



Australia Awards

Global Synthesis Report

Long-term outcomes of Australian
development scholarship alumni

Australia Awards Global Tracer Facility

April 2024



The views expressed in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the policy or position of the Australian Government, its agencies or representatives.

Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

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Published Research Reports by the Australia Awards Global Tracer Facility

2016/17 – Year One

Australia Awards Global Tracer Facility Tracer Survey: Alumni of 2006–2010

Fiji Alumni Case Study – Education

Sri Lanka Alumni Case Study – Engineering

Kenya Alumni Case Study – Agriculture & Environmental Management

Nepal Alumni Case Study – Public Service

2017/18 – Year Two

Australia Awards Global Tracer Facility Survey: Alumni of 1996–2005

China Alumni Case Study – Public Health & Environment

Indonesia Alumni Case Study – Education

Mongolia Alumni Case Study – Management & Commerce

Solomon Islands Alumni Case Study – Health

Vanuatu Alumni Case Study – Law

2018/19 – Year Three

Australia Awards Global Tracer Facility Survey: Alumni of 2011–2016

Cambodia Alumni Case Study – Public Health

Mozambique Alumni Case Study – Food Security & Agriculture

Pakistan Alumni Case Study – NGOs and Public Service

PNG Alumni Case Study – Information Technology & Communications

Vietnam Alumni Case Study – Women in Finance

2019/2020 – Year Four

Bangladesh Case Study – Public Sector Finance

Costa Rica Case Study – Environment & Agriculture

Samoa Case Study – Engineering & ICT

Timor–Leste Case Study – Disability & Development

Global Impact of Australian Aid Scholarships: Long-term Outcomes of Alumni

2020/21 – Year Five

Philippines Case Study – Peace, Security and Inclusive Development

Kiribati Case Study – Social Network Analysis of alumni connections

Mobile Alumni Case Study – Outcomes of alumni no longer in their home country

Alumni Contributions to COVID-19 Response

Global Tracer Survey Report 2020

2021/22 – Year Six

Alumni Case Study – Insights into Short Course Capacity Building

Australia Awards Pacific Scholarships Alumni Survey 2021

Social Network Analysis of an Australia Awards Leadership Program Cohort

Australia Awards Exemplary Partnerships: The South Pacific Centre for Central Banking

Alumni Growth: Tracking Australia Awards Alumni Over Five Years – Longitudinal Tracer Survey 2021

2022/23 – Year Seven

Australia Awards Alumni contributing to civil society: supporting development through volunteerism

Women's Leadership and Career Progression: Insights from Indonesian Australia Awards Alumnae

Outcomes of Australia Awards Fellowships: Sport for Development in Fiji

A Social Network Analysis of Australia Awards Alumni Workshops

Australia Awards Alumni Global Tracer Survey 2022

2023/24 – Year Eight

Longitudinal Alumni Case Study: Where are they now?

Developmental leadership for women in the Pacific: Cultivating networks for change in Australia Awards WLI alumni

Developmental leadership for women in the Pacific: WLI alumni reflections and insights

Australia Awards Alumni Longitudinal Global Tracer Survey 2023

Further information and all research published by the Australia Awards Global Tracer Facility can be found on the DFAT website here: <https://www.dfat.gov.au/people-to-people/australia-awards/australia-awards-global-tracer-facility>.

Contents

Executive Summary – Australia Awards outcomes	5
1. Introduction	7
2. Approach	8
2.1 GTF research scope and synthesis focus	8
2.2 Synthesis research questions	10
2.3 Assessing Australia Awards performance	11
3. Australia Awards global performance – alumni impact and long-term outcomes	12
3.1 Findings summary	12
3.2 Outcome 1: Contributions to sustainable development	13
3.3 Outcome 2: Contributions to cooperation with partner countries	20
3.4 Target 6: Women's Leadership	26
4. Implications and next steps	30
5. Data source details for figures	32

Executive Summary – Australia Awards outcomes

Is the Australia Awards effective in achieving its long-term Program Outcomes?

This study answers this question using a detailed data synthesis of almost 2,000 data points from the 40 in-depth quantitative and qualitative studies on alumni outcomes produced by the Australia Awards Global Tracer Facility (GTF) between 2016 and

2024. This systematic compilation and analysis of data offers a global view of alumni long-term outcomes and provides an overall assessment of Australia Awards performance framed within the *Australia Awards Global Monitoring and Evaluation Framework*. The following table highlights key findings with recommendations detailed in the final section of the report: Implications and next steps.

Key findings

Australia Awards overall global performance

Performing well with opportunities for improvement

The Australia Awards are effective in contributing to sustainable development, with some room for improvement to increase alumni opportunities to build cooperation with Australia and parity for women's leadership outcomes.

Outcome 1: Contribution to sustainable development	Outcome 2: Contribution to cooperation	Performance Target 6: Women's Leadership
<i>Performing well</i>	<i>Performing well with opportunities for improvement</i>	<i>Performing well with opportunities for improvement</i>
GTF research findings indicate that Australia Awards provide alumni with enhanced skills and knowledge that they can effectively apply to contribute to positive change across all 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Ensuring study is undertaken in fields linked to local industry demand will enhance the achievement of Outcome 1.	Across GTF research, alumni consistently report ongoing frequent contact with their peers but less so with professionals in Australia and with their local Australian diplomatic post. Close to half of alumni have formed partnerships with Australian organisations. For the majority of alumni who have yet to consolidate a partnership, reported challenges include a lack of professional networks in Australia.	The majority of women alumni are attaining formal leadership positions in their work and contributing to development. However, women alumni are not yet at parity with men alumni in attaining formal leadership positions. Women alumni are contributing to all SDGs and developing partnerships with Australia at a similar rate to their men alumni peers.

Quick impact facts

98% of alumni pass on their Australian skills and knowledge to others in the workplace.

17 UN SDGs – alumni are contributing to all sustainable development goals, with largest impact in education, health and gender equality.

Alumni use networks formed through targeted on- and post-award activities to enable developmental change.

86% of alumni remain in contact with other alumni (**41%** are in *frequent* contact), years after their award.

41% of alumni have developed a professional partnership with Australian organisations.

Sharing connections back to Australia is strongest amongst alumni who participated in small AA enrichment programs.

60% of women alumni are in formal leadership positions.

There is a 14 percentage point gap for women aged 25-39 in holding formal leadership positions at work compared with men, but this gap decreases to 3 percentage points by ages 50-59.

1. Introduction

For seven decades, Australian governments have supported educational exchange by investing in international scholarships and short courses for emerging leaders from developing countries. From the Colombo Plan in the 1950s to the current Australia Awards, these enduring programs have aimed to build human capital across the world and increase cooperation with Australians. Over eight years, the Australia Awards Global Tracer Facility (GTF) has collected data from alumni of these development scholarships to improve understanding of their outcomes and the overall contribution of Australia's investment in this area.

The GTF research has provided global information for the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and Australia Awards stakeholders to understand the long-term outcomes for alumni. From 2016 to 2024, the GTF conducted 40 in-depth studies using quantitative and qualitative data, contributing consistent and comparable insights into the impact of study in Australia on alumni pathways following graduation.

This report is the result of a detailed data synthesis of these eight years of research by the GTF. This systematic compilation and analysis of data collected by the GTF offers a global view of alumni long-term outcomes and provides an overall assessment of Australia Awards performance. The report harnesses the significant depth of information collected over eight years, with the synthesised findings offering an insight into the breadth of the outcomes of the Australia Awards that these reports have collectively identified. The data and published research drawn on for this synthesis come from 40 different GTF reports, including:

- 5 Global Tracer Surveys
- 2 Longitudinal Global Tracer Surveys
- 2 surveys targeted with a focus alumni population
- 4 social network analysis studies
- 27 qualitative interview studies

Almost 2,000 data points from the above studies framed the synthesis for this report.

2. Approach

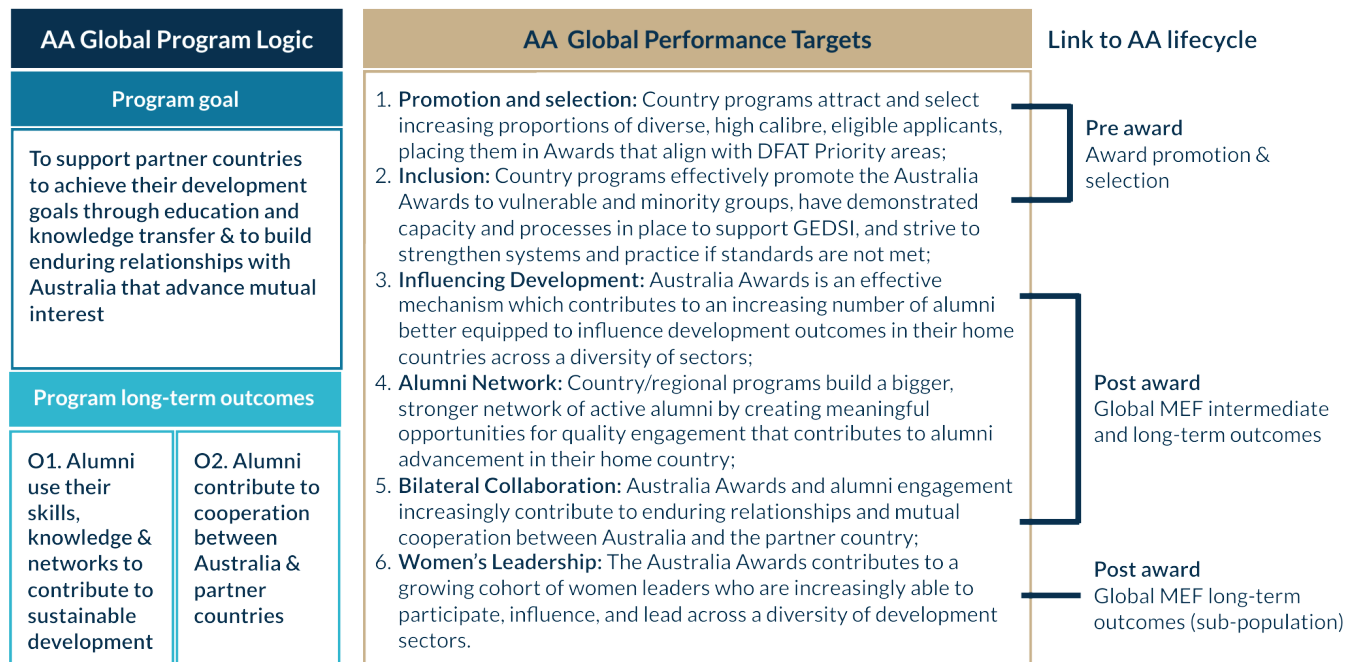
For a detailed insight into the methodology used in this study, see *GTF Global Synthesis Report: Methodology*.

2.1 GTF research scope and synthesis focus

GTF research focusses on tracing alumni outcomes using the *Australia Awards Global Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (global MEF)* (DFAT, 2022; DFAT, 2016). The *global MEF* outlines two key program outcomes to realise the goal of the Australia Awards (see Figure 1). In addition, the global MEF identifies

six Global Performance Targets aligned to the program logic goals and outcomes (DFAT, 2022, p.12). In Figure 1, these targets are linked to the Australia Awards program lifecycle. The figure shows that Targets 1 and 2 are focussed on stages in the lifecycle relating to selecting candidates for the awards. Targets 3 to 6 are related to the Program Logic long-term Outcomes 1 (contribution to sustainable development) and 2 (contribution to cooperation with Australia). Targets 3 to 6 – and their relationship to the long-term outcomes – are the most relevant to the data collection and research of the GTF.

Figure 1: Australia Awards Global Program Logic and Performance Targets (DFAT, 2022)



The Performance Targets 3 to 5 overlap with the Australia Awards' two long-term outcomes, and given these outcomes form the basis for the GTF's data collection, analysis, and reporting, they are explicitly covered in the synthesis of data from the GTF research. Across the 40 GTF research reports, the data collected looked at the extent to which alumni state they can contribute to the long-term outcomes, how they are contributing and their impact, and the factors influencing their ability to contribute in these ways.

In addition to the broad data collection relating to the two long-term outcomes, the GTF has consistently collected data relating to the gender of alumni. This collection has enabled a focus in this synthesis on Performance Target 6, Women's Leadership. Women's leadership is an equity priority articulated in the *Australia Awards Global Strategic Framework: Investing in the next generation of global leaders for development 2021–24 (the Framework)*. The Framework sets gender equality and empowering women and girls as one of six long-term priorities, and ensuring equity of access is embedded as one of five key operating principles.

The evidence synthesised to explore Target 6 is drawn from 11 research reports across the GTF data collection. These include the 5 Global Tracer Surveys (GTS) and 2 Longitudinal Global Tracer Surveys (LGTS), which are disaggregated by gender and region. Further contextual insights are gained from 4 case studies focussed on women alumni, using social network analysis, interviews, and a targeted survey to understand the factors influencing career progression and opportunity to contribute to developmental change.

Therefore, **this report highlights the synthesis findings for the two long-term outcomes of the Australia Awards:** Outcome 1, contributions to development; Outcome 2, contribution to cooperation with Australia (also covering Performance Targets 3 to 5); **and Performance Target 6, Women's Leadership.**

2.2 Synthesis research questions

This synthesis study draws on the Australia Awards MEF, applying a theory-driven approach to answer the key research question: *Is the Australia Awards effective in achieving its long-term Program Outcomes?*

In answering this overarching question, the synthesis has adopted three dimensions, detailed in Table 1: the two long-term Program Outcomes and Performance Target 6—Women’s leadership. Connected to these three dimensions are sub-

research questions examining the extent alumni report they are contributing, the impact of these contributions and the opportunity and resources they have to do so. Answering these sub-research questions involved drawing on the variety of qualitative and quantitative data collected and reported by the GTF. An insight into the number and type of sources used for each sub-research question is included in Table 1. Within the findings section of this report, links and references are provided to the specific reports in which data used for analyses in the synthesis were drawn.

Table 1: GTF Synthesis research and sub-research questions explored in this study

Synthesis research question					
Is the Australia Awards effective in achieving its long-term Program Outcomes?					
Synthesis dimensions					
Outcome 1: contributions to sustainable development		Outcome 2: contributions to cooperation with Australia		Target 6: Women's leadership	
Sub-research questions					
1a. To what extent do alumni use their skills, knowledge, and networks developed on award to contribute to sustainable development?	1b. What is the impact of alumni's use of skills, knowledge and networks developed on award to contribute to sustainable development?	2a. Who do alumni engage with in ongoing networks or relationships related to the Australia Awards?	2b. To what extent do alumni use their networks to build cooperation between Australia and partner countries?	3a. To what extent are women alumni attaining positions of leadership?	3b. To what extent are women alumni able to participate, influence and lead across a diversity of development sectors?
Data sources					
5 Global Tracer Surveys	2 Global Tracer Surveys	5 Global Tracer Surveys	5 Global Tracer Surveys	5 Global Tracer Surveys	5 Global Tracer Surveys
2 Longitudinal Global Tracer Surveys	25 qualitative interview studies	2 Longitudinal Global Tracer Surveys	2 Longitudinal Global Tracer Surveys	2 Longitudinal Global Tracer Surveys	2 Longitudinal Global Tracer Surveys
21 qualitative interview studies			20 qualitative interview studies 4 social network analysis studies		1 targeted survey 2 qualitative interview studies 1 social network analysis study

2.3 Assessing Australia Awards performance

Assessment of Australia Awards performance in this report is drawn from the data used in responding to the sub-research questions (Table 1) using the following criteria:

Performing well: Consistent evidence the majority of alumni have positive sentiments of being able to contribute with limited variation across characteristics and location;

Opportunities for improvement: Inconsistent evidence of alumni having positive sentiments of being able to contribute with variation across characteristics and location.

These assessments by the sub-research questions are then synthesised into a dimension performance rating (Outcomes 1 and 2, and Target 6) and an overall performance rating (summarised in Figure 2). Table 2 details the guideline for synthesising the global performance rating from the sub-research question level to a dimension level rating (Outcomes 1 and 2, and Target 6) and an overall Australia Awards rating.

See GTF Global Synthesis Report: Methodology for detailed methodology.

Figure 2: Process for synthesizing assessment of Australia Awards performance



Table 2: Guideline for synthesizing sub-research question performance rating into dimension and overall ratings

Australia Awards global performance rating	Description	Dimension/Overall ratings
Performing well	Consistent evidence across all sub-research questions/ dimensions that the majority of alumni have positive sentiments of being able to contribute.	All sub-research questions/dimensions rated 'Performing well'
Performing well with opportunities for improvement	Consistent evidence across at least 1 sub-research question/ dimension that the majority of alumni have positive sentiments of being able to contribute; but inconsistent evidence across at least 1 sub-research question/dimension of alumni having positive sentiments of being able to contribute with variation across characteristics and location.	At least 1 sub-research question/ dimension rated 'Performing well'
Opportunities for improvement	Inconsistent evidence across all sub-research questions/ dimensions of alumni having positive sentiments of being able to contribute with variation across characteristics and location.	All sub-research questions/dimensions rated 'Opportunities for improvement'

3. Australia Awards global performance – alumni impact and long-term outcomes

3.1 Findings summary

Is the Australia Awards effective in achieving its long-term Program Outcomes?

Australia Awards overall global performance

Performance: Performing well with opportunities for improvement

The Australia Awards are effective in contributing to sustainable development, with some room for improvement to increase alumni opportunities to build cooperation with Australia and parity for women's leadership outcomes.

Outcome 1: Alumni use their skills, knowledge and networks to contribute to sustainable development

Performance: Performing well

GTF research findings indicate that Australia Awards provide alumni with enhanced skills and knowledge that they can effectively apply to contribute to positive change across all 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Ensuring study is undertaken in fields linked to local industry demand will enhance the achievement of Outcome 1.

Outcome 2: Alumni contribute to cooperation between Australia and partner countries

Performance: Performing well with opportunities for improvement

Across GTF research, alumni consistently report ongoing frequent contact with their peers but less so with professionals in Australia and with their local Australian diplomatic post. Close to half of alumni have formed partnerships with Australian organisations. For the majority of alumni who have yet to consolidate a partnership, reported challenges include a lack of professional networks in Australia.

Performance Target 6: The Australia Awards contributes to a growing cohort of women leaders who are increasingly able to participate, influence and lead across a diversity of development sectors.

Performance: Performing well with opportunities for improvement

The majority of women alumni are attaining formal leadership positions in their work and contributing to development. However, women alumni are not yet at parity with men alumni in attaining formal leadership positions. Women alumni are contributing to all SDGs and developing partnerships with Australia at a similar rate to their men alumni peers.

The analysis and sub-questions supporting these conclusions are detailed further in this chapter.

3.2 Outcome 1: Contributions to sustainable development

Alumni use their skills, knowledge and networks to contribute to sustainable development.

Outcome 1 Performance: Performing well

GTF research findings indicate that Australia Awards provide alumni with enhanced skills and knowledge that they can effectively apply to contribute to positive change across all 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Ensuring study is undertaken in fields linked to local industry demand will enhance the achievement of Outcome¹.

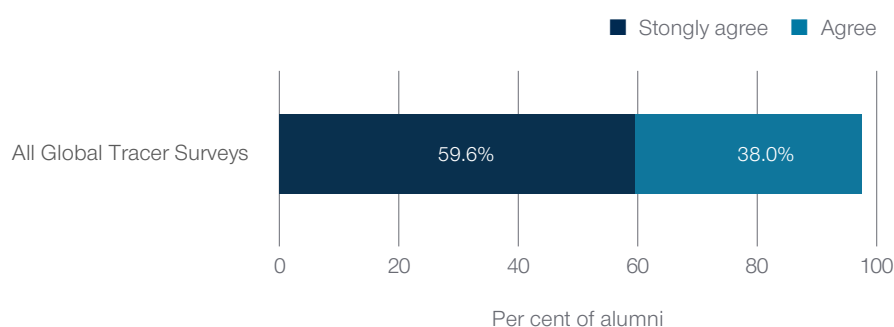
1a: To what extent do alumni use their skills, knowledge, and networks developed on award to contribute to sustainable development?

Performance: Performing well

Nearly all alumni are sharing their Australian skills and knowledge with colleagues to improve their work, with two thirds of all alumni 'strongly agreeing' that they continue to contribute in this way. While study in Australia has enhanced alumni capacity to contribute to developmental change, alumni indicate this is often dependent on opportunities and resources to do so.

The combined result across five Global Tracer Surveys shows a resounding 98% of Australia Awards alumni are passing on their Australian skills and knowledge to others, contributing to sustainable development through capacity building in their workplaces and community (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Alumni who 'Strongly agree' and 'Agree' they have passed on their Australian skills and knowledge to others



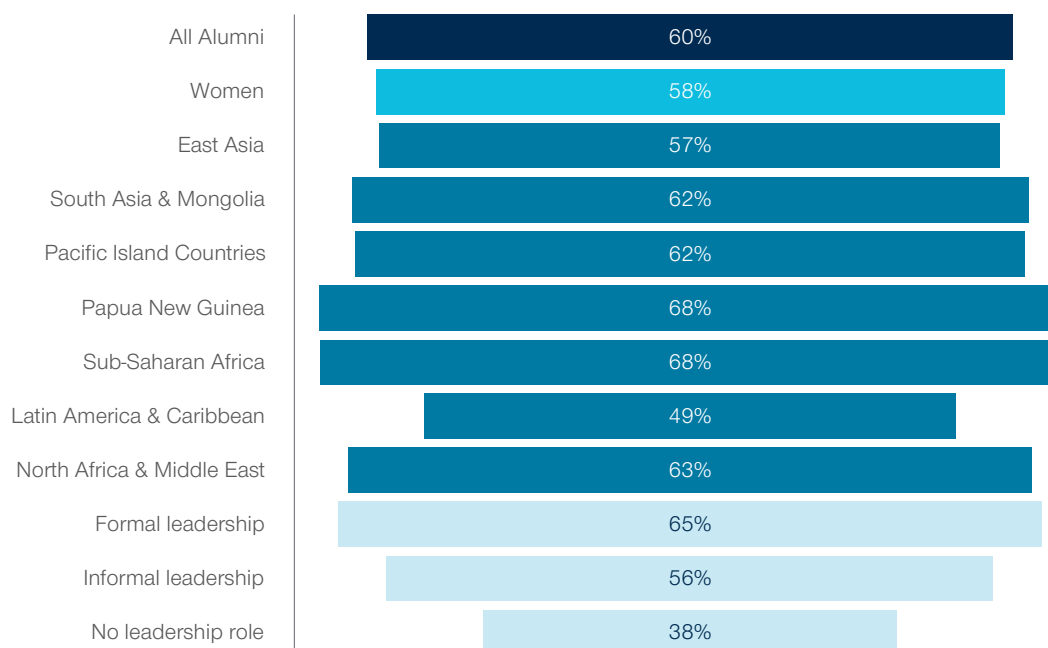
Note: Data Source synthesised from 5 GTF Research Reports. For further details see Section 5 "Data Source details for Figures".

Figure 4 focuses only on the alumni who ‘strongly agree’ they have passed on the skills and knowledge; 60% of alumni identify this as a significant contribution resulting from their award. The figure also demonstrates the nuances in this overall outcome when explored by different alumni characteristics.

Across every region the Australia Awards has provided scholarships, at least one in every two alumni strongly agrees they have passed on new skills and knowledge. Overwhelmingly strong responses include PNG and Sub-Saharan Africa, where more than two thirds of all alumni responded they ‘strongly agree’.

Importantly, the ability to pass on new skills and knowledge is shown to be related to the level of leadership. Figure 4 shows that alumni in formal or informal leadership positions were more likely than others to indicate a strong positive response when asked about their ability to pass on new skills and knowledge.

Figure 4: Alumni who ‘strongly agree’ they have passed on their Australian skills and knowledge to others, by selected characteristics

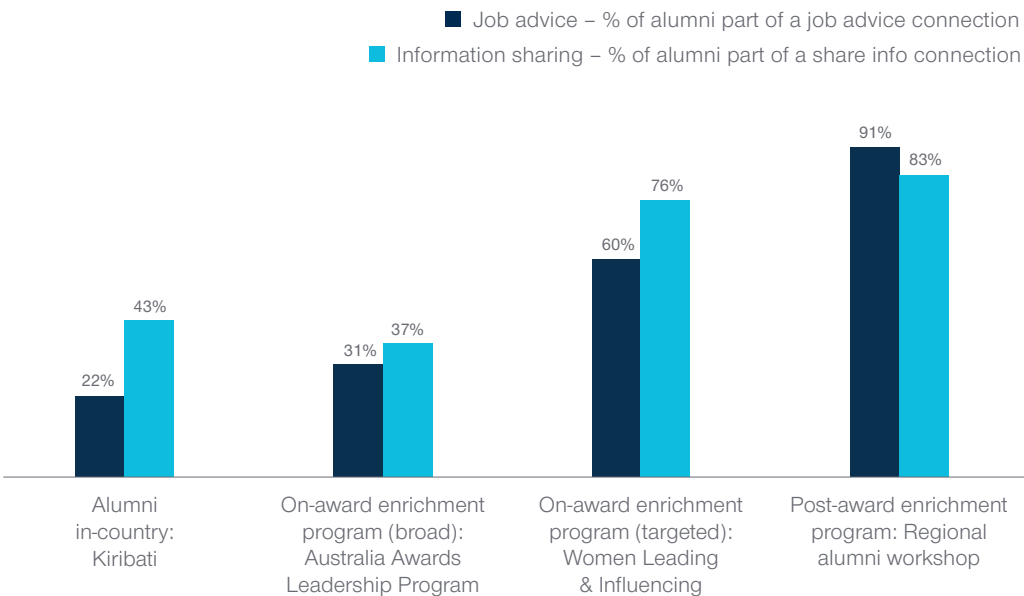


Note: Data Source synthesised from 5 GTF Research Reports. For further details see Section 5 “Data Source details for Figures”.

Drawing on data from GTF social network analysis (SNA) studies, Figure 5 highlights the importance of networks developed by alumni in facilitating contributions to development. Importantly, the synthesis of these GTF SNA studies provides new insight into the extent to which networks can help in things like job advice and sharing information for professional purposes. While critical masses of alumni have been identified as effective for

organisational change (see Lockley *et al*, 2015), the GTF data also suggest that opportunities to develop relationships in smaller cohorts sharing a collective goal or professional interests (e.g., Women Leading and Influencing and Regional Alumni Workshop programs) may encourage the development of more connections between alumni that support change.

Figure 5: Australia Awards alumni networks for support, percent of alumni within selected networks by different alumni groups



Note: Data Source synthesised from 4 GTF Research Reports. For further details see Section 5 “Data Source details for Figures”.

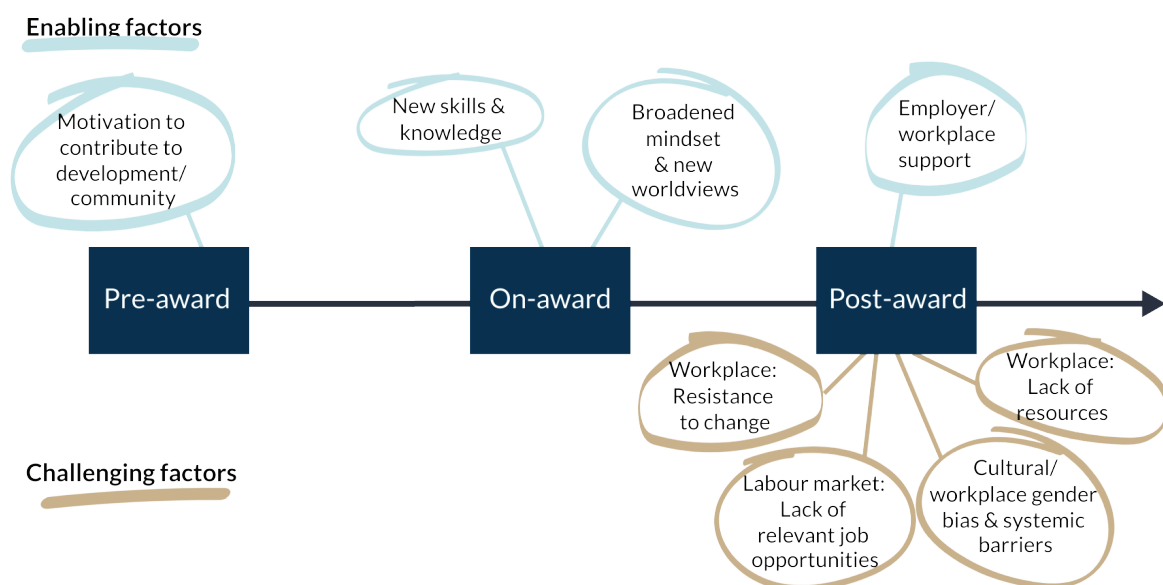
A range of factors and circumstances influence the extent to which alumni are able to use their skills and knowledge. The summarised data synthesis in Figure 6 shows the most significant enabling and challenging factors reported across the quantitative surveys and in-depth interviews, which influenced the ability of alumni to contribute to sustainable development. This summary is not exhaustive but shows the factors most affecting alumni. The individual reports which generated this summary offer a deeper contextual insight into these factors.

As is reflected in the other findings reported here, **the skills and knowledge gained by alumni are key to their ability to contribute to development** on return home. Other key enabling factors identified commonly through all the research of the GTF include personal characteristics such as motivation, the influence of culture, exposure to new ways of thinking through the overall award experience, and support provided by workplaces on return home.

Interestingly, findings also show that barriers influencing alumni contributions to sustainable development were predominately attributed to workplace and employment challenges post-award which impact on alumni ability to transfer newly acquired skills and knowledge. Collectively, these challenges indicate a broader issue regarding *absorptive capacity* – the ability of an organisation or sector to value, assimilate and use new knowledge to improve learning and capacity (Cohen & Levinthal, 1990).

Of note here, and discussed in detail in section 3.4 - Target 6: Women's Leadership, gendered bias and systemic barriers was the fourth most significant factor recorded. This factor highlights the impact of this challenge experienced by women alumni who comprise around half of the population in this study.

Figure 6: Factors across the Australia Awards lifecycle influencing alumni contributions to development



Note: Data Source synthesised from 26 GTF Research Reports. For further details see Section 5 "Data Source details for Figures".

1b: What is the impact of alumni's use of skills, knowledge and networks developed on award to contribute to sustainable development?

Performance: Performing well

Globally, Australia Awards alumni are contributing to sustainable developmental change, demonstrating influence in their organisations and across society, particularly in the areas of health, education, gender equality and governance.

Quantitative survey data collected by the GTF enables the mapping of alumni contributions to the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Synthesis of these data highlights a broad level of contribution across all SDGs, as shown in Figure 7. This global summary indicates areas in which the Australia Awards provide unique value as an international scholarship program with impact, particularly in the areas of education (SDG 4), health (SDG 3), gender equality (SDG 5), and partnerships for the goals (SDG 17).

Figure 7: Alumni reported contributions to the UN Sustainable Development Goals



Note: Data Source synthesised from 2 GTF Research Reports. For further details see Section 5 "Data Source details for Figures".

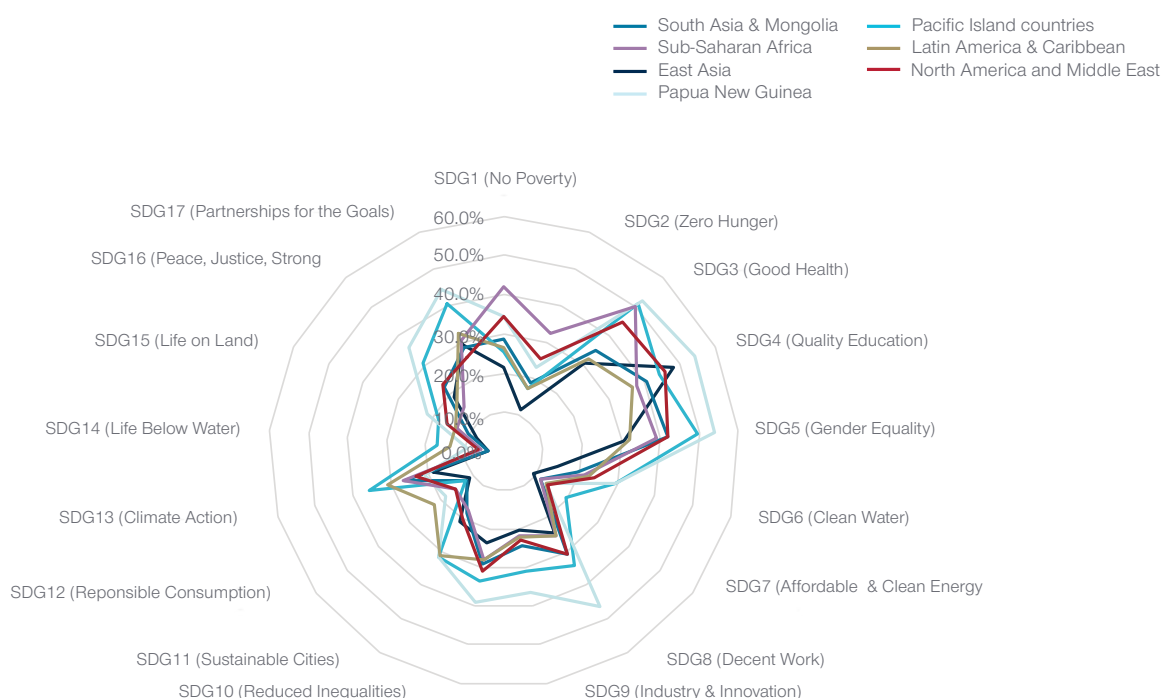
Figure 8 shows the distribution of these contributions by region. The SDGs with relatively larger contribution in some regions, like SDG 8 (decent work) for PNG, SDG 14 (life below water) for the Pacific and SDG 1 (no poverty) and SDG 2 (zero hunger) for Sub-Saharan Africa, provide **insight into localised efforts and priorities in development**. SDGs with a lower concentration of alumni contributions (for example, SDG 7 (affordable and clean energy)) in East Asia or SDG 12 (responsible consumption) in the Pacific) may signify new opportunities for the Australia Awards to broaden the program's impact.

In addition to the SDGs, the GTF has collected and analysed data from alumni through a 'magnitudes of impact' lens as a way of understanding the effect of their contributions on others (see Edwards *et al.*, 2020). 'Micro' impacts benefit alumni and their families and friends, and 'meso' impacts are benefit the organisations or communities alumni work in. 'Macro' impacts have societal outcomes where alumni contributions

are linked to informing, influencing or benefiting initiatives at a national, regional or international level. Combining the SDGs and the impact analyses in a synthesis enables a more nuanced perspective into how alumni contribute to sustainable development.

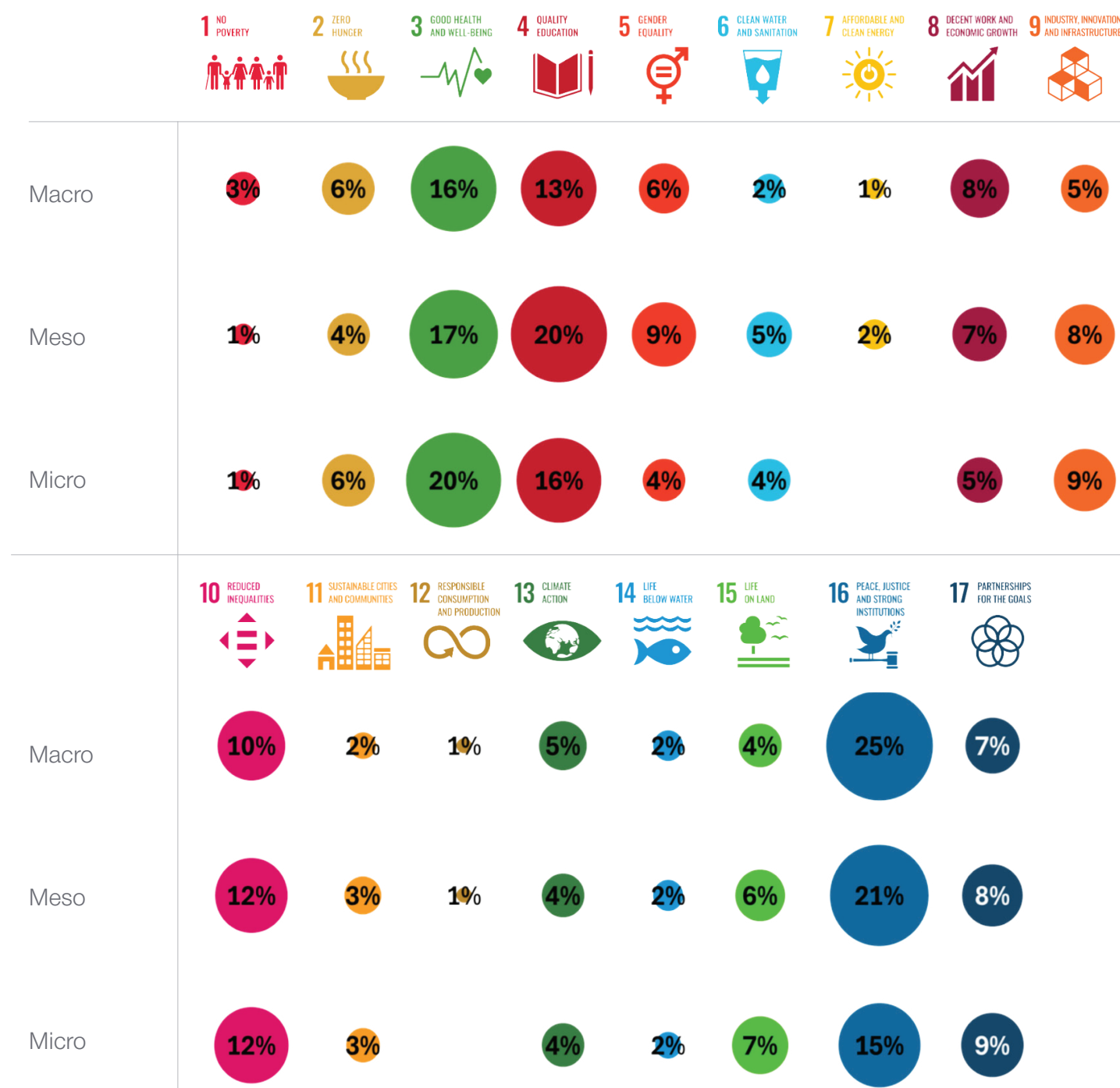
Insight into coverage at the micro, meso, and macro levels of impact for SDGs is displayed based on a synthesis of GTF qualitative data in Figure 9. While the pattern of contributions between SDGs is similar in this figure, there are nuances in the impact of contributions within SDGs. For example, the figure shows that for SDG4, Quality Education, the contributions at the meso (or school) level are most prominent in examples provided by alumni in their interviews. In contrast, for SDG16 Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions, alumni contributions are more likely to have had a macro impact – examples provided by alumni often include governance and policy reforms with national impact.

Figure 8: Alumni reported contributions to the UN SDGs by region



Note: Data Source synthesised from 2 GTF Research Reports. For further details see Section 5 "Data Source details for Figures".

Figure 9: Alumni magnitude of impact across the UN SDGs, percent of alumni interviewed by SDG and magnitude of impact (interview data from 197 alumni)



Note: Data Source synthesised from 25 GTF Research Reports. For further details see Section 5 "Data Source details for Figures".

3.3 Outcome 2: Contributions to cooperation with partner countries

Alumni contribute to cooperation between Australia and partner countries.

Outcome 2 Performance: Opportunities for improvement

Across GTF research, alumni consistently report ongoing frequent contact with their peers but less so with professionals in Australia and with their local Australian diplomatic post. Close to half of alumni have formed partnerships with Australian organisations. For the majority of alumni who have yet to consolidate a partnership, reported challenges include a lack of professional networks in Australia.

2a: Who do alumni engage with in ongoing networks or relationships related to the Australia Awards?

Performance: Opportunities for improvement

The most common ongoing relationships alumni hold from their award experience are with their scholarship peers and friends in the Australian community. Less common is frequent communication with Australian academics and industry professionals, their local Australian diplomatic post and Australia Awards team.

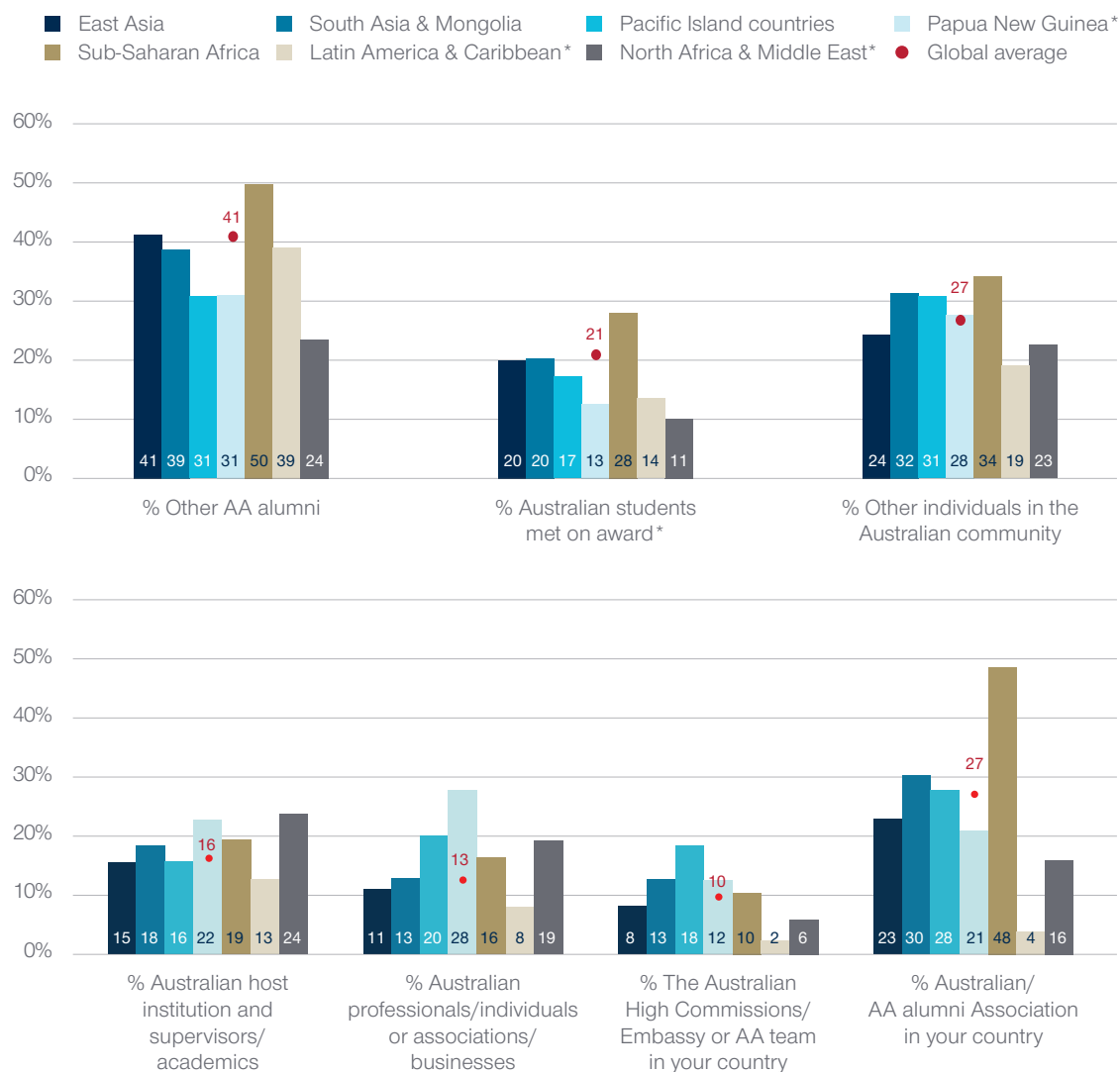
Across all GTF surveys, Australia Awards alumni have been asked how frequently they continue to be in contact with people they connected with in Australia while on award. Figure 10 shows that, on average, 41% of alumni reported frequently contacting other Australian scholarship alumni in the years after returning home – that is being in contact ‘always’ or ‘often’. While not highlighted in the figures, a further 45% of alumni report ongoing contact but less frequently – i.e. ‘sometimes’. Combined, this data show that 86% of alumni maintain some contact with their fellow alumni, years after completing their award.

As shown in Figure 10 the propensity for frequent contact differs when explored by region, with variations spanning 14% of alumni from North Africa and the Middle East to 50% of alumni from Sub-Saharan Africa.

Alumni have less frequent connections with other people or groups they met in Australia, but nonetheless, there is evidence of a strong cohort maintaining relationships. Approximately one quarter of all alumni surveyed indicated they continue to be in frequent contact with other individuals in the Australian community. Fourteen percent of alumni continue to frequently connect with their host institution, supervisors, or academics. On average, only one in ten alumni indicated they maintain frequent contact with local Australia Awards or Australian alumni associations. This figure varied significantly across regions beyond the Indo-Pacific; it was 4% for alumni from Latin America and the Caribbean and almost 50% for alumni from Sub-Saharan Africa.

Overall, Figure 10 emphasises that many of the relationships alumni develop while on award are maintained into the future after they return home. These connections represent key cooperative links developed between alumni and Australia during the Australia Awards experience.

Figure 10: Who do alumni continue to be in frequent contact with ('Always' + 'Often') as a result of their Australia Award?



Note: Data Source synthesised from 7 GTF Research Reports. For further details see Section 5 "Data Source details for Figures".

2b: To what extent do alumni use their networks to build cooperation between Australia and partner countries?

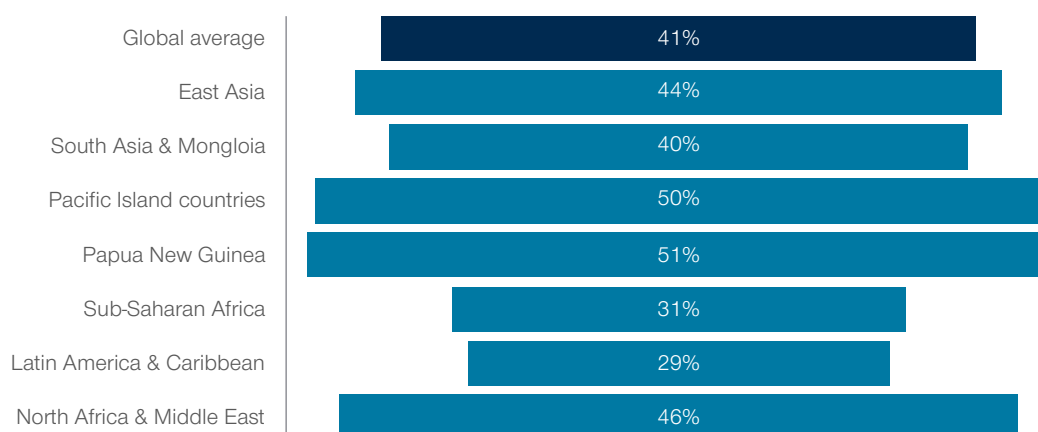
Performance: Opportunities for improvement

Many alumni are using their Australia Awards-related networks to develop partnerships with Australian organisations. However, more than half have not formed a partnership. A key challenge indicated by alumni is a lack of opportunity to build these networks on while in Australia on award.

GTF Global Tracer Surveys have consistently collected data about whether alumni have developed professional connections with Australians or Australian organisations. A combined analysis across all quantitative data collections of the GTF shows that just under half (41%) of all alumni report a professional partnership with Australia.

Figure 11 highlights the variations amongst alumni by region, where proximity to Australia may be an influence. One in two Pacific and PNG alumni partnered with Australians for their work. East Asian alumni also report higher professional connections with Australia than the global average.

Figure 11: Alumni who developed professional links and partnerships with Australia



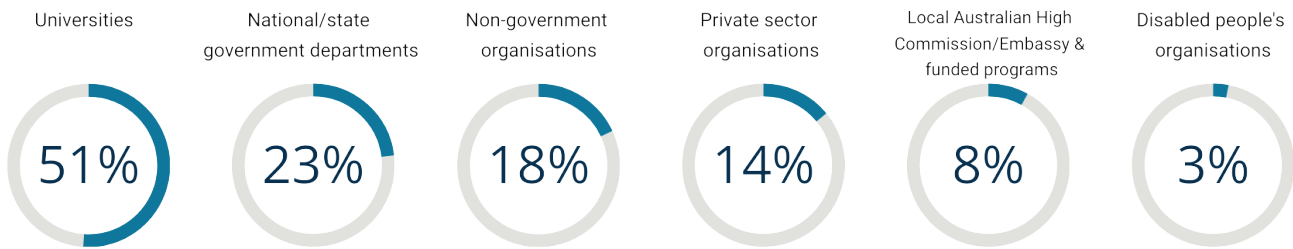
Note: Data Source synthesised from 6 GTF Research Reports. For further details see Section 5 "Data Source details for Figures".

As Figure 12 shows, universities in Australia are key partner organisations for alumni. Partnerships with other Australian sectors (government departments, private sector and non-government organisations) are considerably less frequently reported. Partnerships were also infrequently reported with local diplomatic posts (8%) and may be an avenue for exploring mutual opportunities with alumni.

Figure 13 illustrates data from several GTF SNA studies and highlights the impact of alumni networks in facilitating links with Australia. SNA allows for a more sophisticated, birds-eye analysis of connections developed between alumni. Across each social network map, a circle represents an alum in a target cohort, and a line between circles represents a reported connection between two alumni.

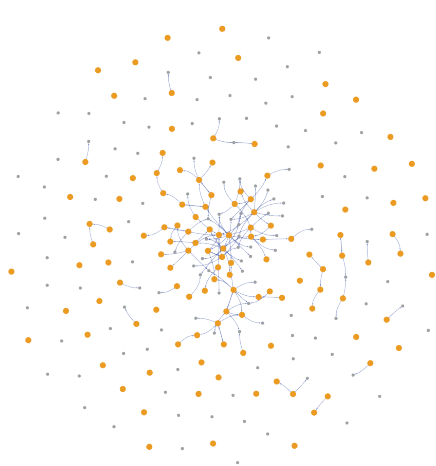
Alumni in all four studies shown were asked if they contact other alumni from the target cohort of interest (i.e., alumni from Kiribati) to make connections with Australia. While these types of connections can be seen in each social map presented, higher levels of networking between alumni to develop connections with Australia were found from the smaller enrichment programs (WLI and Regional Alumni Workshop). Together, these data highlight the impact of the Australia Awards in building alumni social capital that can strengthen links and partnerships with Australia.

Figure 12: Types of Australian organisations alumni have developed professional links and partnerships (proportion of alumni with a partnership who indicate it is with one or more of these types of organisations)

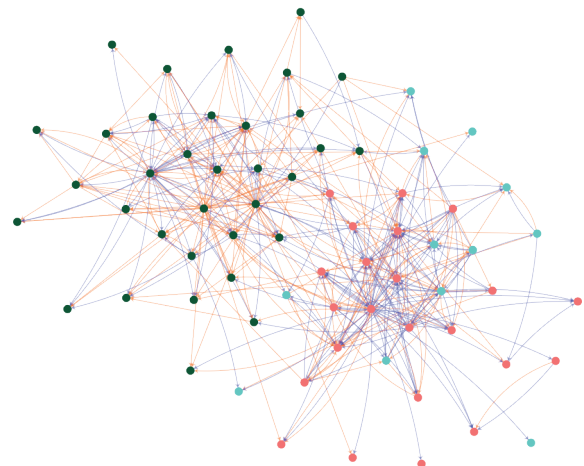


Note: Data Source synthesised from 6 GTF Research Reports. For further details see Section 5 “Data Source details for Figures”.

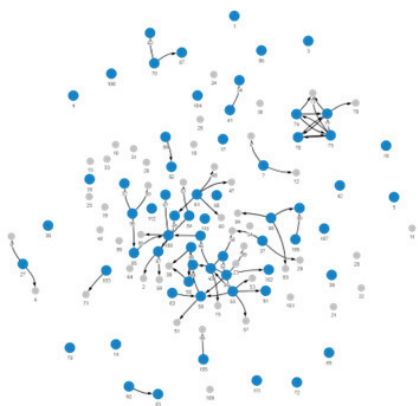
Figure 13: Impact of alumni networks – Who alumni go to for connections with Australia



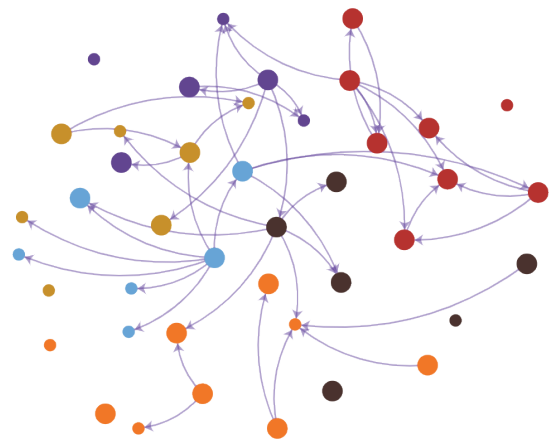
On-award enrichment program (broad):
AA Leadership Program



On-award enrichment program (targeted): WLI



Alumni in-country: Kiribati



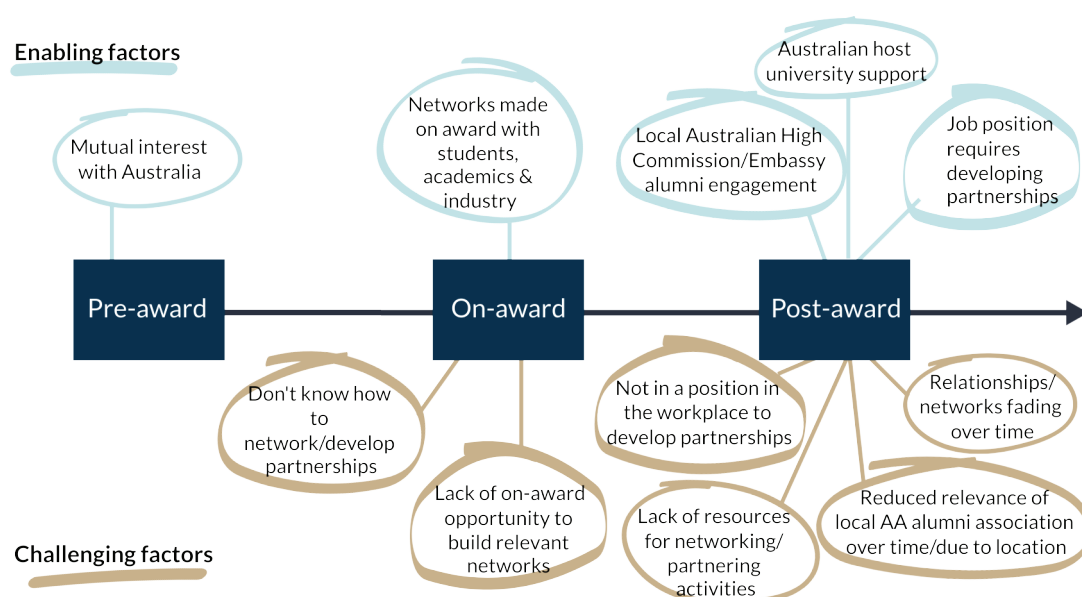
Post-award enrichment program:
Regional alumni workshop

Note: Data Source synthesised from 4 GTF Research Reports. For further details see Section 5 "Data Source details for Figures".

When examining the factors influencing contributions to cooperation with Australia across the Australia Awards lifecycle, **the connections alumni make on award and the responsibilities of their job influence the likelihood of developing partnerships** (Figure 14). These are more likely to last where there are mutual interests for engagement. Host universities and local Australian diplomatic posts are also vital in helping alumni to foster these opportunities.

For alumni who have not developed partnerships, their challenges are related to a lack of knowledge, resources or opportunity to build and foster professional networks in Australia. In the years following their return home, the relevance of networks and local alumni association activities have decreased for alumni as their professional development needs and interests differ from those of more recently returned alumni.

Figure 14: Factors across the Australia Awards lifecycle influencing alumni contributions to cooperation



Note: Data Source synthesised from 25 GTF Research Reports. For further details see Section 5 "Data Source details for Figures".

3.4 Target 6: Women's Leadership

The Australia Awards contributes to a growing cohort of women leaders who are increasingly able to participate, influence and lead across a diversity of development sectors.

Target 6 Performance: Performing well with opportunities for improvement

The majority of women alumni are attaining formal leadership positions in their work and contributing to development. However, women alumni are not yet at parity with men alumni in attaining formal leadership positions. Women alumni are contributing to all SDGs and developing partnerships with Australia at a similar rate to men alumni.

3a. To what extent are women alumni attaining positions of leadership?

Performance: Opportunities for improvement

The majority of women alumni are in formal leadership positions in their work, and the likelihood of being in formal leadership increases with age at a rate faster than men alumni. However, despite this, on average, for most ages, a smaller proportion of women than men hold a formal leadership position. Some differences in outcomes for women are also seen across regions.

Over the eight years of Global Tracer Surveys, the GTF has asked alumni about their leadership positions, with the data consolidated here to develop a 'big picture' understanding of the gender differences in the formal leadership attainment of alumni. Overall, across the GTF surveys, 60% of women alumni report being in a formal leadership position at work, compared to 70% of men alumni.

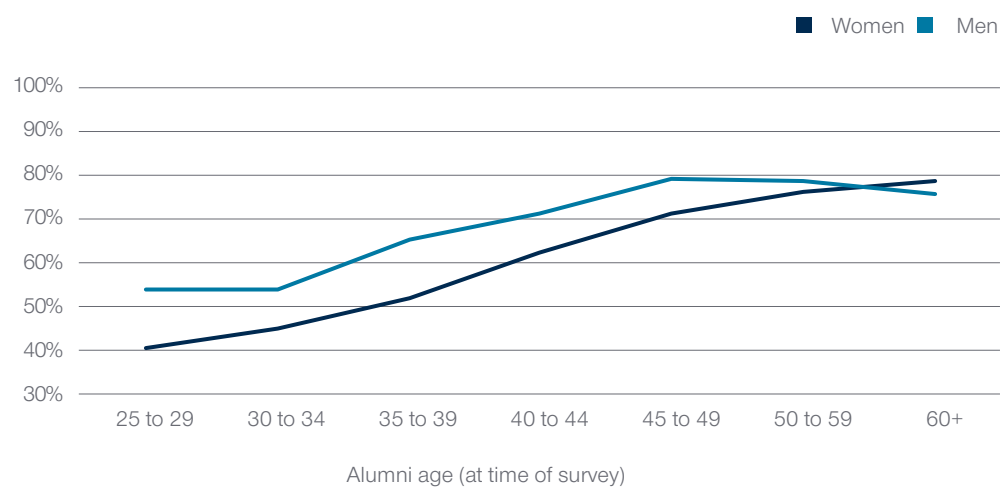
Figure 15 shows the extent to which alumni are in formal leadership positions in their workplace by age group, providing an indication of women's careers over time. While not the only type of leadership alumni may hold, the evidence collected by the GTF (see Figure 4) suggests those in a formal leadership position in the workplace indicate a greater propensity to be able to share their skills and knowledge.

As would be expected, Figure 15 shows that formal leadership attainment becomes more likely as alumni get older and their careers develop. The figure also highlights a gap between the percentage of men and women in leadership positions, with more men in formal leadership positions at almost all ages.

In exploring Target 6 of the Australia Awards, these figures provide interesting insight. Overall, when examined by age, the data shows that women alumni are increasingly moving into leadership positions as they progress in their careers. Interestingly, and importantly for Target 6, the data suggest a narrowing in the gap between men and women alumni in leadership positions as they get older. **In the early and middle stages of their careers (ages 25–39), periods when caring responsibilities can influence women's participation in the labour market more than men, the data show a 14 percentage point gender gap.** However, this gap narrows for women from their early 40s to be only 3 percentage points different from men by ages 50–59. The leadership figures flip at age 60 and above, although there are smaller numbers of employed alumni at this age.

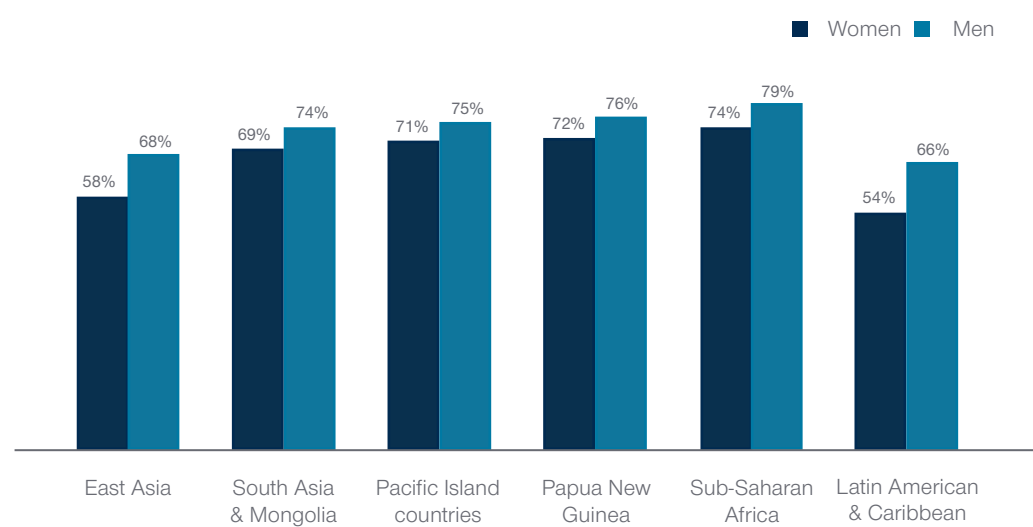
In Figure 16, formal leadership positions for alumni by region is displayed. While the majority of women alumni across all regions are in formal leadership positions, this data does show prominent gender differences between women and men in East Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean. The differences in other regions are smaller, but nonetheless with the consistent pattern of smaller proportions of women being in leadership positions than men.

Figure 15: Alumni in formal leadership roles in the workplace by age (at time of survey)



Note: Data Source synthesised from 7 GTF Research Reports. For further details see Section 5 “Data Source details for Figures”.

Figure 16: Alumni in formal leadership roles in the workplace by region



Note: Data Source synthesised from 7 GTF Research Reports. For further details see Section 5 “Data Source details for Figures”.

3b. To what extent are women alumni able to participate, influence and lead across a diversity of development sectors?

Performance: Performing well

Women alumni are contributing in similar ways to men alumni across a range of UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and in developing partnerships with Australian organisations. The factors enabling their successes are their confidence, the transformative impact of studying in Australia, and their support networks.

Exploring the aspect of Target 6 relating to women alumni contributing to a 'diversity of development sectors', this study examined data on alumni contributions by SDGs. Extraction of the raw alumni numbers collected through Global Tracer Surveys showed the number of examples provided by alumni

of contributions by SDG and gender. The 'spider web' diagram (Figure 17) shows that women alumni contribute to every SDG, although in a slightly smaller volume than men alumni. The reason for the discrepancy in numbers can be partially attributed to the fact that slightly more men than women alumni have responded to the GTF Global Tracer Surveys (on average, about 47% of respondents are women across these collections).

Overall, the pattern of contributions across different SDGs by women is similar to that of men, although there are some interesting exceptions in this comparison. For example, the differences in reported numbers of contributions to SDG 5 Gender Equality, SDG 3 Good Health, SDG 10 Reduced Inequality and SDG 17 Partnerships for the Goals, were all relatively small suggesting that women alumni are particularly strong in contributions to these areas of development. Differences in terms of large gaps in the number of men's and women's contributions included SDG 9 Industry and Innovation, and SDG 7 Affordable and Clean Energy.

Figure 17: Alumni reported contributions to the UN Sustainable Development Goals by gender



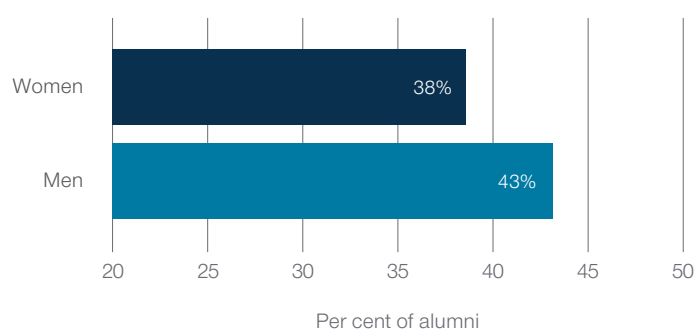
Note: Data Source synthesised from 2 GTF Research Reports. For further details see Section 5 "Data Source details for Figures".

The extent to which women alumni have developed partnerships with Australians and Australian organisations is also critical to understanding their ability to contribute to sustainable development and use networks to influence change. Figure 18 shows that more than one third (38%) of women alumni have made a professional link with Australians following their award, slightly lower than their male counterparts.

Five GTF research outputs have specifically focused on collecting data from women alumni only. They are examined together here to identify common aspects raised in supporting women's contribution to change and development when they return from award.

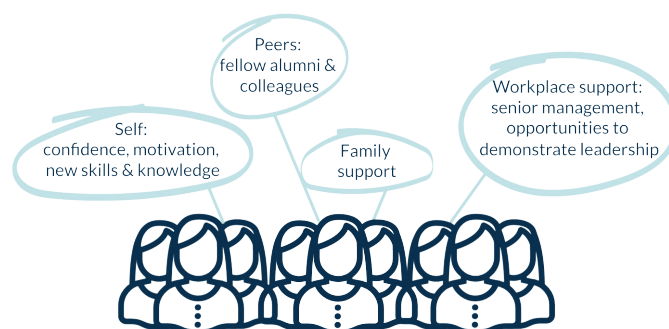
As summarised in Figure 19, women have consistently identified four key enablers that foster successful outcomes. The first, 'self,' relates closely to the on-award experience and studies as building confidence and the tools to be able to contribute on returning home. The next three, family, peers, and workplace, are all domains of women's lives that, if nurtured and engaged throughout the Australia Awards lifecycle, are important in helping achieve the outcomes of the Australia Awards and ensure fulfillment for individuals.

Figure 18: Proportion of alumni who reported developing a professional link/partnership with an Australian professional/organisation as a result of their Australia Awards



Note: Data Source synthesised from 6 GTF Research Reports. For further details see Section 5 "Data Source details for Figures".

Figure 19: Factors enabling women's career progression and leadership attainment



Note: Source synthesised from 4 GTF Research Reports. For further details see Section 5 "Data Source details for Figures".

4. Implications and next steps

This synthesis of research by the GTF over an eight-year period provides a 'big picture' view of the overall performance of the Australia Awards in relation to its long-term outcomes. Overall, the data collected indicate the Australia Awards are performing well in the first long-term outcome of the program; contributing to sustainable development. Evidence from the systematic data collection identified opportunities for improvement in achieving the second long-term outcome; cooperation with partner countries, and for Target 6; increasing women's leadership.

The findings from this large-scale data collation from the GTF's 40 research reports point to aspects for program improvement and strengths to continue which support the Australia Awards program in achieving its objectives.

Table 3: Findings implications for Australia Awards program

Australia Awards outcome/target	GTF synthesis finding	Enablers for outcome	Implications for AA G= Global P= Posts
Long-term Outcome 1: Alumni use their skills, knowledge and networks to contribute to sustainable development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The vast majority of alumni are sharing their knowledge and skills with colleagues in the years following their return from award. Alumni are contributing to all 17 of the UN SDGs. Alumni roles are helping build micro, meso and macro impacts on achieving SDGs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skills and knowledge developed on award are relevant. Motivation of scholars/alumni to make a difference through their work. Workplace/sector support and capacity to use new skills and knowledge. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure selection for AA continues to focus on skill needs of countries and regions (P) Ensure the quality of educational experiences in Australia maintains a very high standard (G) Work with employers to develop support for scholars both pre- and post-award (P) Champion and support alumni to celebrate and share their contributions for their own recognition and to highlight the impact of the program (G & P)
Long-term Outcome 2: Alumni contribute to cooperation between Australia and partner countries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alumni have strong, enduring relationships with individuals they met while in Australia. Networks among fellow scholarship alumni are particularly strong. Less than half of all alumni have established a professional connection with Australia. Among those without, almost all want to develop a connection. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Positive on-award experiences help cultivate common interests among alumni. Alumni who participated in enrichment programs are more likely to be utilising their networks Opportunities for networking with Australians and Australian businesses on award enable ongoing connections. Activities and opportunities to network are continued for alumni on return home. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to foster and encourage enrichment programs for target groups of scholars (G & P) Build expectations for scholars and their host institutions to develop links and networks with Australian organisations relevant to their study, through Work Integrated Learning, internships or secondments (G & P)
Performance Target 6: The Australia Awards contributes to a growing cohort of women leaders who are increasingly able to participate, influence and lead across a diversity of development sectors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The majority of women alumni are in formal leadership positions in their work, but on average for most ages, a smaller proportion of women than men hold a formal leadership position. Women alumni of Australia Awards are contributing to all 17 of the UN SDGs. Women alumni are slightly less likely than men alumni to have developed a partnership with Australia following award. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Motivation to develop new skills and lead change on return home. Confidence gained from the transformative impact of study in Australia. Strong networks of support – both among alumni and with others. Opportunities to demonstrate leadership through support in the workplace. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain strong emphasis on women's leadership as a target of Australia Awards, both in selection of candidates, support of scholars on award and engagement with alumni (P) Encourage expansion of enrichment programs such as Women Leading and Influencing (G) Champion and celebrate the achievement of Australia Awards women across the scholarship lifecycle (G & P)

5. Data source details for figures

Each of the figures in this report draw on data from multiple GTF research reports. The data collected in these individual studies has been synthesised, as explained in the methodology section and in more detail [here](#), to develop the outcomes presented in each figure.

Figure 3: Alumni who ‘Strongly agree’ and ‘Agree’ they have passed on their Australian skills and knowledge to others

- Global Tracer Survey Report Year 1 – 2016–17: Alumni of 2006 to 2010
- Global Tracer Survey Year 2 2017–18: Alumni of 1996 to 2005
- Global Tracer Survey Report Year 3 2018–19: Alumni of 2011 to 2016
- Australia Awards Alumni Global Tracer Survey 2020
- Australia Awards Alumni Global Tracer Survey 2022

Figure 4: Alumni who ‘strongly agree’ they have passed on their Australian skills and knowledge to others, by selected characteristics

- Global Tracer Survey Report Year 1 – 2016–17: Alumni of 2006 to 2010
- Global Tracer Survey Year 2 2017–18: Alumni of 1996 to 2005
- Global Tracer Survey Report Year 3 2018–19: Alumni of 2011 to 2016
- Australia Awards Alumni Global Tracer Survey 2020
- Australia Awards Alumni Global Tracer Survey 2022

Figure 5: Australia Awards alumni networks for support, percent of alumni within selected networks by different alumni groups

- Kiribati Case Study: Mapping Alumni Networks and Links to Australia
- Social Network Analysis of an Australia Awards Leadership Program cohort
- Investigating the Contribution of Alumni Workshops to Australia Awards Program Outcomes using Social Network Analysis
- Developmental leadership for women in the Pacific: Cultivating networks for change in Australia Award WLI alumni

Figure 6: Factors across the Australia Awards lifecycle influencing alumni contributions to development

- Global Tracer Survey Year 2 2017–18: Alumni of 1996 to 2005
- Global Tracer Survey Report Year 3 2018–19: Alumni of 2011 to 2016
- Australia Awards Alumni Global Tracer Survey 2020
- Alumni Growth: Tracking Australia Awards Alumni Over Five Years Longitudinal Tracer Survey 2021
- Longitudinal Global Tracer Survey: Alumni of 2013–2016
- Case Study #1: Fiji (Education)
- Case Study #2: Sri Lanka (Engineering)
- Case Study #3: Kenya (Agriculture)
- Case Study #4: Nepal (Public service)
- Case Study in China – environment and public health fields
- Case Study in Indonesia – education field
- Case Study in Mongolia – management and commerce fields
- Case Study in Solomon Islands – health field
- Case Study in Vanuatu – legal and justice fields
- Case Study in Cambodia in public health fields
- Case Study in Mozambique in the fields of agriculture, food security and natural resources

- Case Study in Pakistan in governance and leadership
- Case Study in Papua New Guinea in information and communication technology
- Case Study in Vietnam women in finance and banking
- Timor-Leste Case Study: Disability and Development
- Samoa Case Study: Engineering and Information Technology
- Bangladesh Case Study: Economic Development
- Philippines Case Study: Peace, Security and Inclusive Development
- Outcomes of Australia Awards Fellowships: Sport for Development in Fiji
- Australia Awards Alumni Contributing to Civil Society: Supporting development through volunteerism
- Longitudinal Alumni Case Study – Where are they now?

Figure 7: Alumni reported contributions to the UN Sustainable Development Goals

- Australia Awards Alumni Global Tracer Survey 2020
- Australia Awards Alumni Global Tracer Survey 2022

Figure 8: Alumni reported contributions to the UN SDGs by region

- Australia Awards Alumni Global Tracer Survey 2020
- Australia Awards Alumni Global Tracer Survey 2022

Figure 9: Alumni magnitude of impact across the UN SDGs, percent of alumni interviewed by SDG and magnitude of impact (interview data from 197 alumni)

- Case Study #1: Fiji (Education)
- Case Study #2: Sri Lanka (Engineering)
- Case Study #3: Kenya (Agriculture)
- Case Study #4: Nepal (Public service)
- Case Study in China – environment and public health fields
- Case Study in Indonesia – education field
- Case Study in Mongolia – management and commerce fields
- Case Study in Solomon Islands – health field
- Case Study in Vanuatu – legal and justice fields
- Case Study in Cambodia in public health fields
- Case Study in Mozambique in the fields of agriculture, food security and natural resources
- Case Study in Pakistan in governance and leadership
- Case Study in Papua New Guinea in information and communication technology
- Case Study in Vietnam women in finance and banking
- Timor-Leste Case Study: Disability and Development
- Samoa Case Study: Engineering and Information Technology
- Costa Rica Case Study: Environment and Agriculture
- Bangladesh Case Study: Economic Development
- Philippines Case Study: Peace, Security and Inclusive Development
- Alumni contributions to the COVID-19 pandemic response
- Alumni Case Study – Insights into short course capacity building
- Outcomes of Australia Awards Fellowships: Sport for Development in Fiji
- Australia Awards Alumni Contributing to Civil Society: Supporting development through volunteerism
- Developmental leadership for women in the Pacific: WLI alumni reflections and insights
- Longitudinal Alumni Case Study – Where are they now?

Figure 10: Who do alumni continue to be in frequent contact with ('Always' + 'Often') as a result of their Australia Award?

- Global Tracer Survey Report Year 1 – 2016–17: Alumni of 2006 to 2010
- Global Tracer Survey Year 2 2017–18: Alumni of 1996 to 2005
- Global Tracer Survey Report Year 3 2018–19: Alumni of 2011 to 2016
- Australia Awards Alumni Global Tracer Survey 2020
- Alumni Growth: Tracking Australia Awards Alumni Over Five Years – Longitudinal Tracer Survey 2021
- Australia Awards Alumni Global Tracer Survey 2022
- Longitudinal Global Tracer Survey: Alumni of 2013–2016

Figure 11: Alumni who developed professional links and partnerships with Australia

- Global Tracer Survey Report Year 1 – 2016–17: Alumni of 2006 to 2010
- Global Tracer Survey Year 2 2017–18: Alumni of 1996 to 2005
- Global Tracer Survey Report Year 3 2018–19: Alumni of 2011 to 2016
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Figure 14: Factors across the Australia Awards lifecycle influencing alumni contributions to cooperation

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- Australia Awards Alumni Global Tracer Survey 2020
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- Timor–Leste Case Study: Disability and Development
- Samoa Case Study: Engineering and Information Technology

- Bangladesh Case Study: Economic Development
- Philippines Case Study: Peace, Security and Inclusive Development
- Alumni Case Study – Insights into short course capacity building
- Outcomes of Australia Awards Fellowships: Sport for Development in Fiji
- Longitudinal Alumni Case Study – Where are they now?

Figure 15: Alumni in formal leadership roles in the workplace by age (at time of survey)

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- Global Tracer Survey Report Year 3 2018–19: Alumni of 2011 to 2016
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- Alumni Growth: Tracking Australia Awards Alumni Over Five Years – Longitudinal Tracer Survey 2021
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Figure 16: Alumni in formal leadership roles in the workplace by region

- Global Tracer Survey Report Year 1 – 2016–17: Alumni of 2006 to 2010
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- Global Tracer Survey Report Year 3 2018–19: Alumni of 2011 to 2016
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- Longitudinal Global Tracer Survey: Alumni of 2013–2016

Figure 17: Alumni reported contributions to the UN Sustainable Development Goals by gender

- Australia Awards Alumni Global Tracer Survey 2020
- Australia Awards Alumni Global Tracer Survey 2022

Figure 18: Proportion of alumni who reported developing a professional link/partnership with an Australian professional/organisation as a result of their Australia Awards

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- Global Tracer Survey 2017–18: Alumni of 1996–2005
- Global Tracer Survey Report 2018–19: Alumni of 2011–2016
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- Longitudinal Global Tracer Survey: Alumni of 2013–2016

Figure 19: Factors enabling women's career progression and leadership attainment

- Women's Leadership and Career Progression: Insights from Indonesian Australia Awards Alumnae
- Case Study in Vietnam women in finance and banking
- Developmental leadership for women in the Pacific: Cultivating networks for change in Australia Awards WLI alumni
- Developmental leadership for women in the Pacific: WLI alumni reflections and insights