and/or Palladium. Notwithstanding the pressure on time noted by DFAT staff in Canberra and Posts, more structured and regular methods of information sharing are warranted. This may go some way to allaying the challenges felt at Post and supporting a stronger, more coordinated program management system across DFAT and Palladium.

Findings

- › For the most part Palladium's engagement with Posts is highly valued, with many noting the support provided by Palladium alleviates the administrative burden of tasks such as managing selections processes and alumni small grants.
- › The evaluation heard that different Posts want different levels of engagement with, and support from, Palladium on various aspects of the program. The largest variances across Posts expectations relate to communications and public diplomacy support required from Palladium, and the level of detail and notice required for activities scheduled in the annual work plan.
- › Meeting these varied expectations requires strong planning processes, coordinated communication between Desk, Post and Palladium, and clear decision-making accountabilities.

Recommendations

DFAT and Palladium use the annual planning process to clarify: timing and content of specific communications products to be developed for each Post (in conjunction with the promotions plans);

level of assistance required for each Post to maintain any alumni contact register; and, other issues as raised by Post with the Africa Branch.

3.3 Relevance and alignment with new policy and aid priorities

3.3.1 Is the Australia Awards in Africa design and M&E framework fit-for-purpose and targeting the right outcomes and modalities to best support achievement of the Foreign Policy White Paper priorities?

The Australia Awards in Africa design preceded the Australia Awards Global Strategy (currently under evaluation) and Australia's Global Alumni Engagement Strategy. Flexibility in implementation arrangements have resulted in the Africa Branch and Palladium working together to ensure consistency with the necessary global strategies, policies and branding requirements. However, Outcome 2 (targeted African countries view Australia as a valued partner) has a different emphasis to the comparable global outcome (Alumni view Australia, Australians and Australian expertise positively) and is proving difficult for DFAT and Palladium to appropriately measure. It is suggested the wording and measurement of this outcome be changed to more directly align with global Awards policy.

Australia Awards in Africa is well positioned to contribute to Australia's aim of working to expand and diversify commercial links with Africa (as per the Foreign Policy White Paper). The short course modality is likely to be particularly beneficial in this regard because of the potential to expose private sector participants to counterparts in equivalent Australian business / industries as part of the in-Australia component. The Australia Awards Linkages Framework (under development) to connect scholars to Australian leaders in the private sector and government is an important contextual factor in future implementation of Australia Awards in Africa.

As discussed in section 3.1, there is a lack of clear objectives for private sector engagement. Palladium's annual work plans and annual reports contain some examples of where scholars working in the private sector are contributing to development outcomes in their countries. However, the work plans and reports do not give an indication of the program's overall approach to private sector engagement. Australia Awards in Africa does not currently have results statements or indicators that are linked to private sector engagement.

The evaluation notes the following considerations for a new phase of Australia Awards in Africa:

- › What criteria should be used to determine participation of African countries in Australia Awards. Some criteria suggested by Posts are included at Appendix H.
- › What are appropriate objectives for private sector engagement/development: Palladium's annual work plans and annual reports contain some examples of where scholars working in the private sector are contributing to development outcomes in their countries. However, the work plans and reports do not give an indication of the program's overall approach to private sector engagement. Australia Awards in Africa does not currently have results statements or indicators that are linked to private sector engagement.
- › Which piloted approaches should be continued: the Australia Awards in Africa design included two pilot activities (private sector and flexible learning) neither of which have progressed beyond the pilot stage. On the other hand, the postdoctoral fellowships pilot is showing promise as a low-cost mechanism for supporting postdoctoral research.
- › Enhanced alumni engagement beyond Australia Awards alumni to full-fee paying students.
- › Opportunities to move Australia Awards in Africa from individual capacity development to include organisational capacity development level (for example, research capacity development in

Universities). This is beyond the scope, and financial approval⁵⁰, of Australia Awards in Africa at this time but warrants further consideration in the next design.

Findings

- › DFAT's Africa Branch and Palladium have demonstrated an ability to adapt the implementation of the design to fit the current strategic and practical realities of Australia's aid program in Africa. It is timely to update Outcome 2 to bring it in line with the relevant global strategies and allow both DFAT and Palladium to better measure the outcomes.
- › The mix of Australia Awards scholarships and short courses appears sound for developing a cadre of alumni that fit with the intentions of the Foreign Policy White Paper.
- › It is timely to consider the investment design process for Australia Awards in Africa post-completion of the current design in 2020.

Recommendations

Amend the Outcome 2 wording to read 'Alumni view Australia, Australians and Australian expertise positively'.

DFAT to use the option in the Scope of Services Agreement with the managing contractor to extend the end date of the contract by two years, from 31 March 2020 to 31 March 2022.

3.4 Gender equality and social inclusion

Australia Awards in Africa's gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) agenda is two-fold: (i) ensuring adjustment support is given to those who need it at all stages of the cycle, and (ii) ensuring GESI is seen as a development issue that requires everyone's attention.

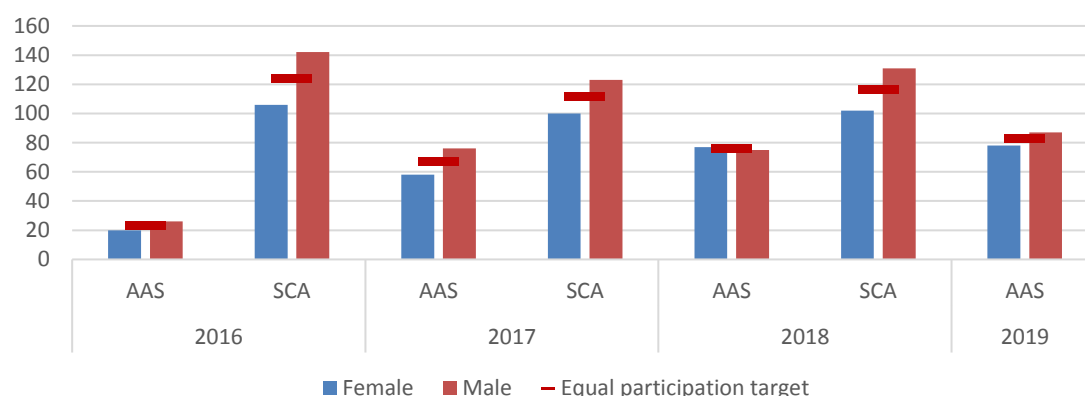
An ongoing challenge for Australia Awards in Africa is to increase the number of applications from eligible female candidates and people with disabilities (PWD).⁵¹ Stakeholders noted various efforts underway to specifically target promotions activities to increase applications from women and PWD. Alumni networks (including the Alumni Associations and the Women in Leadership network) are proving invaluable to getting word out about opportunities (and support available through Australia Awards in Africa). Further options may include: strengthening women's and PWD confidence at the interview stage, with the possibility of providing special pre-interview capacity-building sessions for women and PWD to increase confidence and interview skills; and, Palladium and Posts to consult more closely with disabled people's organisations to identify opportunities to promote Australia Awards and capturing those activities in the promotions plans (for example, promotions activities that coincide with the International Day of Persons with Disabilities); and, where relevant, include national inclusion policy and legislation and/or PWD as presenters in short course delivery.

While a continued focus on increasing the number of applications is warranted, it is noted that separate consideration of applications from women and men at the selection and interview stages is pivotal to achieving gender balance in Australia Awards in Africa. Of the 1201 Australia awards scholarships and short awards offered since 2016, 541 (45 per cent) were offered to women and 660 (55 per cent) to men.

⁵⁰ Ministerial approval was for \$32 million per year to be spent on scholarships.

⁵¹ For the 2019 Australia Awards scholarship intake 1,034 (29 per cent of total applications) were from women, with 91 (3 per cent of total applications) were from persons who disclosed a disability

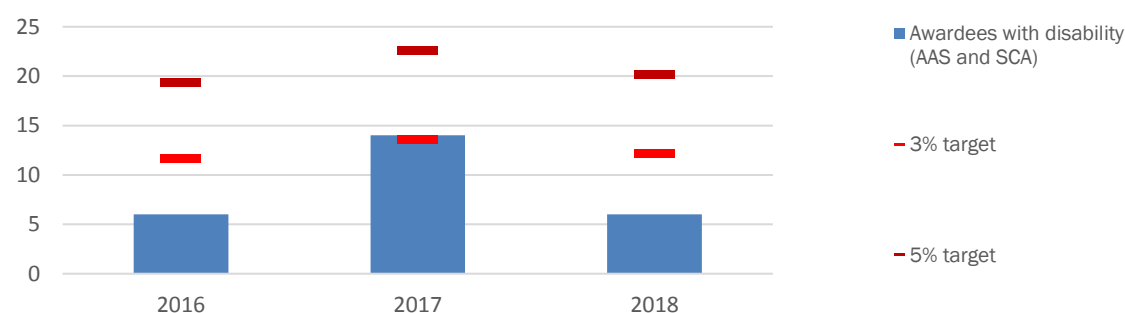
Figure 1 Participation of women and men in Australia Awards scholarships (2016-2019) and short courses (2016-2018)



There is a notable discrepancy of equal awards across countries. For example, Kenya, Botswana, Madagascar have had more women than men awarded Australia Awards scholarships and participated in short courses over the period 2016-2019. Whereas other countries have had few or no women participate (see Appendix D).

Although the Australia Awards in Africa design notes that the application of a participation target for PWD is not advisable⁵², an aspirational target is included in Palladium's contract - "3-5 per cent of all Awards allocated to PWD or people working to support PWD (such as Disabled Peoples' Organisations, government health and education agencies working on inclusion), provided that the latter does not reduce access by PWD". While it is useful to report data on both these aspects, a clearer delineation between the two is required so as to not inadvertently overstate the participation of PWD. There has been a significant fluctuation related to disability inclusion (see Appendix D). Participation of PWD reached 3 per cent target in 2017 (Figure 2).

Figure 2 Participation of people with disability, 2016 - 2018



The following GESI initiatives are currently implemented under Australia Awards in Africa:

- › All master's applicants are exposed to GESI concepts in the selection interviews and pre-departure briefings through purposive GESI discussion sessions. However, findings from the Australia Awards in Africa GESI review (2016), and Palladium's surveys of on-award scholars at Stay Connected workshops found that not all scholars have access to GESI related content while

⁵² "Although considered, the new program will not specify a target figure on the number of scholars who have a disability or are working to support people with a disability. Applying moderation to meet a target would likely skew the outcomes when only a small number of awards are available to priority countries or run the risk of not being able to fill short courses." Australia Awards in Africa Investment Design, pp. 14-15.

on award.⁵³ An online GESI course is available to scholars and alumni to provide skills and knowledge on how to integrate GESI in their work policy and practice. However, Palladium reporting notes there has been a low uptake of the online course.

- › Short course providers are contractually required to embed GESI in their course content. This appears to be working well, with Palladium staff providing quality-checks on the content and short course participants reporting being exposed to GESI concepts during their course.⁵⁴
- › The Gender Equity Funds and Disability Access and Equity Funds are special funds available for those who identify GESI related obstacles that require funding support to overcome. Over the period July 2016-July 2018, \$9,352.95 was dispensed under the Gender Equality Fund to benefit 18 people. Over the same period, \$20,427.47 was dispensed under the Disability Equity and Access Fund to benefit nine people. See Appendix J for further detail. The evaluation heard from a small number of women and PWD about the support provided by Palladium and short course providers being appropriate to their needs.
- › Anecdotally, the evaluation heard the WILN is engaging women and men who are promoting Australia Awards to women from their countries, to mentor women and girls (both in the award program and in their private capacity) and to lead inclusive change at the Alumni Association, workplace and community levels.

The evaluation heard of structural barriers beyond the control of Australia Awards in Africa (for example, visas and overseas student health care insurance levies⁵⁵) affecting the participation of women (and men) who wish to be accompanied by family members. DFAT and Palladium are actively engaging to mitigate negative impacts as much as possible, for example providing timely clear information about visa requirements and starting the process as early as possible.

Some stakeholders reflected on the nexus between rural disadvantage, gender inequality and exclusion of people with disabilities. Further consideration on how to address geographic barriers to women, men and people with disabilities participating in Australia Awards in Africa is warranted. The evaluation notes these concerns are shared by DFAT and Palladium staff, and that consideration of geographic barriers to inclusion (including for alumni engagement) is being given increasing priority. Some options for addressing geographical barriers may include supporting Alumni Associations to engage with alumni outside capital cities, and amending promotions plans to include specific activities for promotions outside capital cities.

Findings

- › An on-going challenge for Australia Awards in Africa is to increase the number of applications from eligible female candidates and people with disabilities. While a continued focus on increasing the number of applications is warranted, it is noted that separate consideration of applications from women and men at the selection and interview stages is pivotal to achieving gender balance in Australia Awards in Africa. Participation of people with disabilities is variable from year to year.

⁵³ From the Stay Connected workshop survey, of the 27 that responded to the question on exposure, only eight Scholars (25 per cent) had completed the Australia Awards GESI e-course. Further, only six (19 per cent) had attended a GESI training or forum while on award. Reasons for no GESI exposure included: 12 indicated that GESI was not part of their course, seven were not aware of any GESI related opportunities while two indicated did not have time to seek these opportunities. There was no significant difference in the responses for males and females

⁵⁴ All 249 in 2016 and all 149 in 2017

⁵⁵ Purchasing the insurance for dependents prior to mobilising to Australia has a significant cost implication for the scholar.

- › DFAT and Palladium are actively engaging to mitigate negative impacts from structural barriers beyond the control of Australia Awards in Africa that affect the participation of women, PWD and sufferers of chronic illness.
- › Palladium's GESI strategy includes considerations of gender equality and disability-inclusion. Broadening the concept of social inclusion to address geographic barriers to women, men and PWD participating in Australia Awards in Africa is warranted.

Recommendations

Palladium adjust how it reports on disability-inclusion to give a clearer indication of the participation of PWD in Australia Awards in Africa.

4 Conclusions

The evaluation finds Australia Awards in Africa is being effectively delivered and is on-track to meet its end-of-program outcomes. The managing contractor, Palladium, has developed strong relationships with stakeholders and strives to demonstrate flexibility and responsiveness in meeting DFAT's expectations of program delivery.

Australia Awards in Africa is proving to be a valuable mechanism for Australia to build goodwill and contribute to skills development in African countries. There are vibrant, active and dynamic alumni across the African continent who are contributing to the success of Australia Awards in Africa.

The evaluation heard from coordinating authorities and alumni alike that the merit-based, gender equality and disability-inclusive ethos of Australia Awards in Africa resonates strongly with them and distinguishes Australia Awards in Africa from other scholarship programs in their countries. Australia's appreciation of, and commitment to, alumni was also noted.

Posts expressed differing experiences of efficient and effective delivery of Australia Awards in Africa. The delivery of Australia Awards in some of their countries of accreditation is working well, while for others it is challenging. Variances in experiences across the countries may be due in some part to different operating contexts and resource levels at Post. There are also different levels of understanding and experience of Post staff with the scholarship modality of aid delivery. Four of the posts consulted expressed a need for greater support from DFAT's Africa Branch and Palladium in order to efficiently and effectively fulfil their roles. Increased coordination between Africa Branch and Posts and improved understanding of roles and responsibilities may assist the consistency of Posts' experiences in supporting the delivery of Australia Awards in Africa.

Significant learning is being generated through feasibility studies and pilots, including on private sector engagement. It is important for Africa Branch to document, and disseminate, reasons behind deciding to progress, or not, with any feasibility study or pilot. This is valuable information for the next design phase. With the current phase of Australia Awards in Africa scheduled for completion in March 2020, an efficient use of Palladium resources may be to consolidate implementation and monitoring of existing successful elements of the program, rather than establish new pilots or new areas of thematic research.

The Australia Awards in Africa design preceded the Australia Awards Global Strategy (which is currently under evaluation) and Australia's Global Alumni Engagement Strategy. Palladium and DFAT Canberra have demonstrated an ability to adapt the implementation of the Australia Awards in Africa design to fit the current strategic and practical realities of Australia's aid program in Africa. It is timely to update the program logic (namely Outcome 2) to bring it in line with the relevant global strategies and enable DFAT and Palladium to better measure Australia Awards in Africa outcomes.

It is also timely to consider the investment design process and timing for Australia Awards in Africa post-completion of the current design in 2020. Several considerations relevant to the design process

emerged during the evaluation consultations. To allow sufficient time⁵⁶ for the necessary design process and procurement arrangements to be completed prior to the end of this current phase of Australia Awards in Africa, it is suggested that DFAT and Palladium utilise the option period end date included in the contract term to extend the current contract arrangements to 31 March 2022.

⁵⁶ Depending on the desired design and contractual processes, it may require up to two years to complete a robust design process, complete procurement arrangement for a managing contractor and mobilise an implementation team.

5 Recommendations

Strategic

1. DFAT to use the option in the Scope of Services Agreement with the managing contractor to extend the end date of the contract by two years, from 31 March 2020 to 31 March 2022.
2. Africa Branch to lead a strategic discussion about the postdoctoral fellowship pilot at the September 2019 Program Management Group meeting to inform the design of the next phase of Australia Awards in Africa.
3. Africa Branch to clarify the strategic and functional intent of private sector engagement and development to inform the design of the next phase of Australia Awards in Africa.

Operational

4. Palladium and Posts use the annual work plan process to further strengthen alignment of alumni engagement activities delivered by Palladium with: (i) the Australia Awards in Africa Alumni Engagement Strategy; and, (ii) Posts economic and public diplomacy strategies.
5. Africa Branch increase its coordination of information sharing between relevant sections in Canberra, Palladium and Posts to (i) ensure policy and operational decisions are communicated to all stakeholders; and (ii) create regular opportunities for shared learning.
6. Africa Branch, Posts and Palladium management team to review the current documented roles and responsibilities, discuss any changed expectations and revise the document accordingly.
7. Africa Branch consider stakeholder suggestions for improvements as summarised in Appendix H and discuss with Palladium.

Monitoring, evaluation and communications

8. DFAT and Palladium consider the suggested modifications to the MEF and progress reports included at Appendix I.
9. DFAT and Palladium agree on distribution plans for each of the key reporting and evaluation products.
10. DFAT and Palladium use the annual planning process to clarify: timing and content of specific communications products to be developed for each Post (in conjunction with the promotions plans); level of assistance required for each Post to maintain any alumni contact register; and, other issues as raised by Post with the Africa Branch.
11. Amend the Outcome 2 wording to read 'Alumni view Australia, Australians and Australian expertise positively'. This change in outcome wording is consistent the program logic as is currently being implemented. If this recommendation is accepted, the Statement of Requirements (clauses 1.4 (b) and 4.47 (a)) will need to be updated accordingly.
12. Palladium adjust how it reports on disability-inclusion to give a clearer indication of the participation of PWD in Australia Awards in Africa.

Appendix A: Methodology

Approach

The evaluation used a formative evaluation approach, focusing on identifying what is working well with Australia Awards in Africa and where improvements can be made for the remainder of the current phase of the investment. It is expected the findings and recommendations will directly influence decision-making on program components for the remainder of the program, and as such, a collaborative approach to analysis and recommendation forming was a key part of the evaluation process. The evaluator led the data collection and initial analysis stages to determine emerging findings, and then tested out the recommendations with DFAT and Palladium (via the aide memoire) to add a level of contestability to the proposed changes going forward.

The evaluation used a mixed methods methodology, with qualitative data collected during consultations supplemented with quantitative data from existing sources (scholar and alumni data provided by Palladium, Australia Awards tracer studies, Australia in Africa outcomes study reports).

The evaluation process followed included: evaluation planning with DFAT in Canberra and Posts, culminating in an evaluation plan; a literature and data review; data collection, including in-country consultations in South Africa, Ghana and Kenya; analysis of qualitative data collected during consultations, and quantitative data from existing sources; testing out recommendations (via the aide memoire) with DFAT and Palladium to add a level of contestability to any proposed changes going forward; and reporting writing.

Table 4 sets out the main evaluation questions, the approach to collecting and analysing information and the sources of information.

Limitations

Not all interviews were conducted confidentially with the independent evaluator.⁵⁷ The non-confidential nature of the discussions however did not appear to unduly influence stakeholders' responses which appeared frank and constructive. However, some consideration to the non-confidential nature of these conversations has been taken into account in the data collection phase, with the evaluator seeking additional evidence to verify positive claims.

Over the course of the evaluation, it became apparent there were differing views across DFAT regarding the utility and value-for-money of undertaking this evaluation. Some Posts reflected that the program is running well, due in no small part to high levels of engagement of Post staff and productive working relationship with Palladium. For others in DFAT, the evaluation was seen as an opportunity to reflect and learn. The evaluator has tried to take into account these differing views and focus the evaluation process and report on capturing learning and providing information for Africa section to feed into other reviews occurring in tandem with this evaluation (e.g. the review of Australia Awards Global Strategy).

⁵⁷ DFAT officers were present at interviews conducted with some (not all) government representatives from African countries, Australian Government representatives and two of the alumni roundtable.

Table 4 Evaluation approach

Evaluation question	Approach	Data sources	Data collection	Analysis
Relevance and alignment with new policy and aid priorities <i>Key question:</i> Is the Australia Awards in Africa design and M&E framework fit-for-purpose and targeting the right outcomes and modalities to best support achievement of the Foreign Policy White Paper priorities? <i>Sub-question:</i> Does the current approach to private sector engagement have clear realistic objectives and are they being achieved?	Assessment of the extent to which the three end of program outcomes are still valid, and if the activities and outputs of the program are consistent with the attainment of these three outcomes. Assessment of the approach to private sector engagement.	DFAT policy and strategy documents. Australia Awards in Africa planning, monitoring and reporting documents. Stakeholders: DFAT; Australia Awards in Africa staff; individuals/organisations directly involved in implementing Australia Awards in Africa activities.	Document Review. Qualitative data sourced from case studies of Australia Awards alumni. Face-to-face/telephone semi-structured interviews. Roundtable discussions.	Content analysis against evaluation questions. Descriptive analysis.
Effectiveness of the program <i>Key question:</i> To what extent are the three Australia Awards in Africa program outcomes being achieved or are likely to be achieved? <i>Sub-questions:</i> What are the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the outputs and/or outcomes? Is the program targeting the highest priority countries and sectors? Is the program engaging with Australia Awards in Africa scholars and alumni to maximise program outcomes around public diplomacy and people-to-people links?	Examination of progress towards outcomes through review of program documents, reports and existing alumni data (outcomes surveys and tracer reports) and stakeholder interviews.	DFAT policy and strategy documents; Australia Awards in Africa planning, monitoring and reporting documents. Stakeholders: DFAT; Australia Awards in Africa staff; individuals/organisations directly involved in implementing or benefiting from Australia Awards in Africa activities. Alumni tracer and case studies.	Document Review. Qualitative data sourced from case studies of Australia Awards alumni. Face-to-face/telephone semi-structured interviews. Roundtable discussion. Quantitative data sourced from surveys of Australia Awards alumni.	Content analysis against the program logic and evaluation questions. Descriptive analysis Statistical analysis to be determined based on availability and reliability of data sourced.

Is the balance of award types ⁵⁸ optimal? To what extent are private sector engagement objectives being achieved?				
Efficiency of program implementation <i>Key questions:</i> Is the managing contractor delivering efficiently on all aspects of the scope of services, including timelines and budget? Are the managing contractor's program reports of good quality, providing fit-for-purpose program data and information that is well targeted to DFAT's accountability and program decision-making requirements? Is the managing contractor's engagement with Africa posts done in such a way as to minimise administrative burden and maximise public and economic diplomacy opportunities? Are there options to streamline processes?	Assess the program management, monitoring and reporting arrangements, with a focus on value-for-money as described in the Australia Awards in Africa design document.	DFAT policy and strategy documents; Australia Awards in Africa planning, monitoring and reporting documents, and, where relevant, financial reporting and procurement procedures.	Document Review.	Content analysis against evaluation questions.
		Stakeholders: DFAT; Australia Awards in Africa staff; individuals/organisations directly involved in implementing or benefiting from Australia Awards in Africa activities.	Face-to-face/telephone semi-structured interviews. Roundtable discussions.	
Gender equality and social inclusion What steps have been taken by the program to identify and reduce barriers to inclusion, and have they have been successful?	Assessment of GESI achievements will be integrated into data collection and analysis for effectiveness key evaluation questions.	As per 'effectiveness' evaluation questions data sources.	As per 'effectiveness' evaluation questions data collection.	Content and descriptive analyses to draw out GESI findings and recommendations. Statistical analysis to take into account gender and disability (depending on availability and reliability of data sourced).

⁵⁸ Masters, short course and postdoctoral pilot. Fellowships were previously available (delivered through DFAT's Scholarships and Alumni Branch) but are currently on hold pending the outcome of a review.

Data collection and analysis

Literature and data review

The literature and data review provided a distilled analysis of program data provided by Palladium and informed the lines of enquiry for the data collection phase of the evaluation.

The evaluator reviewed the program design, program reports, DFAT's investment quality reports, and DFAT policies and strategies. The evaluator analysed program data and scholarships and alumni data as provided in the program reports, outcome surveys and Australia Awards tracer surveys.

Documents were coded in NVivo⁵⁹ against the evaluation questions and themes (context, issues, success, challenges, lessons, for follow-up). A framework matrix was used to organise the information from the literature against the evaluation questions and traffic lighted into positive, mixed, or negative responses, giving a rough visual insight into how the literature contributes to assessments against the evaluation questions. This was added to over the course of the evaluation and as additional documents are collected by the evaluator during consultations in South Africa, Ghana and Kenya.

Data analysis included collating the MEF data provided in the four six-monthly progress reports. Analysis of the data against the baselines/targets in the MEF included traffic lighting into met, on track, not met, giving a rough visual insight into how Australia Awards in Africa is progressing against the achievement of its outputs and outcomes. The analysis identified issues of data measurement and where data was not fully reported as per the expectations in the MEF. In addition, high-level data from five Global Tracer Facility reports and the 2017 Outcomes Study were combined in a framework matrix against the end-of-program outcomes.

Data collection

The scope of primary data collection was on gathering program implementation information from key stakeholders (see Appendix B for list of stakeholders consulted). There is substantial information (in the form of tracer studies and past evaluations) available on the contributions of long-term scholarships delivered under Australia Awards in Africa and globally, and these formed the secondary data sources for the evaluation. This evaluation did not seek to duplicate DFAT's global Australia Awards efforts to trace alumni experiences both while studying in Australia⁶⁰ and following their return home.⁶¹ Nor did the evaluation duplicate the outcomes studies conducted by Australia Awards in Africa. With the exception of the postdoctoral fellows, the evaluation did not include interviewing scholars to understand their on-award experience in Australia.

The evaluator participated in briefings in DFAT Canberra (29-30 August 2018) with Africa Branch and relevant thematic areas (Scholarships and Alumni Branch, Development Economics, Private Sector and Agriculture Branch, Gender Equality Branch). The evaluator also participated in phone briefings with Africa Branch and post staff⁶² and the Palladium's Program Director on key issues while developing the consultation schedule.

The evaluator, along with the DFAT evaluation manager, conducted consultations in Ghana, Kenya and South Africa (12-30 November 2018) with the following stakeholders:

- DFAT staff at the Australian High Commissions in Pretoria, Accra and Nairobi;
- Coordinating authority representatives from the Governments of Botswana, Eswatini, Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique, South Africa;

⁵⁹ NVivo is a qualitative research software. It is used to manage copious quantities of data and simplify the process for identifying emerging themes and gaps and drawing out findings and lessons. Interview data collected during in-country consultations will be added to the coding and analysis undertaken for this literature review.

⁶⁰ On-award surveys are conducted twice a year for Australia Awards scholars at tertiary institutions in Australia.

⁶¹ DFAT's Global Tracer Facility is the primary mechanism for undertaking tracer and case studies of Australia Awards alumni.

⁶² DFAT staff at Nairobi, Pretoria and Abuja posts were consulted during the development of the evaluation plan.

- University of Pretoria, University of Ghana, University of Nairobi – supervisors and postdoctoral fellows;
- Disabled Person's Organisations;
- Australia Awards alumni from Botswana, Ghana, Kenya, South Africa;
- Australian Government: Australian Trade and Investment Commission (Austrade); Home Affairs;
- Briefly attended three short courses being delivered in South Africa (Public-Private Infrastructure Partnerships), Ghana (Agribusiness) and Kenya (Increasing the development impact of agricultural research) and spoke with participants and facilitators;
- Briefly attended the pre-departure briefing for Intake 2019 masters' scholars from Botswana, Mozambique, South Africa and Eswatini.

Following the in-Africa consultations, the evaluator conducted phone interviews with additional short course providers and postdoctoral fellows in Australia.

Data was collected from stakeholders using semi-structured interviews, which were steered by interview guides and conversational in nature. The guides acted as prompts to ensure major topics were explored and were adjusted throughout the process to pick up new trails of data and test them in subsequent interviews.

Data analysis

Analysis of the data occurred on an ongoing basis during the data collection phase. The evaluator recorded and tracked analytical insights during the data collection phase. The evaluator and the DFAT evaluation manager set aside time during the in-country consultations to briefly discuss the major observations, impressions and emergent sense-making of the data. Evidence was triangulated to ensure rigour - emerging themes from interviews were tested in subsequent interviews.

Extensive notes were taken of all interviews. The evaluator used NVivo (a qualitative research software) to code responses from interviews against the key evaluation questions, emerging themes and other insights. This helped manage large quantities of interview data and simplify the process for identifying emerging themes and gaps and drawing out findings and recommendations.

Following the in-Africa consultations, the evaluator prepared an aide memoire for the evaluation reference group. The aide memoire provided an overview of the in-Africa consultations and summarised preliminary findings and initial recommendations.

The evaluator then gathered further necessary data to address gaps identified in the preliminary analysis, and then do a final analysis of the data against: (i) the key evaluation questions; and, (ii) emerging themes.

Appendix B: Stakeholders consulted

Short course participants:

- Public-Private Infrastructure Partnerships short course: 30 participants (18 female/12 male) from 10 countries (Botswana, Cameroon, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Mauritius, Nigeria, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia).
- Agribusiness short course: 29 participants (16 female/13 male) from 8 countries (Cameroon, Ghana, Kenya, Madagascar, Nigeria, Tanzania, Uganda, Zimbabwe).

2019 intake scholars:

- 40 participants (19 female/21 male) from Botswana, Eswatini, Mauritius, Mozambique, South Africa at the pre-departure briefing in South Africa.

Group or individual interviews:

Name	Position	Organisation
DFAT Canberra		
Susan Wilson	Director, Pan Africa and Effectiveness Section, Africa Branch	
Gnari Michael	Assistant Director, Pan Africa and Effectiveness Section, Africa Branch	
Mark Snowden	Australia Awards in Africa Manager, Middle East & Africa Partnerships Section, Africa Branch	
Mika Kontiainen	Director Disability Section	
Sacha Blumen	Assistant Director Private Sector Development Section	
Lyn Henderson	Assistant Director Alumni Section, Scholarships and Alumni Branch	
Kayte Davidson	Assistant Director, Strategy and Governance Section, Scholarships and Alumni Branch	
Kate Watson	Director, Strategy and Governance Section, Scholarships and Alumni Branch	
Rachel Ingwersen	Assistant Director, Gender Equality Branch	
Michael Bergmann	Director Partnerships and Private Sector Relations, Scholarships and Alumni Branch	
Wanda Oram-Miles	Director, Australia Awards Delivery Section, Scholarships Branch	
DFAT Post staff		
Adam McCarthy	Head of Mission	Australian High Commission, Pretoria
David Eggleston	First Secretary, Political, Economic and Development	Australian High Commission, Pretoria
Stacey Walker	First Secretary	Australian High Commission, Pretoria
Sarah Withers	Senior Research and Program Officer	Australian High Commission, Pretoria
Ana Kabalu	Research and Program Officer	Australian High Commission, Pretoria
Andrew Barnes	Head of Mission	Australian High Commission, Ghana
Glen Askew	Deputy Head of Mission	Australian High Commission, Ghana
Celeste Macauley	Political and Economic Research Officer	Australian High Commission, Ghana
Alison Chartres	Head of Mission	Australian High Commission, Nairobi
Heather Rich	Second Secretary	Australian High Commission, Nairobi
Caroline Mbugua	Program Manager- Australia Awards	Australian High Commission, Nairobi
Susan Cash	Second Secretary	Australian Embassy, Abuja
Rebecca Yohannes	Senior Program Manager & Policy Analyst	Australian Embassy, Addis Ababa
Natasha Morris	Second Secretary	Australian High Commission, Port Louis
Yasmina Hosanoo	Senior Political and Public Diplomacy Officer	Australian High Commission, Port Louis
Kiran Seetohul	Political and Research Officer	Australian High Commission, Port Louis
Australian government agencies		
Ben Ospray	Second Secretary, Immigration	Australian High Commission, Pretoria
Meridan Biziak	First Secretary, Immigration	Australian High Commission, Pretoria
Elizabeth Dietrichsen	Business Development Manager, Johannesburg, Growth & Emerging Markets	Australian Trade and Investment Commission (Austrade), Pretoria
Brendan Coyne	Austrade Commissioner	Austrade, Ghana

Name	Position	Organisation
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Gugu Makhubo	Communications Manager	Palladium
Mark Lawrence	Program Operations Manager	Palladium
Ngonidzashe Chipato	M&E Manager	Palladium
Jenny Laughton	Awards Manager	Palladium
DC Jacobs	Alumni Engagement Manager	Palladium
Danielle Stein	M&E Advisor	Palladium
Nancy Biwott	Gender Equality & Social Inclusion Officer	Palladium
Samson Odongo	Alumni Officer	Palladium
Patrick Tito Kibiego	Systems Support & Data Analyst	Palladium
Mbindyo Kimanthi	Stakeholder Relations Officer	Palladium
Cecilia Mulinge	Awards Officer	Palladium
Melvin Ochieng Otieno	Awards Officer	
Grace Olango	Awards Officer	Palladium
Country stakeholders		
Botswana:		
Rebecca Mphahudi	Assistant Director	Directorate of Public Service Management
Eswatini		
Mr. Nhlannhla Mnisi	Acting Under Secretary	Ministry of Public Service and Information
Ghana:		
Setor Yaw Adanuvor	Assistant Director	Scholarships Secretariat
Mawunyo Yakor-Dagbah	National Vice President	Ghana Federation of Disability Organisations
Rita Kusi Kyeremaa	Executive Director	Ghana Federation of Disability Organisations
Doris A. Ndebugri	Program Officer - Employment	Ghana Federation of Disability Organisations
Fred Ofosu	Training & Development Officer	Ghana Federation of Disability Organisations
Kenya:		
Simon M. Angote	Assistant Secretary, Human Resource Development Division, Directorate of Public Service Management	Ministry of Public Service, Youth and Gender Affairs
Dennis Mutahi	Director, Human Resource Development Division, Directorate of Public Service Management	Ministry of Public Service, Youth and Gender Affairs
John Chege Waweru	Programs Officer- Advocacy	Gender Violence Recovery Centre - The Nairobi Women's Hospital
Alberta Wambua	Executive Director	Gender Violence Recovery Centre - The Nairobi Women's Hospital
Moses Njeru	Chief Executive Officer	Kenya Chamber of Mines
Mozambique:		
Ester Fernanda Tinga	Head of Cooperation and Post Graduate Studies	Institute of Scholarships, Mozambique
South Africa:		
Sebenzile Matsebula	Executive Director	Motswako - Office Solutions, South Africa
Andrew Kudakwashe Dube	Chief Executive Officer	Africa Disability Alliance, South Africa
Dr Whitfield Green	Chief Director, Teaching and Learning Development,	Department of Higher Education and Training, South Africa
Ruth Roberts-Chen	Director, International Scholarships	Department of Higher Education and Training, South Africa
Victor Modubu	Acting Chief Director, Human Resource Development	Department of Public Service and Administration, South Africa

Name	Position	Organisation
Post-doctoral fellows and supervisors		
Professor Lyndy McGaw	Faculty of Veterinary Science	University of Pretoria
Dr Richard Ikuesan	Department of Computer Science	University of Pretoria
Professor Hein Venter	Department of Computer Science. Head, Digital Forensic Science (DigiForS) Research Group	University of Pretoria
Dr Steven Hussey	Department of Genetics.	University of Pretoria
Professor Zander Myburg	Department of Genetics. Chair: Forest Genomics and Biotechnology.	University of Pretoria
Professor Don Cowan	Director, Genomics Research Institute Director, Centre for Microbial Ecology and Genomics	University of Pretoria
Dr Esther Muema	Forestry & Agricultural Biotechnology Institute	University of Pretoria
Dr Vitus Apalangya	Lecturer, Department of Food Process Engineering	University of Ghana
Dr Abu Yaya	Senior Lecturer & Head of Department, Department of Materials Science and Engineering	University of Ghana
Afua Yeboah	Senior Assistant Registrar, Office of Research, Innovation and Development	University of Ghana
Selasie Agamah	Research Development Officer, Office of Research, Innovation and Development	University of Ghana
Professor Nicaise Ndam	Parasitology Department, Noguchi Memorial Institute for Medical Research	University of Ghana
Rev. Dr Richard Osei- Amponsah	Senior Lecturer, Department of Animal Science	University of Ghana
Dr Marian Sapah	Lecturer, Department of Earth Science	University of Ghana
Professor S. G. Kiama	Principal, College of Agriculture & Veterinary Sciences	University of Nairobi
Professor Margaret Hutchson	Chair, Department of Plant Science and Crop Protection	University of Nairobi
Professor Michael Okoth	Food Science, Nutrition & Technology	University of Nairobi
Dr. Esther Kanduma	Department of Biochemistry	University of Nairobi
Dr George Obiero	Director, Centre for Biotechnology & Bioinformatics	University of Nairobi
Dr Richard Onwonga	Land Resource Management & Agricultural Technology	University of Nairobi
Dr Izidine Pinto	Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Climate Systems Analysis Group	University of Cape Town
Dr Brian Kullin	Department of Molecular and Cell Biology	University of Cape Town
Dr Olumide Ogunmodimu	Applied Physics Group, Center for Minerals Research, Department of Chemical Engineering	University of Cape Town
Alumni roundtables		
South Africa:		
Dr Baldwin Nengovhela	Scientific Manager	Department of Agriculture, Forestry & Fisheries
Gugu Mona	Public Health Specialist	PEPFAR
Jacqueline Nkhate	Deputy Director: Knowledge Management	National School of Government
Harry Dube	Technical Advisor	Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
Nompumelelo Radebe	Director: Public Finance Division	National Treasury
Joshua Magomani	Agricultural Economist	Department of Agriculture Forestry and Fisheries
Zulaigha Ismail	Aerospace Engineer	Denel Aeronautics
Precious Mlaudzi	Director	Vusela Quantity Surveyors
Mankaleme Letswalo	Deputy Director-Asia Bilateral Relations	Department of Trade and Industry
Kagiso Nnoi	Geologist	Department of Geological Survey, Botswana

Name	Position	Organisation
Ghana:		
Bright Kwesi Awuye	Research Officer	Global Alliance for Trade Facilitation
Lydia Amina ACHEL	Chief Superintendent	Ghana Immigration Service (Ghana Government)
Emmanuel Ebo Arthur	District GNAT Secretary	Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT)
Joyce Caitlyn Ocansey	Environmental Governance and Gender Specialist	Ministry of Energy
Frederick Nsatimba	Principal health tutor (Nurses Training College, Pantang)	Ministry of Health
Patience A Nsatimba	Principal Nursing Officer (Nurse manager)	Ministry of Health
Dr Paul Adjei Onyina		Pentecost University College
Martha Lewis Korku	Superintendent Pharmacist	Ghana Health Service
Gordon Okyere Adjei	Deputy Head, Safety Monitoring Department	Food and Drugs Authority
Daniel Ninson		
Kenya:		
Angella Gichaga	Chief Executive Officer	The Financing Alliance for Health
Paul Mirie	Mineral Economist	Ministry of Petroleum and Mining
Dr Mary Onsarigo	Senior Scientist	National Commission for Science Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI)
Dr Benard Mware	Postdoctoral Fellow	International Institute of Tropical Agriculture
Charles Ngunjiri	Senior Assistant Director	Ministry of East African Community
Regina Opondo	Director of Education	Kiambu County Government
Caroline Kisato	Local Advisory Council	Kids to School Foundation
Njoki Kahiga	Commissioner (former)	Kenya Law Reform Commission
Philip Lang'at	Assistant Director- Livestock Production	Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock
Caroline Nyongesa	Regional Advisor	Malteser International
Anbar Ganatra	County Dentist	Ministry of Health- Kiambu
Anderw Wanga	Deputy Head of Internal Audit	Agricultural Finance Corporation
Jane Kamau	Centre Manager	National Industrial Training Authority
Short Course providers		
John Brighenti	Manager	University of Queensland International Development
Badrul Alam	Development Coordinator	University of Queensland International Development
Associate Professor Neil Paulsen	Business School	University of Queensland
Professor Paul Kibuuka	Economic Research Division	University of South Africa
Professor David Fourie	School of Public Management and Administration	University of Pretoria
Karen Martin	Programme Manager	Enterprises University of Pretoria
Professor Robyn McConchie	Director, ARC Centre for Food Safety in Fresh Produce	University of Sydney
Vivian Atieno	Capacity Building Officer	African Insect Science for Food and Health (ICIPE)
Professor Florence Olubayo	Agricultural Scientist, Department of Plant Science and Crop Protection	University of Nairobi
Keith Wilson	Senior International Trade Law Counsellor, Institute for International Trade	The University of Adelaide

Appendix C: High level results

The expected results are listed below, with original text or number as per the design in italics in parentheses. The results data included in the table is for the current phase of the Australia Awards in Africa investment (that is, 2016 onwards).

Unless otherwise indicated the results data in Table 5 has been taken from excel spreadsheet proved by Palladium to the evaluator in November 2018. This results data may differ from more up-to-date results reported by Palladium to DFAT, and as such these results should not be used for official reporting purposes.

Table 5 Progress towards results

Result statement as per design	Revised results statement	Actual results (2016-2018)
Around 400 professionals from Sub-Saharan Africa will have completed a master's degree from an Australian university, primarily in the agricultural productivity, extractive industries and public policy sectors.	Around 600 professionals from Sub-Saharan Africa will have completed a master's degree from an Australian university, primarily in the agricultural productivity, extractive industries and public policy sectors.	497 scholars (233 female/ 264 male) accepted an Australia Awards scholarship over the period 2016-2019. See Appendix D for breakdown of scholars by country, sector and organisation type.
Around 800 Africans from government, civil society and the private sector will gain higher-level skills through formal short course studies in Australia and Africa in the target sectors of extractive industries, agricultural productivity and public policy.	Around 1,200 Africans from government, civil society and the private sector will gain higher-level skills through formal short course studies in Australia and Africa.	704 Africans (308 female/ 396 male) completed a short course over the period 2016-2018. See Appendix D for breakdown of participants by country, sector and organisation type.
Up to 6,000 Sub-Saharan African alumni of an Australia Awards program will be able to access alumni professional development activities, either in person or online	Over 4,000 Sub-Saharan African Alumni of the Australia Awards program will have access to Alumni networks.	As at July 2018 Palladium reported 6,542 alumni were registered on the database (and hence contactable to participate in any professional development activities that may be made available).
Gender parity in Awards delivered will be achieved and people with disability will be actively supported.	Gender parity in Awards delivered will be achieved and people with disability will be actively supported.	Except for Australia Awards Scholarship Intake 2018, more men have been offered Australia Awards scholarships (2016-2019) and short course awards (2016-2018). Percentages of PWD participating in Australia Awards in Africa remain lower than the informal target rate of 3-5%: 2011 -1 per cent; 2012 -1 per cent; 2013 - 2 per cent; 2014 - 3 per cent; 2015 - 4 per cent; 2016 - 2 per

		cent; 2017 – 3 per cent; 2018 – 1 per cent
		Over the period July 2016 – July 2018, \$9,352.95 was dispensed under the Gender Equality Fund to benefit 18 people. Over the same period, \$20,427.47 was dispensed under the Disability Equity and Access Fund to benefit 9 people. See Appendix J for further detail.
Alumni associations will be present in over 10 Sub-Saharan African countries.	Alumni associations will be present in over 20 Sub-Saharan African countries.	As at July 2018, Palladium reported 19 Alumni Associations with operational structures were formally registered.
Alumni, their work colleagues, and their social networks will have a better knowledge of Australia and its commitment to poverty reduction, economic growth, and equitable access for women.	Alumni, their work colleagues, and their social networks will have a better knowledge of Australia and its commitment to inclusive economic growth for Africa	It is not clear to the evaluation how this result is to be measured and where data would be reported. This results statement could be removed.
Australia's international status and its reputation as a provider of quality education and training will be significantly enhanced.	Australia's international status and its reputation as a provider of quality education and training will be significantly enhanced.	Data reported by Palladium indicates little difference between 2016-2018 data on the estimated number of African students studying in Australia (figures are ~7,200 – 7,250).

Appendix D: Summary of key data

Figure 3 Participation of people with disability, and disability-related courses, 2011 - 2018

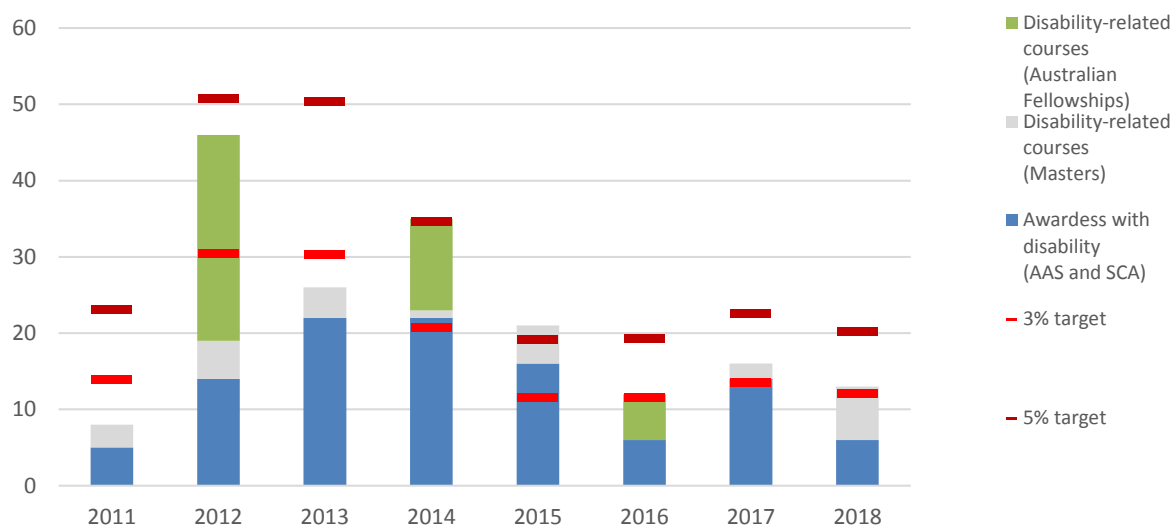


Figure 4 Australia Awards Scholarship scholars by country of citizenship, 2016-2019

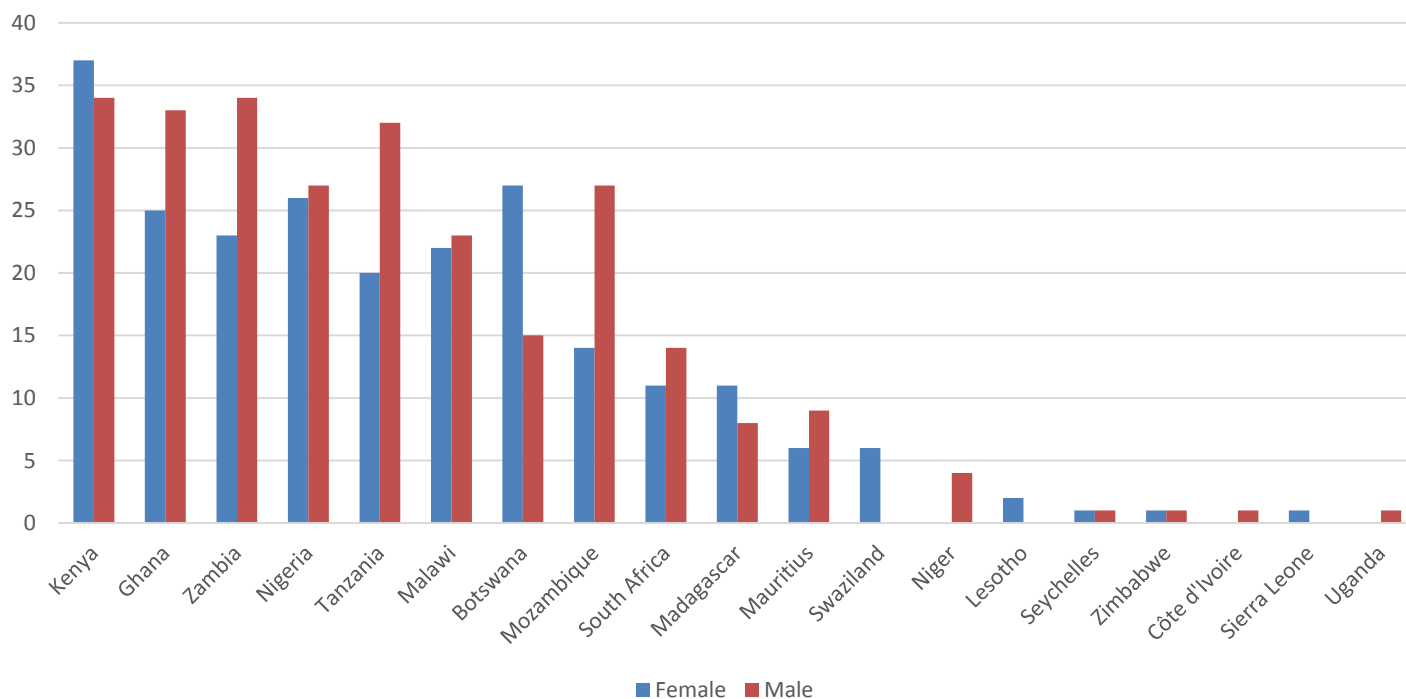


Figure 5 Short course participants by country of citizenship, 2016 -2018

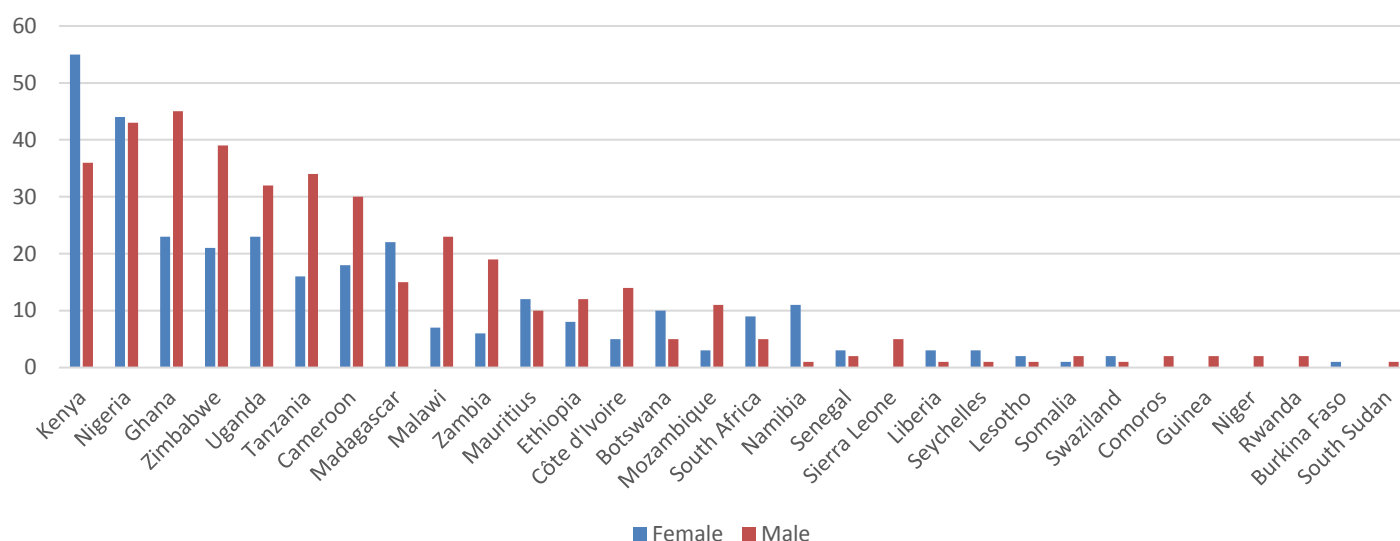


Table 6 Australia Awards Scholarships by priority sector and gender, Intakes 2016 – 2019

Priority Sector	2016			2017			2018			2019			Total
	F	M	Total	F	M	Total	F	M	Total	F	M	Total	
Agriculture	5	8	13	12	26	38	17	26	43	20	31	51	145
Disability								1	1		1	1	2
Education				1	2	3	9	1	10	3	4	7	20
Environment	1	3	4	4	9	13	8	6	14	5	10	15	46
Extractives	1	7	8	5	11	16	4	9	13	4	13	17	54
Governance/public policy	6	5	11	14	11	25	17	17	34	21	9	30	100
Health	7	2	9	20	10	30	16	9	25	18	13	31	95
Other					5	5	3	2	5	7	3	10	20
Water and Sanitation		1	1	2	2	4	3	4	7		3	3	15
Total	20	26	46	58	76	134	77	75	152	78	87	165	497

Table 7 Short Course Awards by priority sector and gender, Intakes 2016 – 2018

Priority Sector	2016			2017			2018			Total
	F	M	Total	F	M	Total	F	M	Total	
Agriculture	35	38	73	30	40	70	39	50	89	232
Extractives	39	67	106	25	26	51	18	38	56	213
Governance	32	37	69	45	57	102	45	43	88	259

Grand Total	106	142	248	100	123	223	102	131	233	704
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Table 8 Small grants by country and grant type, 2016 – 2018

Country / year	Grant type			Total
	Community Development Grant	Continuing professional development grant	Unspecified	
Cameroon	19,141.72			19,141.72
2018	19,141.72			19,141.72
Ghana	10,000.00			10,000.00
2018	10,000.00			10,000.00
Mauritius & Kenya	10,000.00			10,000.00
2018	10,000.00			10,000.00
Cameroon	32,277.00	9,300.00		41,577.00
2017	18,027.00	9,300.00		27,327.00
2018	14,250.00			14,250.00
Kenya	49,297.49			49,297.49
2017	29,814.87			29,814.87
2018	19,482.62			19,482.62
Lesotho		5,491.00		5,491.00
2018		5,491.00		5,491.00
Madagascar		5,644.00	10,000.00	15,644.00
2018		5,644.00	10,000.00	15,644.00
Mozambique			9,981.19	9,981.19
2018			9,981.19	9,981.19
Niger	7,094.18			7,094.18
2018	7,094.18			7,094.18
Nigeria	19,777.21	9,997.41		29,774.62
2017	19,777.21			19,777.21
2018		9,997.41		9,997.41
Nigeria, Kenya, Uganda			9,999.99	9,999.99
2018			9,999.99	9,999.99
South Africa	10,000.00	9,000.00		19,000.00
2017		9,000.00		9,000.00
2018	10,000.00			10,000.00
Tanzania	7,500.00			7,500.00

Country / year	Grant type			Total
	Community Development Grant	Continuing professional development grant	Unspecified	
2018	7,500.00			7,500.00
Uganda	9,976.47			9,976.47
2017	9,976.47			9,976.47
Zambia	9,993.75			9,993.75
2018	9,993.75			9,993.75
Total	185,057.82	39,432.41	29,981.18	254,471.41

Table 9 2017 participants in Strathmore Business School WIL training by country

Country	Africa Fellowships	Masters	Short Course	Australia Awards Fellowships	Total
Botswana		1			1
Cameroon			1		1
Ghana		1			1
Kenya		9	2	4	15
Malawi		1			1
Mauritius			1		1
Mozambique		1			1
Nigeria	1				1
Rwanda		1			1
South Africa		1			1
Tanzania		1			1
Uganda		2			2
Zambia		1			1
Total	1	19	4	4	28

Table 10 2018 participants in Strathmore Business School WIL training by country

Country	Australia Awards Fellowships	Masters	PHD	Short Course Awards	Total
Ethiopia		1		2	3
Kenya	2	3	1	5	11
Niger				1	1
Nigeria		2			2
Rwanda		2			2
Uganda		2		3	5
Tanzania		3		1	4
Total	2	13	1	12	28

Women in Leadership training delivered in 2018 by Federation Training that took place in Harare, Zimbabwe (consisted of 28 Alumnae from Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe) and in Port Louis Mauritius (29 Alumnae from Mauritius, Madagascar and Seychelles).

Figure 6 Number of Awards to Private Sector by Award Type, Country and Gender, 2016-2019

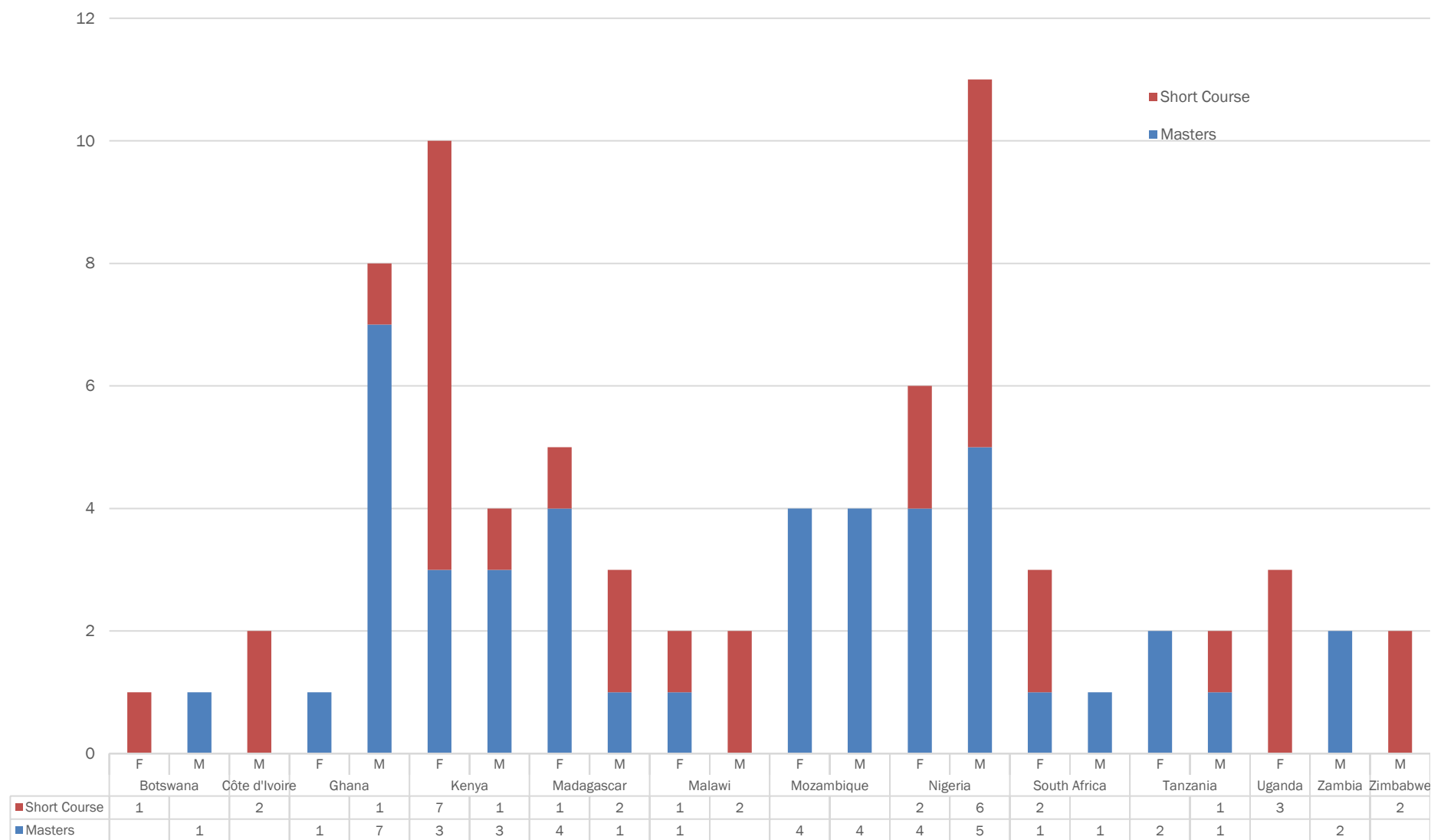
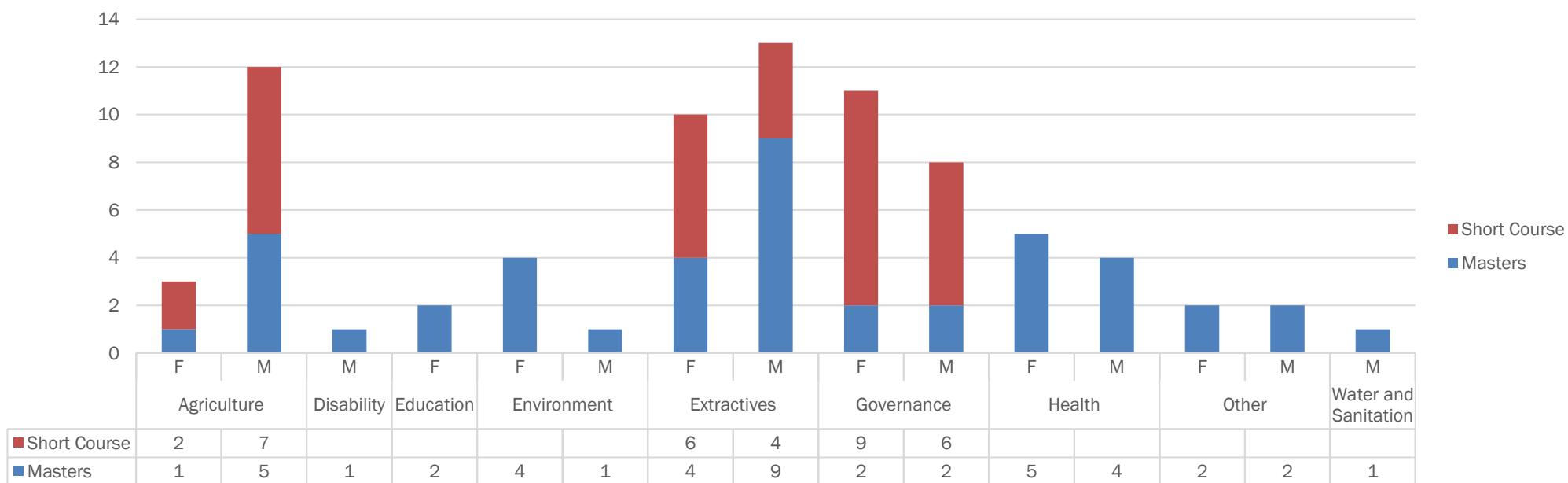


Figure 7 Number of awards to private sector applicants by award type, priority sector and gender, 2016-2019



Appendix E: Postdoctoral fellowship pilot

In 2017 Australia Awards in Africa launched a pilot for postdoctoral fellowships in partnership with the Australia Africa Universities Network (AAUN). The postdoctoral fellowships provide financial support for up to twelve months at an Australia tertiary institution for African academics affiliated with eligible Ghanaian, Kenyan and South African universities⁶³ and engaged in research activity.

The objectives of the postdoctoral fellowships are:

- › develop on-going educational, research and professional linkages between individuals and universities that are members of the Australia-Africa Universities Network (AAUN), in Australia and Ghana, Kenya or South Africa.
- › provide opportunities for high achieving academics to improve their research skills and contribute to development outcomes in Africa.
- › contribute to Australia's position as a high-quality education and training provider and a leader in research and innovation.
- › contribute to the research capacity of Ghanaian, Kenyan and South African tertiary institutions.
- › contribute to public and economic diplomacy efforts.

Postdoctoral fellowships were offered to 18 people (11 male/7 female) in 2017 and 2018. The fellowships range in duration from three to 12 months at an Australian tertiary institution.

Table 11 Post-doctoral fellows by gender, country and intake year

Country	2017		2018		Total
	F	M	F	M	
Ghana			1	3	4
Kenya	1		2	2	5
Mozambique		1			1
Nigeria		2	1		3
South Africa	2	2		1	5
Total	3	5	4	6	18

Thirteen fellows (9 male/4 female), seven supervisors (6 male/1 female) and four University representatives (1 male/3 female) participated in an interview⁶⁴ for this evaluation. At the time of

⁶³ The pilot was initially open to eligible applicants affiliated to South African universities that are members of the AAUN. In 2018 it was open to eligible applicants affiliated with Ghanaian, Kenyan or South African universities that are members of the AAUN.

⁶⁴ Face-to-face individual or group interviews were conducted with fellows and supervisors in Pretoria, Accra and Nairobi in November 2018 and individual telephone and/or skype interviews for fellows in Australia conducted in December 2018 and January 2019.

interview, two fellows had returned to their home institution after their time in Australia, seven were in Australia and three were yet to mobilise to Australia.

Postdoctoral fellows found out about the postdoctoral fellowship pilot through University networks (for example, colleagues and emails about research opportunities), online searches for research opportunities and information sessions provided by Palladium at their University. Two fellows mentioned hearing about the opportunity through AAUN networks.

Postdoctoral fellows reached out through their own or their home university's professional networks to identify Australian tertiary institutions or researchers in their relevant field of interest. The fellows then made contact and facilitated their own placements once successful with their fellowship application. Fellows and supervisors interviewed noted this was a standard process for research collaborations across Universities and was not less or more onerous than other research funding applications and processes.

Fellows and supervisors noted the following benefits have been derived to date through participation in the postdoctoral fellowship pilot:

- › Working with internationally-renowned researchers in agriculture, animal sciences, climatology, planetary and space science.
- › The fellowship enabled much faster progress than would otherwise have been achieved with the research project.
- › Access to laboratory facilities and/or techniques and tools not available at home institutions. For example, climate modelling software and plant genetics diagnostic tools.
- › Enhanced knowledge through exposure to Australia tertiary institution research and teaching practices, and opportunity to co-supervise doctorate candidates.
- › Establishing new and deepening existing research collaborations with Australian tertiary institutions: most of the research projects involved new collaborations with Australian tertiary institutions, with five projects linked to an existing research collaboration involving an Australia tertiary institution. Two of the research projects involve more than one African University.

Fellows and supervisors noted they expect the following to occur in future as a result of the postdoctoral fellowships:

- › Extending research collaborations to bring in other institutions/researchers in Australia and globally.
- › Publications: one research paper is currently being peer reviewed for publication.
- › Apply for research grants (in home country, Australia and internationally) with Australian researchers

Fellows and supervisors were very positive about their experience of the postdoctoral fellowships, and wholly supportive of this type of modality continuing past the pilot phase. They noted the following important considerations for future delivery of the postdoctoral fellowships:

- › The length of the fellowship was advertised as being up to two years, comprising research components in both Australia and Ghana, Kenya or South Africa, but limited to 12 months in Australia (in one stay). This raised several issues:
 - » All bar one fellow interviewed noted the process for undertaking research (for example, fieldwork, data analysis and collaboration with researchers in home and host tertiary institutions) may require regular (but shorter) trips between Australia and Africa than is currently permissible under the pilot's "one year in Australia/one year in Africa" model.

- » For a third of the fellows and supervisors interviewed there was an expectation that there would be support for research within Ghana, Kenya or South Africa as well as Australia. This misunderstanding about the support available under the pilot was clarified during or after the application process and prior to mobilisation. It does however raise an important consideration about how the fellowships are explained to applicants, and to what extent participating African universities are expected to provide funding for the additional twelve months of the postdoctoral fellowship (see following discussion point).
- › The participating Universities have different contexts which do not necessarily support the assumption in the pilot modality that fellows will be provided with support for a year of research at their home institutions:
 - » University of Nairobi does not have a recognised postdoctoral program whereby staff are released from teaching duties to undertake fieldwork (for those staff that are not eligible for sabbatical, they need to negotiate personal leave), and then provided with funds to continue research at the University.
 - » Experiences of postdoctoral fellows in South Africa appear to differ depending on whether they have a teaching or research position prior to going to Australia. For those not being released from a teaching position, they are required to secured teaching positions or funds for further research. Constraints in the research funding environment in South Africa (including anecdotal evidence that research funding levels have fallen significantly in recent years) were noted as severely limiting future research options for fellows.
- › Sustainability of research and research collaborations – support for researchers from Australia to work with researchers in Africa – this would build research collaboration and enable students and others to present research.
- › The inclusion of the \$1,000 research grant in the support provided is welcome, though fellows conducting research in natural sciences noted this is a very small amount compared with the significant costs associated with laboratory research. One fellow noted their host institution covered costs for the laboratory research, but this was not an ideal situation.
- › Divergent experiences with administrative and logistical challenges:
 - » three fellows note the initial disbursement of research and establishment funds took a long time, while three others noted payments were timely and not an issue.

The fellows spoke highly of the support provided by Palladium. For most, the experience was positive, and they found their interactions with Palladium staff to be professional and timely. Those fellows who had attended pre-departure briefings described them as helpful. Three fellows raised issues of lack of information, inconsistent information regarding visa processes and time taken for Palladium staff to respond to their queries. These comments are compatible with Palladium's reflections that other planned Australia Awards activities in 2018 such as selection interviews and short course notifications resulted in delays to finalising grant agreements to reflect individual fellows' circumstances.⁶⁵

It is suggested a strategic discussion regarding the postdoctoral fellowship pilot occur at the September 2019 Program Management Group meeting with a view to taking forward a design of postdoctoral fellowships as a permanent modality for the next design of Australia Awards in Africa.

⁶⁵ Six-monthly progress report #4, p. 19.

The discussion should take into account the considerations noted by fellows (outlined above) and the following:

- › Palladium to present a desk review of the postdoctoral fellows' interim and final reports outlining information from fellows on challenges faced, enablers and progress in achieving outcomes (this is in lieu of Palladium's scheduled review of the postdoctoral pilot in May 2019).
- › Outlining a timeline, process and responsibilities for taking forward strategic discussions with Australian and African Universities.

Although the postdoctoral fellowships pilot is yet to conclude, there is evidence that the linkages between individual researches and tertiary institutions in Australia and Africa could lead to longer-term collaboration, contributing to outcomes 1 and 3 of Australia Awards in Africa and Australia's global Awards agenda for strengthening linkages.

Appendix F: Private sector engagement overview

The Australia Awards in Africa design sets out expectations that there will be increased and new ways of working with the private sector.⁶⁶ These expectations are reflected in the contract between DFAT and Palladium. Minutes of the Program Management Group meetings between DFAT and Palladium, and Palladium's six-monthly progress reports outline a number of steps and different strategies that have been used to try and engage with the private sector under Australia Awards in Africa, including:

- › Developing a Private Sector Engagement Strategy (November 2016) which proposed the piloting of a range of programs with the extractives sector. Three pilots (designed to partner with the extractives and related value-chain industries) were detailed in the strategy.
- › In early 2017 DFAT Canberra agreed that Palladium would focus on three activities under a private sector engagement pilot (these are different to the original three pilot activities suggested in the Private Sector Engagement Strategy). Briefly summarised, these three activities were: (i) a short course in strategic partnering; (ii) private sector professional placements and mentoring for selected masters' scholars, and (iii) enhanced industry participation and funding of short courses.

Progress towards implementing these activities appears to have been:

- › **Activity 1** (Short Course Award in Strategic Partnering): a consultant carried out a scoping exercise in Zimbabwe (agriculture focus) and South Africa (extractives focus) to assess the feasibility of developing and implementing an action learning approach model for short course delivery (Paulsen, 2017). The scoping exercise was carried out with stakeholders in the extractives sector in South Africa and agricultural sector in Zimbabwe, with recommendations for a proposed pilot put to DFAT in October 2017. In February 2018, DFAT requested Palladium to prepare an Implementation Plan and costing to roll out the pilot activity.⁶⁷ Palladium's six-monthly progress report notes this was presented to DFAT in June 2018, and then simply notes "DFAT advised that no further action was required by Palladium on this activity" (p. 20). Given the significant resources put into this exercise for the scoping mission, and the preparation of an implementation plan, further discussion on why this activity did not progress (and/or alternative options for engaging with the private sector) is warranted.
- › **Activity 2** (Private sector professional placements and mentoring for selected masters' scholars): an internship pilot for four masters' scholars was held in March 2017. It is not clear from the reporting if this pilot has continued. The Extractives Mentoring pilot was trialled with Australia-Africa Minerals & Energy Group (AAMEG Palladium's six-monthly progress report notes that progress was slow, that AAMEG was unlikely to be the right organisation to assist with a long-term mentoring pilot and alternatives were being explored).
- › **Activity 3** (Enhanced industry participation and funding of Short Courses): the reporting cites examples of difficulties in engaging with AAMEG to participate in the review of the extractive short courses, and challenges in working with the private sector to identify shared-value activities

⁶⁶ "[the program] will pilot an innovative public-private partnership scheme seeking contributions from reputable Australian companies to increase the number of places available to African government and civil society participants, open up short course awards to company employees and improve training outcomes by fostering engagement and networking between public, private and civil society participants" (p.4).

⁶⁷ Six-monthly progress report #4, p. 20.

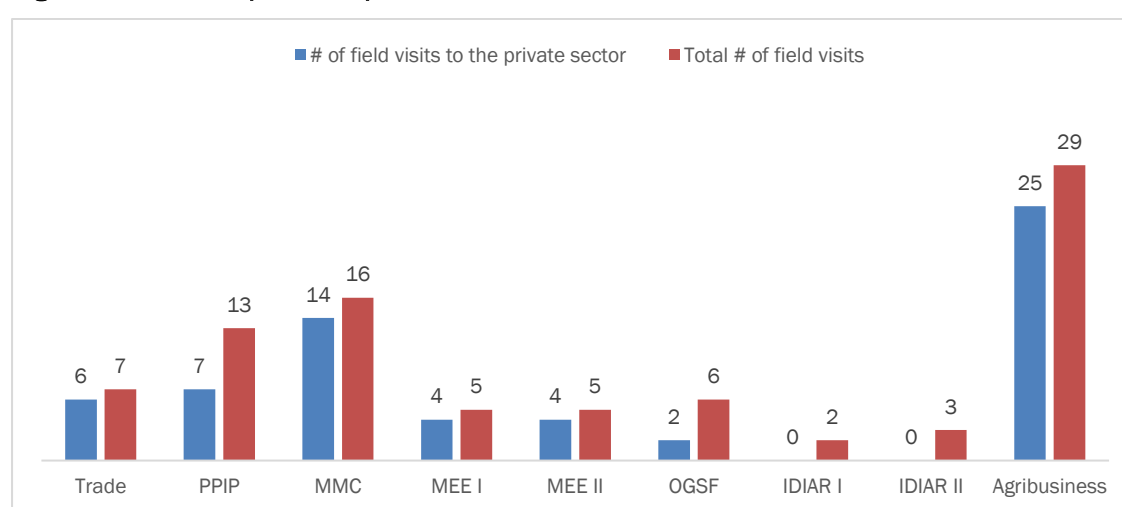
congruent with Australia Awards in Africa objectives. The reporting acknowledges the participation of the private sector in Short Course Award delivery through hosting field visits, conducting roundtables and guest lectures.

While progress was made against these activities, none of them fully progressed to their desired outputs.

There have been instances of using alumni and networks from the private sector to assist with promoting Australia Awards, and good participation of the private sector in the delivery of some short courses. Palladium's review of 2016-17 short course reports showed that, of the 10 short courses delivered, seven⁶⁸ visited a private sector business either in Australia or in Africa. The following information is taken from Palladium's report to the 2017 Program Management Group meeting.

At least 83 per cent of all field visits were to private sector establishments (Figure 8).

Figure 8 Field trips to the private sector



Agribusiness: 25 establishments in Australia visited; and three in Africa. Participants examined the operation and performance of every stage of the agribusiness value chain.

Managing Mine Closures: 14 mining organisations visited to get firsthand information on progressive rehabilitation and engagement to enhance rehabilitation outcomes.

Mineral and Energy Economics course, I: field visits to four establishments in Australia to expose participants to Australian examples of how theory is translated into best practices, challenges and compliance requirements under the regulatory regimes at different levels of governments, taxation regimes, status of gender balance, environment protection, corporate social responsibility, risk assessments, public access to information and community engagements.

Mineral and Energy Economics course, II: visits to four commercial mines in Australia to gain practical experience on the coal miner's life and the challenges that mining companies face to meet maximum safety standards and stringent environmental protection laws.

Ocean Governance and Sustainable Fisheries: two field visits to private fishing business in Australia to view commercial trawling equipment and fish tracking devices.

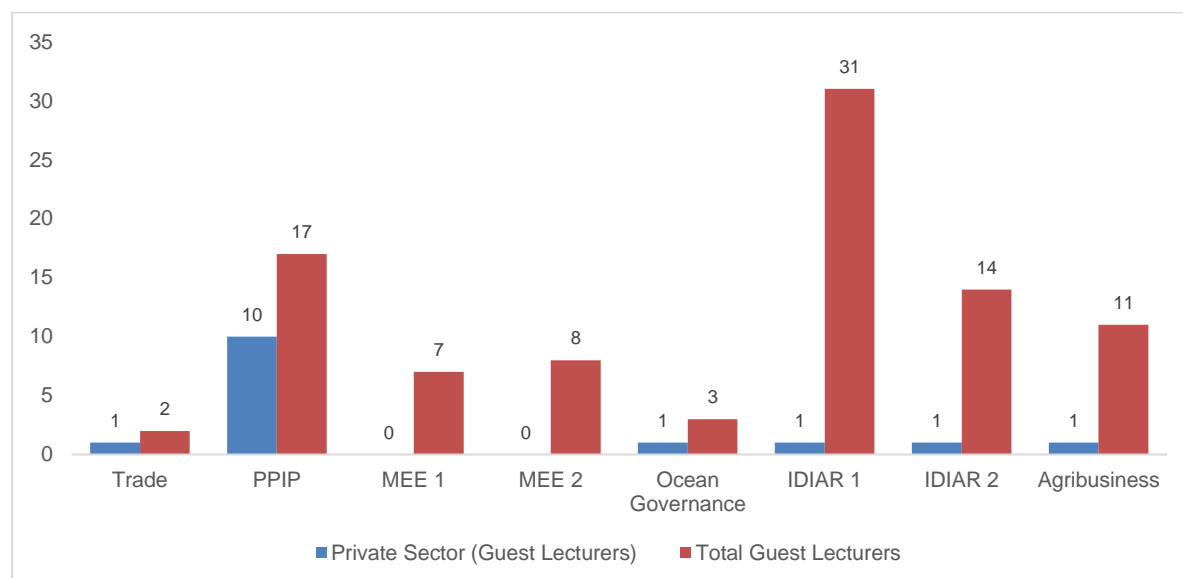
⁶⁸ The Managing Macroeconomic in Resource Rich Countries Course did not provide any private sector engagements in their Milestone 2 report. Increasing the Development Impact of Agricultural Research (IDIAR) – Field visits were limited to government institutions or cooperatives.

Public Private Infrastructure Partnerships: visits to seven business that have successful public private partnerships (five in Australia and two in Africa).

Trade Policy and Negotiation: field visits to six establishments, to highlight to participants the potential for expansion into international markets through the achievements of small companies, and to illustrate the wider value chain.

Of the 10 courses delivered in 2016-17, six courses invited private sector guest lecturers/ presenters (Figure 9).

Figure 9 Guest lecturers on short courses



Course Names: *Trade*: Trade Policy and Negotiation; *MEE*: Mineral and Energy Economics; *Ocean Governance*: Ocean Governance and Sustainable Fisheries; *IDIAR*: Increasing the Development Impact of Agricultural Research; *PPIP*: Public Private Infrastructure Partnerships

In addition to some practical/logistical issues noted regarding engaging with the private sector⁶⁹, there are some strategic considerations that stand out from Australia Awards in Africa's experience to date with private sector engagement:

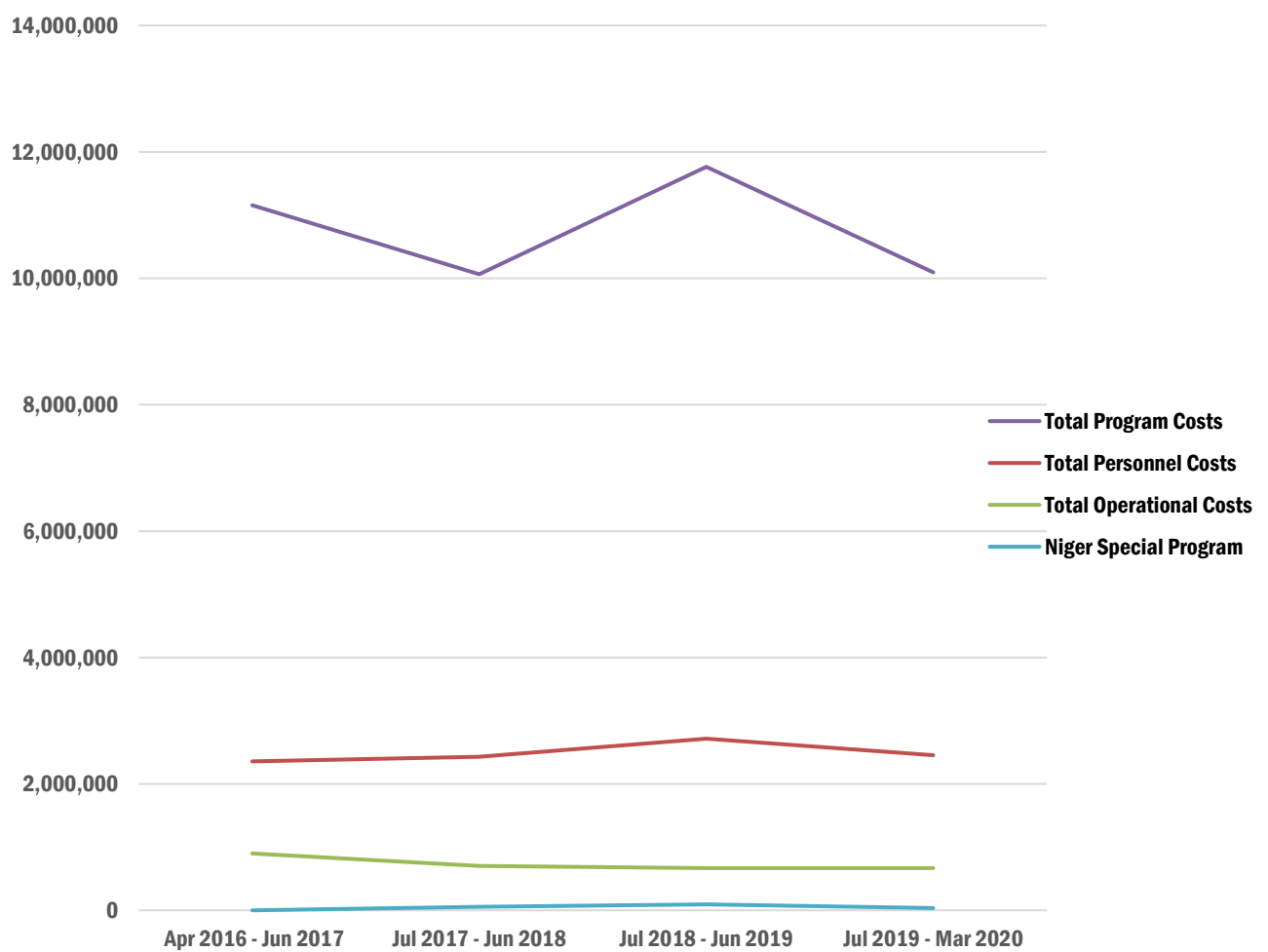
- › It is important to have clarity on both the strategic and functional intent of Australia Awards in Africa engagement with the private sector, and Australia's private sector development objectives in Africa to which Australia Awards in Africa is expected to contribute.
- › Dialogue with potential private sector actors takes time and private sector expectations may not necessarily be aligned with those of Australia Awards in Africa. There is an expectation of a transactional relationship rather than one grounded on shared values.
- › Conversations with private sector representatives confirmed their preference to engage with scholars from countries in which the company is active. These countries are not always aligned with those countries participating in Australia Awards in Africa.
- › DFAT leads on liaison with the private sector, with Palladium relying on DFAT Posts to convey a private sector perspective from their engagement with business. However, some Posts require Palladium's support for promotions outreach to the private sector.

⁶⁹ For example, Palladium reporting notes the mentoring pilot in cooperation with the Australia-Africa Minerals & Energy Group was affected by time constraints on industry members, the lack of structure of the mentoring program, and a lack of professional guidance on what makes good mentorship.

- › Once strategic clarity is achieved, agreement should be reached on the nature of activities to take forward, what is feasible with existing human and financial resources and the respective roles and responsibilities between Palladium and DFAT.

Appendix G: Expenditure summary

Figure 10 Actual and projectect expenditure, 2016 - 2020



Note: the expenditure figures do not include management fees

Appendix H: Stakeholder suggestions for improvements

The following are suggested improvements stakeholders wished to have reflected for DFAT consideration.

Suggestions with global Awards policy implications:

From Coordinating authorities

- › Consider PhD studies in areas where Australia has an advantage.
- › Consider bereavement travel support – of significant cultural importance for immediate family members.

From Posts

- › Panel chairing rules need flexibility, including in relation to chairing by locally engaged staff. These resource allocation decisions are best made by posts.
- › There should be more flexibility around branding.
- › There should be more flexibility around accepting application for master's scholarships of people who already have a master's degree. Current rules are a barrier to accepting key people of influence.

Suggestions for Africa Branch:

From Coordinating Authorities

- › Raise the SCA age restriction to enable people closer to retirement to participate as well.
- › Consider additional training for, and mechanisms for knowledge sharing among, coordinating authorities, including to ensure consistency of approach among different coordinating authorities.
- › Visits to, and internships in, Australia would also enable coordinating authority staff to be better informed when speaking to applicants.

From Posts

- › Consider raising the cut off age to 55
- › Suggested criteria for determining which countries are included:
 - » Status of the of the bilateral relationship with Australia;
 - » Constraints on other options for Australian influence;
 - » The extent to which Australia's offering can develop skills and contribute to enabling the country to meet its needs (e.g. in extractive industries, dryland farming, or public financial management);
 - » Scope to influence gender equity in the country;
 - » Maintaining influence in countries of geostrategic interest;
 - » Commercial interests (including emerging markets);
 - » Anticipated public/private sector split.

- › Task Palladium to track down alumni, based on DFAT's suggestions for institutions to help identify where people are now;
- › Better, regular communication from Africa Branch with posts involving teleconferences and emails to advise of any new elements in the work plan for the Awards or operational changes, and deadlines or post expectations, e.g. during the promotions cycle;
- › Africa Branch to allow posts to contact Palladium directly on operational issues for agreed activities (i.e. promotions and alumni events) without having to first go through Canberra, and then to communicate this to posts and Palladium;
- › Africa Branch to agree - and advise posts and Palladium - that Palladium clear drafts of public diplomacy material concerning alumni from a Post's countries of accreditation with the relevant post before publication (with response timeframes mindful of staff travel requirements).
- › In any future expansion, consideration should be given to scholarships that would help develop the countries' tertiary sectors as well as infrastructure.
- › Re-establish monthly hook-ups to increase engagement and knowledge sharing with other posts.
- › A plan detailing the expectations of the post will help determine how resource-intensive the tasking will be and assist in monitoring how much post time is spent on it.
- › It would be helpful to have a single person in Palladium to provide consistent information to the post and exercise quality control.
- › Online training on aid programming would be helpful for post staff dealing with Australia Awards but who do not have an aid program management background.
- › Flight ticket arrangements for short course participants need to be improved, e.g. avoiding long routes with multiple transfers

From alumni

- › Supervisors and directors should be contacted prior to surveys and reviews
- › Improve information sharing – give feedback on what happens after a survey is completed
- › Open up the grant coverage to include other sectors
- › Include additional short course, especially in relation to gender and inclusive education

From short course providers and participants

- › Provide more time for delivering the lectures, e.g. 6 weeks in Australia and 4 Weeks in South Africa
- › Flight ticket arrangements need to be improved, e.g. avoiding long routes with multiple transfers. Travel arrangements should include arrival at least one day before the course starts and time to pack at the end
- › It would be useful to have more site visits in areas of interest to see theory in practice
- › A less compressed timetable would provide more time to digest material
- › Provide time for social visits and other opportunities to get a better feel for the country
- › Optimal number for short courses is 20-25.

Suggestions for Palladium:

From Coordinating Authorities

- › In addition to noting each applicant's organisation, the applicant list should also specify each applicant's station/location. This will make it easier for them to find someone they know from the same work location.
- › Ensure that coordinating authorities understand the Reintegration Action Plan (RAP) and expected outcomes, that the RAP has visibility during the final briefing and bonding discussions.
- › Undertake regular reviews of individual RAPs. Coordinating authorities and supervisors could be part of the process.

From alumni and scholars

- › The application should mention the word limit and enable applicants to track their progress throughout the application;
- › If possible, avoid organising pre-departure briefings during public holidays;
- › Internships and fellowships for the students to not lose the practical side of things;
- › Supplementary leadership courses would help to better equip students to become better leaders in their countries;
- › Shorten the application process – currently whole year between submitting the application and arrival in Australia;
- › Exclude from applications comments from supervisors who are not supportive of applicant self-improvement to avoid delaying or sabotaging applications;
- › Ensure that course advisors provide clear and insightful information;
- › Ensure timely responses by Palladium staff to emails/queries;
- › Organise more events/sessions to share the opportunities and use social media to approach more applicants;
- › Produce a short video explaining how to complete the application form;
- › Make sure coordinating authority staff are visible and contactable during the application period rather than just coming in at the interview stage;
- › Widely advertise the scholarship through the media (radio, TV, newspapers, social media);
- › Utilise alumni offices for word-of-mouth publicity;
- › Consider how the application process can avoid negative consequences for applicants from unsupportive employers (who need to be engaged at an early stage);
- › Consider study opportunities for people who have been working for less than two years, including those who have recently graduated with good marks;
- › Consider applications from unemployed people;
- › Remove referral letter from previous jobs, because some were projects and are now closed;
- › Reduce the number of questions in the application form;
- › Give feedback to unsuccessful candidates;

- › The proximity to the doctor undertaking medical assessments and the hospital for x-rays should be considered to reduce strain on applicants (in Botswana the distance can be a significant barrier).

Appendix I: MEF and reporting recommendations

The literature and data review analysed program data for evidence of progress towards outcomes, performance benchmarks and results. This involved combining the data provided in four MEFs from Palladium's six-monthly progress reports into one MEF matrix. At this point, several issues with the way in which the data is reported became apparent – the following changes to the MEF and reporting content are recommended:

- › The results reported in the MEF annexes in the six-monthly progress report are not disaggregated as per the instructions in the MEF. At a minimum, data should be disaggregated by gender, disability, organisation type, sector and country wherever possible. Data also needs to be consistently disaggregated. For example, when referring to individuals, data should be sex and disability disaggregated (as much as possible). For example, "Twenty-Four Alumni participated at the 2017 pre-departure briefings in eight locations" could read "Twenty-four alumni (x female/x male, including x female/x male with a disability) participated at the 2017 pre-departure briefings in eight locations".
- › Results are to be reported in a consistent way that allows for aggregation across years. This has not occurred to date, the result being it is impossible for the MEF to provide a cumulative picture of program results two years into program implementation. This is one of the primary purposes of a MEF – to provide consistency of data reporting to cumulatively track results (or a program's progress towards its outcomes).
- › The MEF tables included in the six-monthly progress report include only data for the reporting period. This limits the ability of the reader to understand how the program is tracking with progress against the outputs and outcomes. Some statistical tables provide information across years, however the MEF does not.
- › Palladium's reporting includes useful detail about issues and specific recommendations for addressing issues or improving practice. However, the reporting does not note whether recommendations from the previous reporting period have been implemented or not (as recommended in DFAT's M&E standard on investment reporting). It is recommended an annex be included in the six-monthly progress reports to provide a status update on implementation of recommendations from the previous reporting period.
- › Some errors were noted with the totals in data summary tables in six-monthly progress reports. For example, Table E: Scope of Services Target Numbers for 2017 (vs Actual to December 2017) in six-monthly progress report #3. This suggests manual entry of data for reporting, which may point to data management issues (or it could simply be editing errors).
- › Combine the outcomes study datasets from 2017 and 2018 to enhance statistical analysis of data. Having a combined dataset across several years is more valuable from a statistical analysis perspective than separate datasets.

Appendix J: Gender Equality Fund and Disability Equity and Access Fund

Reporting period	Gender Equality Fund (GEF):		Disability Equity and Access Fund (DEAF):	
	Amount dispensed	Number of beneficiaries*	Amount dispensed	Number of beneficiaries*
January – July 2018	1,824.00	4	551	2
July-December 2017	2,603.95	6	925.85	1 (male)
January – July 2017	597.00	3 (2 female/1 male)	-	-
July-December 2016	4,328.00	5	18,950.62	6
Total (July 2016 – July 2018)	9,352.95	18	20,427.47	9

*Not all beneficiary information contained in the six-monthly progress reports is sex-disaggregated.

Glossary

Term	Meaning
Alumni	Used to include male and female graduates, in both singular and plural form.
Australia Awards Fellowships (currently on hold pending outcome of a global review)	<p>These are flexible training and/or research activities in areas of mutual interest to Australian host organisations and African fellows.</p> <p>Organisations in Australia partner with organisations in Africa and submit proposals for these courses. They also propose fellows.</p> <p>Proposals are evaluated and selected by Canberra Scholarships office.</p> <p>Australia Awards – Africa does not have any input in content or delivery, it only provides some logistical support for implementation and carries the numbers.</p>
Development outcomes	<p>Actions that lead to the development of a country, directly or indirectly.</p> <p>In the case of Australia Awards alumni, their development contributions could fall in the realm of organisational development, wider development contribution or social/community development contributions (volunteer work beyond workplace).</p>
Formative evaluation	Formative evaluations serve the purpose of improving/shaping a specific program or policy. They usually do not attempt to generalise findings beyond the setting in which the evaluation takes place. Formative evaluations often rely heavily on qualitative methods. ⁷⁰
Higher education	Higher education refers to both university and post-secondary vocational education.
Links	Links relate to personal, professional and/or institutional/organisational level relationships established by Alumni between Africa-Australia.
Outcomes	<p>Outcomes in Australia Awards relate to three main program objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Alumni are using awards skills, knowledge and networks in key sectors relevant to their training to contribute to sustainable development in their workplace and/ community; 2) Targeted countries in Africa view Australia as a valued partner; and 3) Alumni have positive ongoing links with Australia
Scholarships	Long term study opportunities comprising Master and PhD. PhDs were offered in the Agriculture sector only. Masters scholarships cover a range of sectors, including Extractives, Health, Agriculture and Public Policy. They are awarded following a competitive application and selection process managed by Palladium

⁷⁰ Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods*, 3rd ed. Sage.

Short Course Awards	<p>Short term training courses in key priority sectors (Extractive, Education, Governance/Public Policy, Agriculture, Health).</p> <p>Short Course Awards are delivered through partnerships between Australian and African institutions involving delivery in-Africa or a combination of in-Africa and in-Australia delivery. They are awarded following a competitive application and selection process managed by Palladium.</p>
Skills transfer	Refers to training, coaching or any other such effort made to share Award gained skills with others.
Training	Training include university courses, formal training and competency-based training. In practice, training did not include on-the-job training or distance education.

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