



Australian Government

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade



AID PROGRAM PERFORMANCE REPORT 2017-18

Australia Awards – A Global Picture

May 2019



KEY MESSAGES

This inaugural Australia Awards Performance Report brings together information from individual Australia Awards investments to provide a global picture of progress and achievements over the 2017-18 financial year.

The key findings of this report are:

- In 2017-18, the Australia Awards budget allocation was \$300.5 million. This equates to **3,871 new Australia Awards in over 60 countries**, with awardees studying at over **50 institutions**.
- In terms of **modalities**, 40 per cent of the awards were for long-term scholarships and 60 per cent were for short-term awards.
- Australia Awards are offered on the basis of **merit-based selection processes** across **a diverse range of development themes and fields of study** aligned to Australia's development, economic and public diplomacy priorities, including: Health, Governance, Economic Growth and Education.
- Globally, the ratio of **female to male long term scholars was 55:45**. This reflects the strategic intent to maintain equal numbers of awards for women and men at the global level.
- Less than two years into the current Australia Awards Global Strategy, there is evidence of progress towards its four long-term outcomes, including:
 - Alumni using their **skills, knowledge and networks** to contribute to sustainable development (Long-term outcome 1). Upon their return, alumni overwhelmingly agree that they are passing on skills and knowledge and introducing improved practices and innovations through their work.
 - Alumni contributing to **cooperation between Australia and partner countries** (Long-term outcome 2). There is a growing pool of case studies, collected through the Australia Awards Global Tracer Facility and other sources, of positive people-to-people links arising from the Australia Awards.
 - **Effective, mutually advantageous partnerships** between institutions and businesses in Australia and partner countries (Long-term outcome 3). Although there are a handful of examples of formal and informal arrangements arising from the Australia Awards, it appears to be difficult to track and measure these partnerships as they often arise indirectly. Nearly half of alumni respondents reported that they did not develop any professional links during their studies.
 - Alumni **viewing Australia, Australians and Australian expertise positively** (Long-term outcome 4). The overwhelming majority of alumni agree that they would recommend Australia as a good place to study and that their Australia Awards experience has helped them to better understand Australian culture.
- Guided by a strategic principle of **value for money and evidence-based decision making**, there is a significant amount of monitoring and evaluation activity occurring at individual investment level and through the Australia Awards Global Tracer Facility. However, it remains **a challenge to build a comprehensive global picture of performance**. This remains an ongoing focus of work under the Australia Awards Global Strategy and Monitoring and Evaluation Framework.

CONTEXT

Overview

Australia Awards are prestigious international scholarships and short-term awards funded by the Australian Government. They offer the next generation of global leaders an opportunity to undertake study, research and professional development, with the majority involving some time in Australia. The Australia Awards investment aims to 'support partner countries progress their development goals and have positive relationships with Australia that advance mutual interests'.

The program is managed in a decentralised way. In broad terms - policy, training and financial payments are managed centrally in Canberra. Selection of students, funding and financial decisions sit with the geographic area, and may be managed from Canberra, a regional area or Post including through the use of an outsourced managing contractor.

In late 2016, the *Australia Awards Global Strategy: Investing in the next generation of global leaders for development 2016-2018* (the Strategy) was introduced to provide strategic direction and improve consistency in policy and program implementation and management.

The Strategy identifies four-long term outcomes:

Outcome 1: Alumni are using their skills, knowledge and networks to contribute to sustainable development.

Outcome 2: Alumni are contributing to cooperation between Australia and partner countries.

Outcome 3: Effective, mutually advantageous partnerships between institutions and businesses in Australia and partner countries.

Outcome 4: Alumni view Australia, Australians and Australian expertise positively.

The Strategy is complemented by the *Australia Global Alumni Engagement Strategy 2016-2020*¹.

This Performance Report reports against the four long-term outcomes and cross-cutting principles² of the Australia Awards. It draws on a number of sources³, including:

- the 2017-18 Australia Awards Statistical Profile⁴;
- annual surveys of Australia Awards scholars on-award in Australia ('on-award surveys');
- 22 Aid Program Performance Reports 2017-2018 (APPRs) and 14 Aid Quality Checks (AQC)s related to individual country and regional investments⁵;
- monitoring and evaluation (M&E) information collected at individual investment level⁶; and
- the Australia Awards Global Tracer Facility (the Global Tracer Facility).

The introduction of the Global Tracer Facility in July 2016 has laid the foundations for the provision of long term performance data. The Performance Report draws on findings from Year 2 of the Tracer Facility Survey ('the Tracer Survey') focusing on alumni from the 1996 to 2005 cohort as well as alumni case studies conducted in China, Indonesia, Mongolia, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu.

¹ The *Australia Global Alumni Engagement Strategy 2016-2020* aims to grow a global alumni community that actively engages and promotes Australia and advances national interests. A summary report highlights available data and profiles of Australia's alumni. The documents are available at: <https://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/Pages/australia-global-alumni-engagement-strategy-2016-2020.aspx>

² There are five principles: Principle 1: Alignment with Australia's development, economic and public diplomacy priorities; Principle 2: Equity of access; Principle 3: Merit-based selection; Principle 4: Value for money and evidence-based decision making; Principle 5: Promote the Australia Awards

³ A description of data sources is included in Annex A.

⁴ The current profile is available at: <https://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/Pages/australia-awards-statistical-profile.aspx>

⁵ A full list of these APPRs and AQC)s is included in Annex A.

⁶ Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) documents are prepared by some but not all Australia Awards investments.

EXPENDITURE

The Australia Awards expenditure was \$300.5 million in financial year 2017-18. By region, the largest commitments were allocated to South-East and East Asia (52%), South Asia (13%) and Pacific (23%). In 2018, DFAT offered 3,871 Australia Awards to over 60 developing countries. This represents a 7 per cent increase from the 2017 intake. In 2018, over 86 per cent of Australia Awards were offered to the Indo-Pacific region.

The 3,871 awards in 2018 include 1,251 Australia Awards Scholarships, 340 Australia Awards Pacific Scholarships, 7 ACIAR awards; 1,136 Australia Awards Fellowships and 1,137 Short Course Awards. Overall DFAT was financially supporting more than 5,100 long-term awardees from multiple intakes in the financial year 2017-18.

Total Australia Awards Expenditure 2017-18 Financial Year:

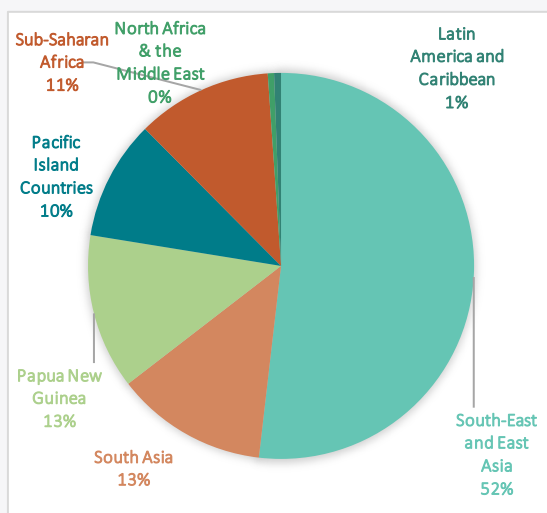


Figure 1: Total Australia Awards Expenditure for all schemes and multiple intakes by region

Data source: Australia Awards worksheet with core dataset as of December 2018

Australia Awards Scholarships 2018 intake:

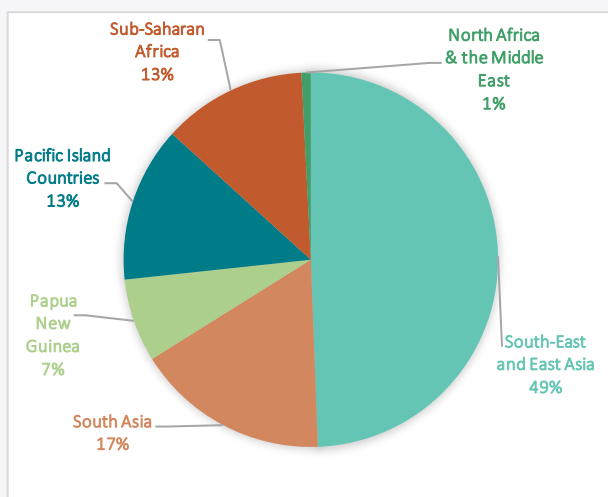


Figure 2: Australia Awards Scholarships by region

Data source: Australia Awards worksheet with core dataset as of December 2018

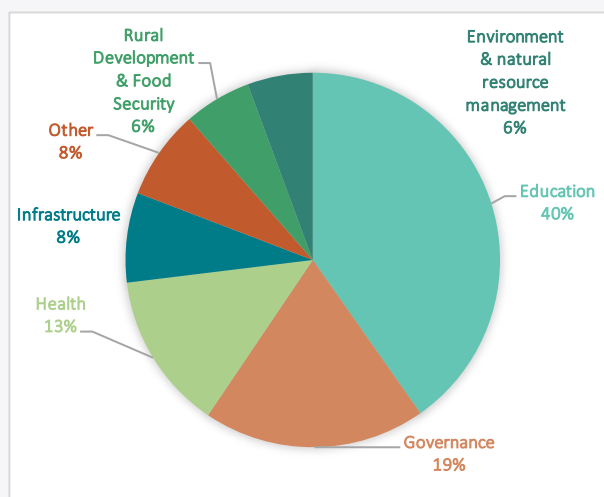


Figure 3: Australia Awards Scholarships by scholarship key sector

Data source: OASIS Power BI report – 2 May 2019

Australia Awards Fellowships Round 17:

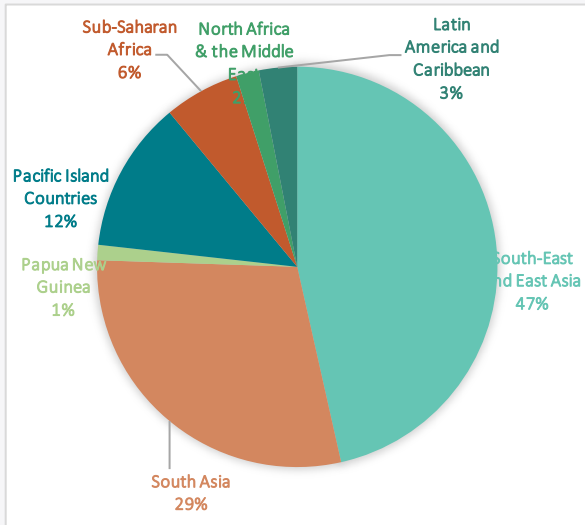


Figure 4: Australia Awards Fellowships Round 17 by region

Data source: Australia Awards Statistical Profile January 2019 updates (p. 5)

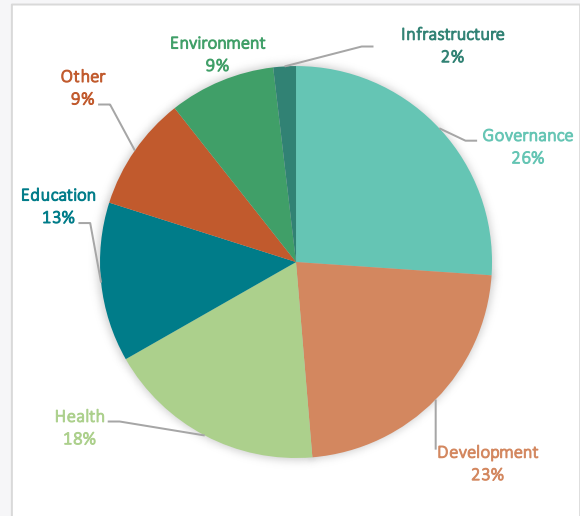


Figure 5: Australia Awards Fellowships Round 17 by key sector

Data source: Australia Awards Statistical Profile January 2019 updates (p. 5)

Overview of Progress

In the 2017-18 financial year, the Australia Awards has demonstrated progress towards achieving each of the four long-term outcomes. Table 1 provides a rating of progress towards each outcome, where each rating is based on an extensive review of the available data sources (detailed in Annex A), including the Aid Program Performance Reports and Aid Quality Checks for each country/regional investment.

The introduction of the Australia Awards Global Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (the MEF) in November 2015 and the Global Tracer Facility in 2016 have led to considerable improvements in the evidence base on the longer term impact and outcomes at an investment and global level.

As the number of case study examples continues to grow, there is a concurrent need to improve the evidence base by building a more standardised and global picture of performance across all measures, with a particular focus on developing robust measures for Long-term Outcomes 2 and 3.

Table 1 Rating of Progress towards Australia Awards Long-term Outcomes

Outcomes	Current Rating
1. Alumni are using their skills and networks to contribute to sustainable development	■
2. Alumni are contributing to cooperation between Australia and partner countries	■
3. Effective, mutually advantageous partnerships between institutions and businesses in Australia and partner countries	■
4. Alumni view Australia, Australians, and Australian expertise positively	■

■ **Green.** Progress is as expected at this stage of implementation and it is likely that the objective will be achieved. Standard program management practices are sufficient.

■ **Amber.** Progress is somewhat less than expected at this stage of implementation and restorative action will be necessary if the objective is to be achieved. Close performance monitoring is recommended.

■ **Red.** Progress is significantly less than expected at this stage of implementation and the objective is not likely to be met given available resources and priorities. Recasting the objective may be required.

OUTCOME 1: ALUMNI ARE USING THEIR SKILLS AND NETWORKS TO CONTRIBUTE TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

This section describes the use and application of skills, knowledge and networks. Examples of monitoring and evaluation measures to demonstrate impact include the number and percentage of:

...awardees by employment sector, development theme and field of study	...awardees achieving a qualification (completion rates)	...alumni with increased knowledge and skills	...awardees /alumni with a job to return to upon completion of their course (sex-disaggregated)	...alumni returning to a higher position upon completion of their course (sex-disaggregated)
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Skills, knowledge and networks

At a global level, **on-award surveys** have found that 98 per cent of respondents are positioned to use their skills, knowledge and networks to contribute to sustainable development.

Selection of high-calibre applicants and alumni

At an investment level, considerable work has been undertaken to ensure applicant, awardee and alumni profiles are consistent with the objectives and principles of the Australia Awards. These activities are diverse, and range from actions to maintain a balanced gender profile to those designed to improve the preparedness of awardees to undertake studies in Australia.

In a number of instances, this work has also involved actions to ensure an effective, efficient and equitable application process. For example, **Indonesia** reported that all 2018 intake targets for the allocation of long term awards were achieved. They attributed this to changes to outreach, promotion and selection processes that enabled them to identify appropriate awardees, with 71 per cent of awards going to candidates from a mix of 11 Indonesian ministries, 6 Embassy partners and 7 geographic focus areas.

Using qualitative evidence collected through interviews, case studies, focus groups and surveys, **Cambodia** reported that their alumni are making a contribution to Cambodia's development on their return. These areas of development include the three pillars (agriculture, infrastructure and health and education) outlined in DFAT's Aid Investment Plan for Cambodia. The **Philippines** reported that it continues to select participants based on their capacity to contribute to development. The investment tests this by requiring applicants to submit re-entry action plans which commit alumni to implementing a development project on their return to the Philippines.

Country/regional investments routinely undertake reviews of their selection processes to improve transparency, rigour and equity. **Mongolia** reported that challenges in the past had included the need to increase the number of male applicants, access for people in rural areas and attract more applicants with disability. Within the current reporting period, Mongolia took measures to address these by introducing different criteria for provincial people and implementation of the provincial outreach plan. The number of applications received from provincial people has increased threefold. Similarly, the number of applicants with disability significantly increased, making up 2.1 per cent of the total submitted applications.

Relevance of studies and employment outcomes

Awardees are studying across a diverse range of development themes and fields of education (Table 2). Globally, more than 9 in 10 respondents to the **on-award surveys** agree that:

- the knowledge and skills provided by their course or research will be **useful for working on development issues** in their home country;
- **they value the skills and knowledge** gained;

- their study experience will help them make a **positive impact on the community** in their home country;
- the Australia Awards has **motivated them to help support development initiatives** in their home country; and
- their study experience has **improved their ability to better manage projects** to meet specified goals.

Africa reported that 90 per cent of alumni who responded to an annual survey say they are using their skills to contribute to development outcomes. In **Laos**, surveys show almost all 2016 graduates returned to work in an area related to their study, and one-third attribute a recent promotion to their qualification. Using qualitative data to report on priorities in the environment sector, **Fiji** reported that a 2011 alumnus completed a Master of Environmental and Resource Economics from the Australian National University. He later became the Director of the Climate Change Division with the Ministry of Economy and held this position up until January 2017.

Mongolia reported that three alumni have held ministerial posts since September 2017. These graduates include a Minister for Foreign Relations, a Minister for Finance and a Minister for Defence. As key Cabinet Ministers, they play an active role in Mongolia's development processes, and directly contribute to formation of links and bilateral ties with Australia and other partners. **Kiribati** reported that 450 alumni include the President, Speaker of Parliament, four Ministers, five Ministry Secretaries, the Commissioner of Police and a number of senior executives in government ministries. In **Vanuatu**, there was evidence of alumni being placed in appropriate positions. These include the first ni-Vanuatu pathologist leading the newly established Pathology Unit at Vila Central Hospital; a female graduate in engineering / project management now working for an engineering company; and two female medicine graduates employed at Vila Central Hospital.

Application of skills and knowledge

At investment level, examples of monitoring and evaluation measures to demonstrate impact include percentage of alumni:

...providing significant and appropriate examples of uses of their award skills 18 (or 6-12) months after return	...providing significant and appropriate examples of actual uses of their award skills 3 years or more after return	...reporting development impacts related to gender equality within 18 months after return	...who remain employed in the field of their award qualification 3 or more years after return
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At a global level, the **Tracer Survey**⁷ found that 98 per cent of alumni indicated they have *passed on their skills and knowledge to others* in their country following their return. Additionally, 97 per cent indicated they had *introduced improved practices and innovations in their work* on return from their award. In terms of employment outcomes leading to **positions of leadership and influence**, the **Tracer Survey**⁸ found that 70 per cent of alumnae hold a formal leadership position in their work, and a further 23 per cent have informal leadership roles. A case study from **Vanuatu** is included below of an alumni that has used her Australia Award to progress her career in the legal profession.

Alumni highlighted the factors that helped them to do this. These included the new skills and knowledge they had gained, support from their employers and support from networks they had established while on-award. However, they also faced challenges, identifying cultural and bureaucratic barriers, a mismatch of skills to their jobs on return and a lack of recognition of new skills.

Alumni are overwhelmingly positive in their response to core statements about passing on skills and knowledge and introducing improved practices and innovations through their work, as shown in Figure 3. This positive response rate indicates that alumni are consistently using and applying the skills and knowledge gained through their award to contribute to development on return to their home country.

⁷ Year 2 surveyed alumni who completed their studies between 1996 and 2005

⁸ Year 2 surveyed alumni who completed their studies between 1996 and 2005

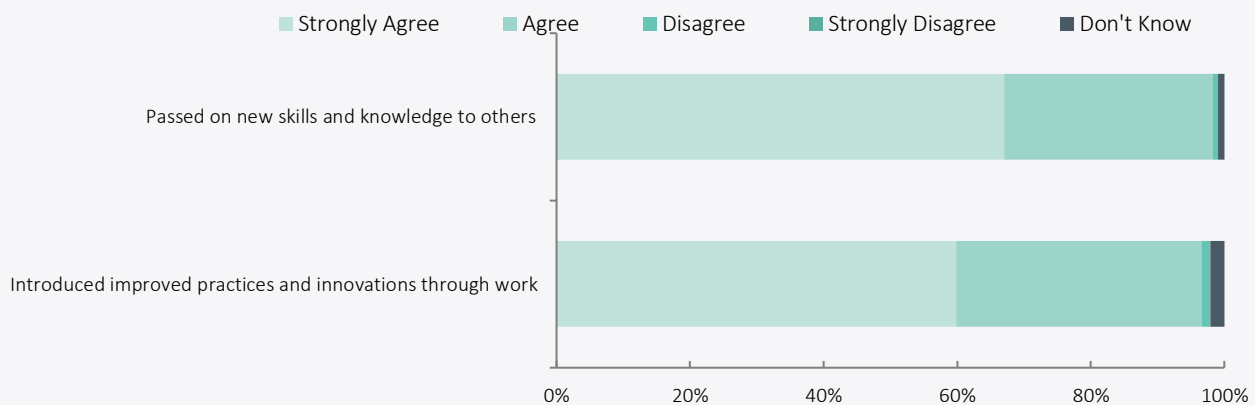


Figure 3: Skills, practices and networks formed as a result of Australia Award (n=1,045)

Data source: Australia Awards Global Tracer Facility Tracer Survey Report Year 2 2017-18 Alumni of 1996 to 2005 (p.18)

Using quantitative data from alumni surveys, **Indonesia** reported that a 2017 survey of alumni found 89 per cent of long-term award alumni respondents applied their technical knowledge and skills from their studies in their current jobs and introduced some improvements to their organisations. In **Africa**, 73 per cent of alumni who responded to an annual surveyed report an active role in the development contribution to their home countries, suggesting that alumni are making significant contributions in their sectors of expertise. Additionally, 75 per cent of those survey respondents reported that they were applying their new skills and knowledge to promote gender equality and social inclusion in their workplace. In **Vietnam**, an Alumni Development Impact Survey (ADIS) found that 131 alumni (56 percent of whom were female) provided 355 sound examples of the ways in which they were using skills and knowledge gained from their scholarship study in policy development (25%), practices (50%), and knowledge transfer (25%). Two hundred and fourteen examples involved alumni taking a leadership role.

South and West Asia report that 85 per cent of short course alumni surveyed in 2017 continued to engage in development tasks related to their course 6-12 months after completion. Examples of alumni contribution include: (i) an Afghan alumna publishing a research paper on Women's Economic Empowerment in the Asia-Pacific Journal of Public Policy; and (ii) a Bangladeshi alumna designing and implementing a training program for 280 Bangladeshi farmers in sustainable crop production through the application of modern irrigation techniques in drought and saline prone areas.

Case study: Ms Christina Suzie Thyna

Country: Vanuatu

Scholarship: Australian Development Scholarship (Australia Awards)

Years: 2009-2010

Degree: Master of Laws (International Business and Economic Law)

Institution: The University of New South Wales

Field: Trade Law

Current position: Founder and lawyer, Cornerstone Lawyers – self-employed

Brief bio: Ms Thyna is a lawyer and entrepreneur, with her own legal firm, CornerStone Lawyers based in Port Vila. She was born on Malekula Island and studied law at the University of the South Pacific and the University of Moncton, Canada.

Prior to going to study in Australia, Ms Thyna worked in a private law practice. Through her Australian Development Scholarship, she studied a Master of Laws at the University of New South Wales with a focus on trade. On her return to Vanuatu in 2010 she resumed work with her previous firm before making the transition to the Vanuatu Governments' State Law Office. Passionate about practicing law, Ms Thyna established her own legal firm, and now works on a variety of legal cases including: trade, trademark and intellectual property issues.

Data source: 'Australia Awards Global Tracer Facility Case Study in Vanuatu - legal and justice fields December 2017'





I'm the president of the women in our church...it makes me proud to give them advice and to assist in issues that they're confronted with. I'm also proud of having set up my own law firm... I think the studies in Australia contributed in one way or another...The benefits (of an Australian scholarship) are the exposure that the students have had. It makes them realise that there's a world out there and they can think beyond their horizon and there's so much they can achieve.



Overall progress towards achieving Long-term Outcome 1

The available evidence suggests that alumni are using their skills, knowledge and networks to contribute to sustainable development. While on-award, scholars report that the knowledge and skills provided by their course or research will be useful for working on development issues in their home country. Upon return, alumni overwhelmingly agree that they are passing on skills and knowledge and introducing improved practices and innovations through their work. Based on the available evidence, progress is as expected at this stage of implementation (Table 3).

Table 3 Rating of Progress towards Australia Awards Long-term Outcome 1

Outcomes	Current Rating
1. Alumni are using their skills and networks to contribute to sustainable development	
 Green. Progress is as expected at this stage of implementation and it is likely that the objective will be achieved. Standard program management practices are sufficient.	
 Amber. Progress is somewhat less than expected at this stage of implementation and restorative action will be necessary if the objective is to be achieved. Close performance monitoring is recommended.	
 Red. Progress is significantly less than expected at this stage of implementation and the objective is not likely to be met given available resources and priorities. Recasting the objective may be required.	

OUTCOME 2: ALUMNI ARE CONTRIBUTING TO COOPERATION BETWEEN AUSTRALIA AND PARTNER COUNTRIES

Information related to Outcome 2 is presented in terms of the diplomacy, people-to-people links and cooperation developed by alumni while on-award and maintained subsequently following their award. Measures used include frequency of contact, and the types of people and organisations with whom alumni are maintaining contact. It also examines the types of cooperative relationships that alumni have made with Australians, using a range of examples provided by alumni.

People-to-people links

Prior to the introduction of the Australia Awards Global Strategy and the Australia Global Alumni Engagement Strategy in 2016, alumni engagement had not been a major focus. Since then there has been stronger alumni engagement at the country and global levels through the Australia Awards.

At a global level, **on-award surveys** found that 76 per cent of students are positioned to contribute to cooperation between Australia and partner countries. According to the survey report, this result reflects the difficulty students experience in forming friendships with students from countries other than their own, and with people from outside their own institutions.

However, despite some students experiencing difficulty in forming social networks, the majority of ongoing students reported positive social experiences, with most agreeing that: other students have been **inclusive towards them** (81%); they have found it **easy to make friends** with other students (not from their own country) whilst in Australia (81%); and they have found it **easy to make friends with other people** (outside their institution and not from their own country) whilst in Australia (66%).

Participation in alumni activities and events

At an investment level, examples of monitoring and evaluation measures to demonstrate impact include the number of:

...alumni/active alumni	...alumni activities (disaggregated by type of activity)	...alumni attending alumni activities organised (disaggregated by type of activity)	...network activities related to women's empowerment involving male and female alumni
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As part of their routine reporting processes, many Australia Awards investments report upon attendance at their alumni events. For example, **Indonesia** reported that during the reporting period over 3,339 alumni participated in various alumni events. The case study below demonstrates the important role that the Australia Awards in Indonesia On-Award Enrichment Program plays in supporting alumni to make links and stay connected over time. In **South and West Asia**, reintegration workshops were conducted in six countries for 175 recently-returned alumni, and 1,700 alumni attended one of the 38 country-level alumni engagement events in 2017.

In the **Philippines**, an Alumni Engagement Strategy has been developed to sustain alumni interest in Australia's affairs. In **Mongolia**, returned scholars continue to attend a "Welcome Back" ceremony and a workshop to finalise their reintegration plans and connect with the Global Alumni Network and the local alumni organisation (Mozzies). The Associations are enabling returned graduates to participate in professional development, knowledge sharing seminars and networking activities.

Case study: Australia Awards in Indonesia On-Award Enrichment Program - fostering intentions for stronger bilateral cooperation

The Australia Awards in Indonesia On-Award Enrichment Program is designed to facilitate professional and personal links between Indonesian Australia Awards scholars and Australians and Australian organisations. It achieves this through a range of activities including community participation, work integrated learning, internships, speaker events, and visits to industry organisations. It also provides mentors, which are mostly sourced from the Australian Government, who are matched with scholars. Currently, around 50 per cent of mentor relationships are self-sustaining.

The On-Award Enrichment program is designed to push students out of their 'campus bubble', where scholars' sole focus is on their study and interaction is often limited to other Indonesian students, to offer them a broad networking experience. Further, scholars visit industry bodies and gain insight into the practical application of skills and knowledge. Around 700 scholars have participated in the program so far, which constitutes around half of the cohort.

It is too early to measure whether networks and links developed on-award are maintained post return, as the On-Award Enrichment program was only established in 2016. However, questionnaires administered to all Indonesian Australia Awards scholars suggest that those who participated in the On-Award Enrichment program expressed greater intention to maintain contact with Australian networks than those who did not participate in this program.

Data source: 'Australia Awards Global Tracer Facility Case Study in Indonesia - education field June 2018'



Credit: Australia Awards in Indonesia

Reporting of professional and/or personal links

Examples of monitoring and evaluation measures to demonstrate impact include the number or percentage of:

...awardees reporting establishment of personal linkages with Australians while on-award	...alumni providing significant and appropriate examples of professional/personal linkages with Australians 18 months after return	... alumni reporting significant and appropriate examples of usage of professional/personal linkages with Australians 3 or more year after return
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Globally, the **Tracer Survey of alumni**⁹ found that more than 30 per cent of alumni have maintained frequent contact with fellow scholarship alumni, while 28 per cent have frequent contact with friends in Australia and 20 per cent with Australian students/alumni. Alumni were less likely to have maintained frequent contact with Australian organisations, with 16 per cent having frequent contact with universities, 13 per cent with Australian businesses and 9 per cent with Australian Embassies, High Commissions or Consulates. Although 12.5 per cent of alumni have frequent contact with an Australian professional organisation or business, 29 per cent have no contact. Nearly one-third of alumni indicated they have never had any contact with the Australian Embassy, High Commission or Consulate (Figure 4).

⁹ Year 2 surveyed alumni who completed their studies between 1996 and 2005

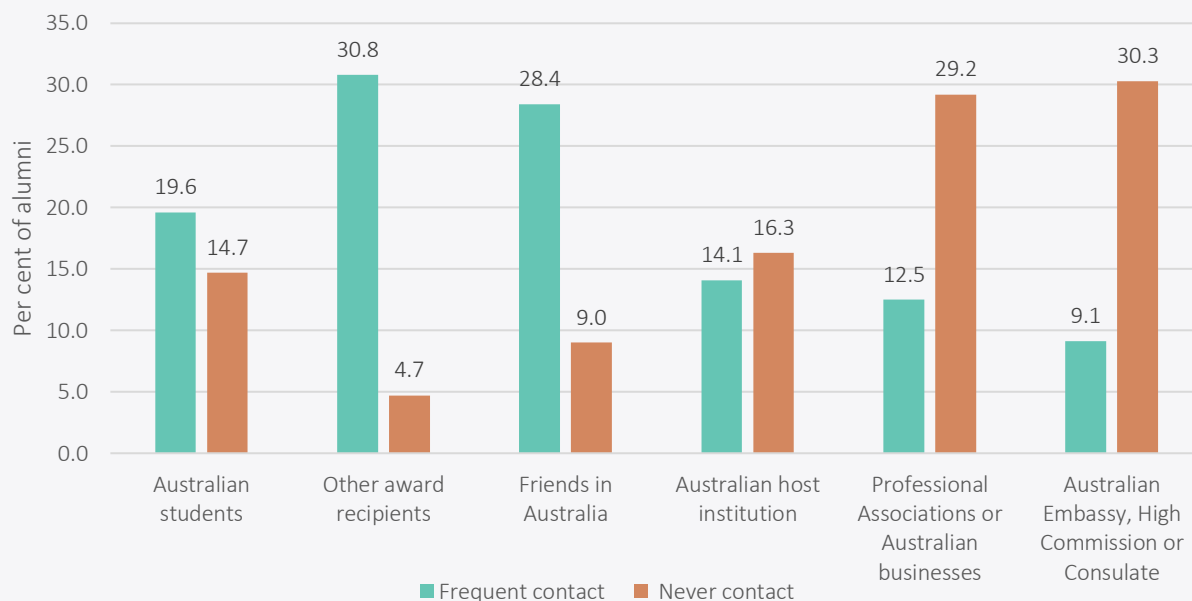


Figure 4: Regularity of contact with alumni by various Australian groups (n=972)

Data source: Australia Awards Global Tracer Facility Tracer Survey Report Year 2 2017-18 Alumni of 1996 to 2005 (p.31)

At investment level, alumni surveys conducted by **Indonesia** show that more than 80 per cent had benefited from networking and building links with the broader Australian alumni community. In **Vietnam**, all 131 respondents reported 291 examples (58% of examples provided by female alumni) of links with Australian individuals or organisations, including 144 examples of alumni facilitating links between Vietnamese individuals and organisations with Australia.

In **South and West Asia**, of the 95 Australia Awards scholarships alumni surveyed in 2017, 40 per cent reported they were in contact at least monthly with Australians they met while on-award. Examples included: (a) collaboration between the Bangladesh Police College and Macquarie University on an Australia Awards Fellowship on “Countering Violent Extremism” which resulted in an MOU between the two organisations; and (b) the mining of research from marine environment surveys in the Maldives, and the provision of that data to Australian environmental research organisations and companies.



Overall progress towards achieving Long-term Outcome 2

The available data suggest that alumni are starting to contribute to cooperation between Australia and partner countries. There is a growing pool of case studies, collected through the Global Tracer Facility as well as other sources, of positive people-to-people links arising from the Australia Awards.

There is ongoing work being undertaken at an investment and global level to ensure these links continue to form and are supported, sustained and measured over time. More work is needed to build robust and standardised measures of global performance against this outcome.

Table 4 Rating of Progress towards Australia Awards Long-term Outcome 2

Outcomes	Current Rating
2. Alumni are contributing to cooperation between Australia and partner countries	<div></div>

Green. Progress is as expected at this stage of implementation and it is likely that the objective will be achieved. Standard program management practices are sufficient.

Amber. Progress is somewhat less than expected at this stage of implementation and restorative action will be necessary if the objective is to be achieved. Close performance monitoring is recommended.

Red. Progress is significantly less than expected at this stage of implementation and the objective is not likely to be met given available resources and priorities. Recasting the objective may be required.

OUTCOME 3: EFFECTIVE, MUTUALLY ADVANTAGEOUS PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN INSTITUTIONS AND BUSINESSES IN AUSTRALIA AND PARTNER COUNTRIES

This section explores the achievement of alumni in contributing to positive relationships between their country and Australia. It does this by reporting upon partnerships and links that have been developed over time, drawing mainly on data related to long-term Australia Awards scholars and alumni. There are limited global data on the performance towards achieving Outcome 3, particularly in relation to short-courses. This may reflect the diversity of practices occurring globally but also the complexity of the institution-to-institution links occurring, the difficulty in attributing these links and partnerships solely to Australia Awards and challenges associated with monitoring and evaluating their impact over time.

Institution-to-institution partnerships

Globally, **on-award surveys** show that 93 per cent of ongoing students are positioned to establish effective, mutually advantageous partnerships between institutions and businesses in Australia and partner countries. These surveys indicate that students consider their participation in the Australian Awards has been beneficial for developing their professional credentials at home (98% agree) and professional networks in Australia (87% agree).

Building and maintaining partnerships

Interestingly, 58 per cent of students expect to return to the same organisation that they left to take up the Australia Awards, which may help better position them to leverage these new networks within their pre-existing professional networks in their home countries. However, students anticipate a number of barriers to using their qualifications when they return. These fall into three main categories:

- their home countries may not have the required infrastructure, systems or funding to support implementation of their new qualifications (15%);
- there will be a lack of work opportunities / career development for candidates with their new qualifications (11%); and
- their employer may not be able (9%) or may be reluctant (8%) to make full use of their new qualifications.

Contributing to institution-to-institution partnerships

The **Tracer Survey**¹⁰ asked alumni about the extent to which they have developed professional links with Australians organisations including government departments, institutions, private sector businesses and non-government organisations.

Of the 984 alumni who responded, less than half (41.5 per cent) indicated they had developed a professional link with an Australian organisation (Figure 5). Conversely, nearly half (49 per cent) responded that they did not develop any professional links.

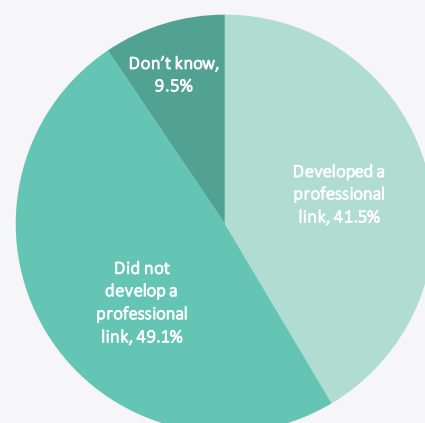


Figure 5: Proportion of alumni who developed professional links with at least one Australian organisational group (n=984)

Data source: Australia Awards Global Tracer Facility Tracer Survey Report Year 2 2017-18 Alumni of 1996 to 2005 (p.39)

¹⁰ Year 2 surveyed alumni who completed their studies between 1996 and 2005

There are also a small number of specific examples of links being formed as a result of the Australia Awards, such as the establishment of the National Cancer Council of **Mongolia** (see case study below). The **Philippines** reported upon the success of the institution-to-institution links between Carnegie Mellon University Australia and the Public Private Partnership Center (PPP Center) of the Philippines. Under this partnership, students from the PPP Center will conduct research projects that relate to the Philippines which will contribute to the quality of research in the Philippines and improve infrastructure delivery, both of which are shared development priorities for Australia and the Philippines.

Case study: The National Cancer Council of Mongolia

The National Cancer Council of Mongolia (NCCM), established by Australia Awards alumna Dr Tsetsegsaikhan, demonstrates good practice in fostering bilateral collaboration and institutional links. Dr Tsetsegsaikhan is the founder and CEO of the National Cancer Council of Mongolia (NCCM), which aims to reduce the risks of cancer and provides assistance and training for patients and families diagnosed with and living with cancer. She received an Australia Award to undertake a Master of Public Health and Health Management at the University of New South Wales (UNSW) from 2013 to 2014.

During her studies, Dr Tsetsegsaikhan submitted an application to UNSW undertake a three-month internship at a health sector-related organisation. Dr Tsetsegsaikhan initially hoped for a placement at the Department of Health, as this corresponded with her position in Mongolia with the Ministry of Health. However the selection panel proposed an internship in the Policy and Advocacy Unit of the Cancer Council New South Wales (NSW), which she accepted; a decision that ultimately 'changed [her] life.'

Dr Tsetsegsaikhan described the exposure to Australian workplace culture as an 'eye-opening experience' and 'very different from being a student.' In particular, Dr Tsetsegsaikhan highlighted the lack of hierarchy in the organisation which encouraged open communication between colleagues, and flexible working arrangements. She described the congruence between the organisation's mandate and employee's daily habits in prioritising their health and work-life balance as practices she aims to encourage in her workplaces in the future.

Data source: 'Australia Awards Global Tracer Facility Case Study in Mongolia - management and commerce fields December 2017'

Overall progress towards achieving Long-term Outcome 3

There are some positive examples of effective, mutually advantageous partnerships between institutions and businesses in Australia and partner countries. However, it remains difficult to measure progress towards this outcome as it can often arise indirectly, or as a by-product of other outcomes. For these reasons, progress is somewhat less than expected at this stage of implementation and close performance monitoring is recommended (Table 5).

Table 5 Rating of Progress towards Australia Awards Long-term Outcome 3

Outcomes	Current Rating
3. Effective, mutually advantageous partnerships between institutions and businesses in Australia and partner countries	■
<p>■ Green. Progress is as expected at this stage of implementation and it is likely that the objective will be achieved. Standard program management practices are sufficient.</p> <p>■ Amber. Progress is somewhat less than expected at this stage of implementation and restorative action will be necessary if the objective is to be achieved. Close performance monitoring is recommended.</p> <p>■ Red. Progress is significantly less than expected at this stage of implementation and the objective is not likely to be met given available resources and priorities. Recasting the objective may be required.</p>	

OUTCOME 4: ALUMNI VIEW AUSTRALIA, AUSTRALIANS, AND AUSTRALIAN EXPERTISE POSITIVELY

A critical objective of the Australia Awards is to provide exposure to the expertise that Australia has to offer. This is made explicit in Outcome 4. The MEF notes that this will be achieved through experiences on-award, including completing 'good quality, relevant education, training, other professional development and research activities' and 'positive experience of life in Australia' for alumni and their families.

Examples of monitoring and evaluation measures to demonstrate impact include the number or percentage of:

...awardees who report positive perceptions of Australia while on-award	...awardees satisfied with course while on-award	...alumni who report positive perceptions of Australia at return / 18 months following return	...awardees/alumni reporting significant negative perceptions of Australia on or after return
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Awardee satisfaction with Australia Awards

Globally, satisfaction with the Australia Awards among awardees while still on-award has remained high and steady, ranging between 96 per cent and 99 per cent satisfied since 2013 (Figure 6). Amongst the 2017 ongoing student cohort, satisfaction levels were similar across a range of demographic characteristics, including age, sex, family composition and disability.

Through their Australia Awards experience, 98 per cent of ongoing students viewed Australia, Australians and Australian expertise positively. Almost all students said they were likely to recommend Australia as a good place to visit (99%), and as a good place to study (98% of ongoing students and 99% of new arrivals). Almost all ongoing students (98%) and new arrivals (99%) agreed that they would recommend others to apply for the Australia Awards.



Figure 6: Overall satisfaction with the Australia Awards

Data source: Australia Awards Scholarships Surveys 2017 Executive Summary Report, p.4

Alumni perceptions of Australia Awards

The **Tracer Survey of alumni**¹¹ found that almost all (97 per cent) had positive perceptions of Australia, and that 95 percent had positive perception of Australian skills and expertise. As shown in Figure 7, a substantial proportion of alumni indicated that their experience in Australia had contributed to this, causing them to become 'much', or at least 'slightly', more positive. These large and positive responses were similar across alumni regardless of region, sex and field of study.

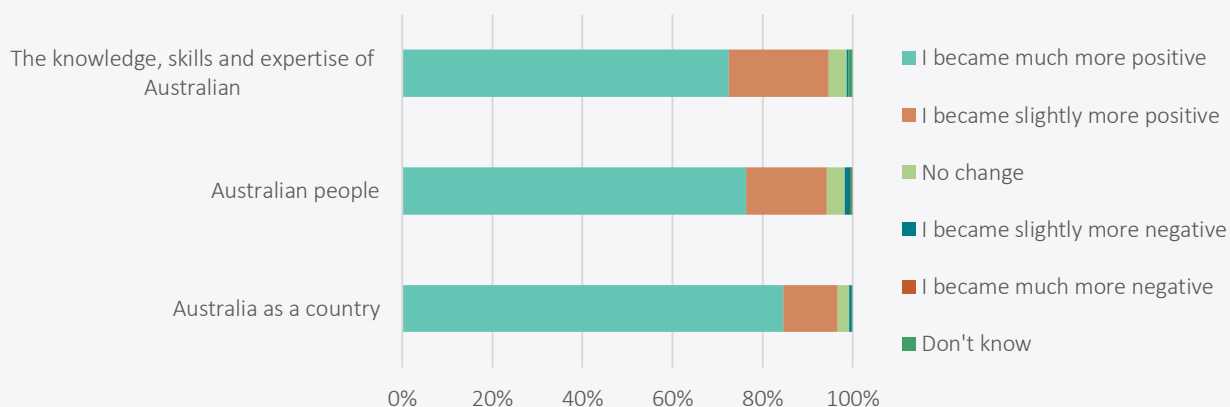


Figure 7: Alumni perceptions on various facets of Australia while on-award (n=971)

Data source: Australia Awards Global Tracer Facility Tracer Survey Report Year 2 2017-18 Alumni of 1996 to 2005 (p.50)

Almost all alumni (97 per cent) who responded to the **Tracer Survey**¹² indicated that they had provided advice to people from their country in relation to pursuing study opportunities in Australia. They indicated they were motivated to help a range of different people, with the four most commonly mentioned groups (in order) being colleagues, students, friends and family.

Case study: Mr Ferry Maulana Putra

Country: Indonesia

Scholarship: Australian Development Scholarship

Years: 2009 – 2010

Degree: Master of Education

Institution: Monash University

Field: Education

Current position: Staff, Directorate of Development of Educational Personnel for Primary and Secondary Education, Ministry of Education and Culture

Mr Ferry Maulana Putra manages the provision of professional development training to principals and school supervisors, as part of an initiative to upskill Indonesian school leaders to implement the National Curriculum (Kurikulum 2013).

Returning to Indonesia, he moved to the Institute for Educational Quality Assurance in Jakarta, working to help schools to meet national education standards. His role included analysing school self-assessment data and providing recommendations regarding improvement strategies, particularly in professional development and teaching. He then moved to his current position, to implement national level programs.

"The people who graduate from Australia have much more depth of understanding inside, not seeing something as black and white but from a different point of view...that's a benefit."

Data source: 'Australia Awards Global Tracer Facility Case Study in Indonesia -education field June 2018'



¹¹ Year 2 surveyed alumni who completed their studies between 1996 and 2005


¹² Year 2 surveyed alumni who completed their studies between 1996 and 2005





Overall progress towards achieving Long-term Outcome 4


Alumni view Australia, Australians and Australian expertise positively. The overwhelming majority of alumni agree that they would recommend Australia as a good place to study, and agree that their Australia Awards experience has helped them to better understand Australian culture. Based on the available evidence, progress is as expected at this stage of implementation and it is likely that the objective will be achieved (Table 6).

Table 6 Rating of Progress towards Australia Awards Long-term Outcome 4

Outcomes	Current Rating
4. Alumni view Australia, Australians, and Australian expertise positively	

 **Green.** Progress is as expected at this stage of implementation and it is likely that the objective will be achieved. Standard program management practices are sufficient.

 **Amber.** Progress is somewhat less than expected at this stage of implementation and restorative action will be necessary if the objective is to be achieved. Close performance monitoring is recommended.

 **Red.** Progress is significantly less than expected at this stage of implementation and the objective is not likely to be met given available resources and priorities. Recasting the objective may be required.

EQUITY OF ACCESS

The Australia Awards Global Strategy (the Strategy) includes a focus under Principle 2 on 'equity of access'. This principle states that '*we will encourage equity of access at the promotion, application, on-award and post-award stages*'. The approach is informed by and consistent with the *Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Strategy*¹³. To monitor and report upon performance, examples of monitoring and evaluation measures to demonstrate impact include the number or percentage of:

...awardees from target groups	...awardees selected from people with disability	...women in leadership positions selected
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Equity of access for women

Under Principle 2, the Strategy specifically aims to maintain 'equal numbers of Awards for women and men at the global level' (p.12). While there is some variation by country, the overall (female:male) ratio globally is 55:45 (Figure 8).

The largest single investment, **Australia Awards Indonesia**, with around 28 per cent of total scholars, recorded a 50:50 female: male ratio (Table 7). Overall, the commitment to equal numbers globally is on track. However, more granular data analysis is required to understand whether there is gender disparity among particular development themes, modalities and investments.

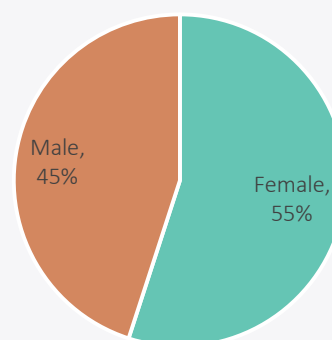


Figure 8: Gender ratio of 2017 intake Long-Term scholars
Data source: Australia Awards Statistical Profile 2017-18 (p.3)

Table 7 Top 5 Represented countries—by Australia Awards long-term scholarships currently in Australia


Rank	Country	# of current scholars	% of total scholars	Female : Male ratio
1	Indonesia	807	28	50:50
2	Vietnam	256	9	59:41
3	Papua New Guinea	237	8	53:47
4	Philippines	158	6	58:42
5	Bangladesh	118	4	51:49
	All other Countries, total	1,301	45	52:48

Data source: Australia Awards Statistical Profile 2017-18 (p.2)

Examples of practices implemented to foster equity of access

Alumni are applying their skills and knowledge on projects and policies to promote and enable the participation of women, people with disability and people from rural and remote areas in education, work and equal access to health care. Globally, evidence collected in **the Tracer Survey** highlights achievements by both female and male alumni in: advocacy relating to **raising awareness** of women's rights; implementation

¹³ Commonwealth of Australia, DFAT, *Gender equality and women's empowerment strategy*, February 2016.



of **policy, practice and programs** to improve the lives of women; and **mentorship of younger women** to build leadership and participation in the workplace.

At investment level, Aid Program Performance Reports (APPRs) and Aid Quality Checks (AQC)s provide examples of support structures that include the use of innovative selection and screening strategies, alumni networks and events and Women in Leadership networks. For example, **Indonesia** took steps to address the lack of gender balance in short term awards by targeting more women, encouraging source organisations to nominate an equal number of men and women, and by broadening the themes and sectors to better reflect the interests and aspirations of women.

In **Laos**, Women's Leadership short courses and reforms to selection processes were also substantially informed by two studies into women's empowerment through scholarships. A Gender and Social Inclusion strategy is currently being updated to ensure that barriers are addressed. In 2017, these risks to gender equity were managed with unconscious bias training for selection panels, an extra weighting for female applicants, using alumnae in promotion, and setting an equity goal of 50 per cent female participation for all training and scholarship places.

In 2017, a Gender Equity & Social Inclusion (GESI) Adviser was engaged to further enhance the **South and West Asia** investment's GESI strategy in line with DFAT's Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Strategy. Approaches included:

- a. enlisting the support of women's organisations and the Women in Leadership Networks in promotional activities and distribution of Australia Awards information materials;
- b. making gender equality a priority sector and target field for Australia Awards in Nepal, Pakistan, Maldives and Sri Lanka;
- c. maintaining a gender-balanced selection and interview panel; and
- d. delivering short-term activities and alumni engagements that supported women's empowerment.

In **Tonga** the Australia Awards continued to provide higher education opportunities for Tongans, with 33 university students (61 per cent female) graduating from Australian and Pacific institutions in 2017-18 to address priority employment gaps nominated by the public and private sectors. An additional 95 Tongans were supported under long-term scholarship and fellowship programs (62 per cent female). In 2017-18, 35 per cent of university students studied in non-traditional fields related to their gender (an improvement on 32 per cent in 2016-17).

The Australia Awards in **Papua New Guinea** (PNG) supports some of the largest numbers of scholarships to persons with disability across the global program. In 2017 PNG created the position of Inclusion Coordinator who assists with ensuring that the considerations of persons with disability are mainstreamed into program planning and delivery. The incumbent is visually impaired and a leading advocate for inclusion in PNG.

PROGRAM QUALITY AND PARTNER PERFORMANCE

Overview

In addition to administrative and survey data sources, the performance of individual country/regional Australia Awards investments are assessed and reported upon through a number of mechanisms, including:

- Aid Program Performance Reports
- Aid Quality Checks
- Partner Performance Assessments
- Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) documentation

Although there are a number of reporting mechanisms in place, it is not yet possible to create a comprehensive global picture of performance. This is due to a range of factors, including the proliferation of non-standardised data and measures, a lack of visibility of Australia Awards information in high-level reporting and, in some instances, the fact there is no requirement to report.

Aid Program Performance Reports (APPRs)

APPRs provide strategic level descriptions of the individual country investments including the Australia Awards. However, the breadth of issues and investments that bilateral program APPRS are required to cover often means that there is limited reference to or performance description of Australia Awards. This was one of the driving reasons for creating this global APPR for Australia Awards, reflecting the fact that Australia Awards are Australia's largest single Australian aid investment

Aid Quality Checks (AQC's)

Data from AQC's are used to report to the public and Government on the performance of the aid program. AQC reporting is mandatory for all aid investments valued at \$3 million and above. This Performance Report draws on findings from the 14 available AQC's for Australia Awards in the 2017-18 reporting cycle.

As Figure 9 illustrates, across all six AQC criteria, over 90 per cent of ratings were either a '4' or '5'. Two investments received a rating of '6'. Only two countries received a '3' against any criteria – both in Efficiency and Monitoring and Evaluation. Only two countries received a '3' against any criteria – both in Efficiency and Monitoring and Evaluation.




Figure 9: Aid Quality Check assessments – Count of assessment ratings

Data source: DFAT Aid Quality Check assessments for Australia Awards investments, 2017-18 cycle (n=14)

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Strategy and MEF were introduced to provide a global framework for the monitoring and evaluation of individual investments, the aim being to ensure the collection of consistent, quality data. Typically, monitoring and evaluation activities, such as Alumni Development Impact Surveys (ADIS), are undertaken by managing contractors with oversight from post.



The Global Tracer Facility (a world first for measuring the long term benefits of scholarships) is a key feature of the global approach to monitoring and evaluation. The Global Tracer Facility collects data, analyses and reports on the long-term outcomes of Australia Awards and predecessor Australian Government-funded scholarships and fellowships. It produces global data that supplements the monitoring and evaluation collected by country and regional programs. The Global Tracer Facility enables efficient and effective reporting on the experiences of alumni, providing a robust baseline data and comparisons over time. It also ensures all country programs meet the three yearly cycle of monitoring less recent alumni, as agreed with the Australian National Audit Office. Through the Facility, DFAT is able to assess the development contributions and public and economic diplomacy outcomes of Australia's investment in the Australia Awards.

Through a range of tracing activities, the Global Tracer Facility is already generating high quality, consistent and comparable information about former scholars and fellows of the Australia Awards and predecessor programs, focusing on less recent alumni. The key research and reporting activities being undertaken are a Tracer Survey and qualitative case studies, which are prepared concurrently throughout the four years.

Each year the Facility will: continue to survey at least 1000 alumni (60% long-term awards and 40% short-term awards, with as close to a 50:50 gender split where possible), conduct 4-5 case studies; update the DFAT centralised alumni database; undertake ad hoc research as requested; and locating and contacting less recent alumni. The outputs include research reports and infographics summarising the key achievements against the four long-term outcomes¹⁴.

¹⁴ Research reports and infographics available at: <https://www.australiaawardstracerfacility.org/research>

RISKS

The Scholarships and Alumni Branch (SCB) has a detailed risk register listing high level risks that may affect the global investment. At the global level the Australia Awards risk profile remains the same as for previous years. Each country / regional program has their own risk register for managing their individual investments.

Table 3: Management of Key Risks to Achieving Objectives

Key risks	What actions were taken to manage the risks over the past year?	What further actions will be taken to manage the risks in the coming year?	For emerging/ongoing risks provide a Risk Rating (low, medium, high, very high)
Decentralised management of Australia Awards risks the integrity of the global Australia Awards investment due to inconsistent processes and policies.	Australia Awards Global Strategy, MEF and Policy Handbook seek to ensure consistency of the Australia Awards cycle and application of policies and procedures.	Review of Australia Awards Global Strategy and Tracer Facility.	Medium
Inadequate budget is available to fund the number of scholarships offered.	SCB clearly communicates country / regional programs of their annual allocation. Close monitoring of annual allocation and expenditure.	Provide advice to country / regional programs on monitoring and expenditure. SCB continues to monitor and forecast expenditure.	Low
Selection process for Australia Awards are compromised	Scholarships Assessment and Selection Guide was updated and strengthened for distribution to posts. Selection processes and interview panels are overseen by an appropriate DFAT delegate.	Continue to update and strengthen guidance/advice as required.	Low
Lowering of eligibility requirements such as academic preparedness or English language competency represents a risk to a scholar's chance to succeed and their overall wellbeing.	Australia Awards policies and country profiles updated to advise of required language scores for eligibility.	Continue to liaise with posts and universities regarding the requirements for English language. Maintain requirement for minimum English language competency and English language proficiency testing.	Medium



MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

Management actions for Australia Awards at the global level prioritised for the coming 12 months are:

1. **Global Strategy evaluation:** an independent evaluation of the Australia Awards Global Strategy and MEF will be undertaken to identify lessons learned on their implementation and to provide a basis for a refresh of these documents.
2. **Broadening the on-award experience:** DFAT will consider ways to increase people-to-people links for Australia Award recipients (Outcome 2) and to support the building of partnerships between institutions and businesses in Australia and partner countries (Outcome 3). This will build on examples of on-award support for students such as the Indonesia On-Award Enrichment Program and the Pacific focussed Women's Leadership Initiative.

ANNEX A – DATA SOURCES

Acknowledgement: this report was prepared with input from the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER)

The main data (2017-18 financial year) sources used in this Performance Report are:

Information Brief: Australia Awards: 2017-18 – A regularly updated statistical profile on the Australia Awards data. The current profile is available at:

<https://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/Pages/australia-awards-statistical-profile.aspx>

Online Australia Awards Scholarships Information System (OASIS) - DFAT's internet-based data management system. OASIS enables DFAT, managing contractors and institutions to access a centralised database to electronically enter and store data, process applications and manage the Australia Awards Scholarships.

On-award surveys of Australia Awards scholarship – Funded by DFAT, these comprise annual surveys of new starters (one for Semester One and one for Semester Two, known as the *Arrival Surveys*¹⁵) and an annual survey of students who have completed at least one semester of study (known as the *Ongoing Survey*¹⁶). This Performance Report draws on findings from the 2017 survey. The two Arrival Surveys were conducted in May/June 2017 for semester one (a 94 per cent response rate) and in September 2017 for semester two (a 91 per cent response rate). The Ongoing Survey was conducted in September 2017 (a 79 per cent response rate).

The Australia Awards Global Tracer Facility (the Global Tracer Facility) – Funded by DFAT, the Facility assesses the development contributions and public and economic diplomacy outcomes of Australia's investment in the Australia Awards. The key research and reporting activities being undertaken are a Tracer Survey and qualitative Case Studies, which are prepared concurrently throughout the four years of the project.

This Performance Report draws on findings from the second Tracer Survey by the Facility and the second year alumni case studies conducted in China, Indonesia, Mongolia, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. This second Tracer Survey involved the engagement of 1,072 alumni from the 1996 to 2005 cohort from 36 countries¹⁷.

Aid Program Performance Reports (APPRs) and Aid Quality Checks (AQC)s – APPRs are the principal mechanism used in DFAT to assess the performance of country and regional aid programs. Data from AQC's are used to report to the public and Government on the performance of the aid program. AQC reporting is mandatory for all aid investments valued \$3 million and above.

The 2017-18 APPRs reviewed were for Bangladesh, Cambodia, Fiji, Indonesia, Kiribati, Laos, Myanmar, Nauru, Nepal, Pakistan, Palestinian Territories, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Samoa, Solomon Islands, South Asia Regional, Sri Lanka, Sub-Saharan Africa, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Vanuatu and Vietnam

The 2018 country and regional investment AQC's reviewed were for Africa, Cambodia, Fiji, Indonesia, Kiribati, Laos, Mongolia, Philippines, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, South and West Asia, Timor-Leste, Vanuatu, Vietnam.

Country/Regional Program Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) documents are prepared by some but not all Australia Awards investments.

¹⁵ The two Arrival Surveys are aimed at gathering information on: the application process for an Australia Awards; pre-departure preparation; experience on arrival and living experiences so far; initial thoughts on study programs, institution services and facilities; and satisfaction with the scholarship entitlements received so far.

¹⁶ The Ongoing Survey is aimed at gathering information on: living and studying experiences; assessments of facilities and services at Australian academic institutions; entitlements and assistance provided by the Australia Awards; and arrangements for returning home.

¹⁷ This involved 1,072 alumni from 36 different countries who completed scholarships as part of the Australia Awards or predecessor scholarship programs between 1996 and 2005 (a 23 per cent response rate). Of the online respondents, 522 participated in the telephone follow-up interview.