

AUSTRALIAN CIVIL SOCIETY SUPPORT PROGRAM

Mid Term Review

FINAL REPORT

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Acronyms

ACSSP	Australia Civil Society Support Program
AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development
ADB	Asian Development Bank
CAL	Competency, Assessment and Local Solutions program
CBOs	Community Based Organisations
CEDAW	Convention on Elimination of Discrimination Against Women
CSO	Civil Society Organisations
CSSP	Civil Society Support Program
DCOSS	District Council of Social Services
ECREA	Ecumenical Centre for Research, Education and Advocacy
EU	European Union
FACE	FRIEND'S Art and Culture Enterprises
FCOSS	Fiji Council Of Social Services
FESP	Fiji Education Sector Program
FISSP	Informal Settlements Support Program
FRIEND	Foundation for Rural Integrated Enterprises 'N' Development
FSPI	Foundation of the Peoples of the South Pacific International,
FWCC	Fiji Women's Crisis Centre
FWRM	Fiji Women's Rights Movement
HC	High Commission
HIV/AIDS	Human Immune Deficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
IT	Information Technology
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MORDI	Mainstreaming of Rural Development Innovations
MPP	Mobile Playgroup Project
NCSMED	National Centre for Small and Micro-enterprise Development
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
NICE	National Initiative for Civic Education

NSA	Non-State Actors
NZAID	New Zealand Agency for International Development
PACE	Participatory Action for Community Empowerment
PCASS	Pacific Counseling and Social Services
PCDF	Partners in Community Development Fiji
PLP	Pacific Leadership Program
PNG	Papua New Guinea
SSV	Fiji Women's Society
SCF	Save the Children
TOR	Terms of Reference
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women

Executive Summary

Disclaimer: This report was produced by independent appraisers and does not necessarily represent the views or the policy of AusAID or the Commonwealth of Australia.

The Australia Civil Society Support program (ACSSP) is an AusAID (Australian Agency for International Development) program which provides funding for a range of civil society organisations in Fiji. The intention of the program has been to support the development of Fiji through development of a strong and active civil society, which in turn would contribute to demand for reform, promote accountability and enhance service delivery.

The program has focused on four areas:

- Community driven development
- Increasing quality of and access to services
- Promoting gender equality
- Civic education and human rights

ACSSP funds programs for up to three years, and provides a mixture of core and program funding. For the most recent financial year (2008-09) there were 42 funding agreements, covering 29 organisations. Of these, 14 agreements were for core organisational funding.

The ACSSP potentially offers AusAID a good position from which to respond to the emerging economic and social difficulties for people and communities in Fiji. The program uses an innovative mix of core and program funding. It is flexible and able to provide funds across a range of sectors with apparently minimal restrictions or exclusions. It is generally well regarded by both CSO (Civil Society Organisations) and other donors and has developed a good local knowledge of the sector and the potential within the CSO in Fiji.

At this time the program appears to lack clear intent and also to lack sufficient means to make assessment of outcomes and impact. It also appears to be resource intensive in regard to AusAID program management. The program is operating in a very challenging environment with increasing poverty in Fiji and a relatively weak civil society sector.

Further discussion of these issues leads to the following recommendations:

- 1. It is recommended that ACSSP decide upon the intent of the program, based upon its best fit with both the AusAID program and the emerging needs in Fiji, and then begin discussions with key organisations that are likely to be able to contribute to those intentions to explore the best directions and shape of the program.***

2. *It is recommended that AusAID continue to explore with the civil society sector the ways in which they might cooperate and collaborate to develop more effective responses to the emerging needs of people in Fiji, with a particular focus upon reaching marginalised people in rural communities and settlement areas.*
3. *It is recommended that a select group of umbrella organisations be supported to develop up representative structures which are able to both support the further development of the sector as well as represent the needs and views of the sector to external stakeholders.*
4. *It is recommended that ACSSP develop an implementation and management strategy, in line with the program intent, that addresses the resources required for adequate program management.*
5. *It is recommended that having established the intent of the ACSSP, AusAID move to utilise the existing guidelines on monitoring and evaluation for civil society programs.*
6. *It is recommended that ACSSP take up some immediate strategies to improve the outcome assessment of the program; these should focus on enabling all stakeholders to improve communication about the program.*
7. *It is therefore recommended that AusAID consider providing leadership among CSO donors, perhaps in cooperation with NZAID (New Zealand Agency for International Development), with an emphasis upon challenging other donors to match existing understanding of good donor practice.*
8. *It is recommended that AusAID consider ways in which donor practice with CSO might be coordinated and where opportunities might be developed for learning and shared improvement.*

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1. Introduction

The Australia Civil Society Support program (ACSSP) is an AusAID (Australian Agency for International Development) program which provides funding for a range of civil society organisations in Fiji. The intention of the program has been to support the development of Fiji through development of a strong and active civil society, which in turn would contribute to demand for reform, promote accountability and enhance service delivery.

The program has focused on four areas:

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The decision to review ACSSP comes in light of the growing funding commitment being made to the civil society sector by AusAID. Funding to civil society organisations (CSO) has increased in recent years as opportunities for bilateral engagement have been affected by the political situation in Fiji. The focus on civil society has also increased because of the growing need for service delivery due to the worsening economic situation.

At the same time, there has been identification of problems with the monitoring in the ACSSP program, and with the amount and breadth of the management currently required by the program. AusAID are funding increasing numbers of organisations, spread across various locations, sectors and target groups, but the impact and outcomes of this work are unclear and the management load required by such diversity is unsustainable under current arrangements.

In light of this situation, the objective of the ACSSP review was,

To provide a situation analysis of the civil society sector, identify program impacts, and provide recommendations to improve program service delivery by identifying clear objectives and providing recommendations to:

- a) Enable effective program monitoring and evaluation*
- b) Improve internal program management*
- c) Improve donor coordination¹*

¹ The full TOR for the review can be found at Annex One

The review was undertaken in August 2009. This document provides the final report for that review.

2. Methodology

The methodology for the ACSSP review was based largely upon existing data sources. These included:

- A review of existing documents, such as organisation reports and funding agreements, existing organisational reviews and evaluations, and contextual and secondary data. A list of all documents consulted is available at Annex Two
- Interviews with relevant stakeholders. These included representatives from a range of the organisations being supported by AusAID through ACSSP, as well as some representatives from other civil society organisations. It also included interviews with other donors and with AusAID program management staff. There was also opportunity to participate at a National Civil Society Forum during the review process. The list of people consulted is included at Annex Three. The interview schedule for the consultation is included at Annex Four.

The field research was undertaken in Fiji during a two week period in August 2009. The information collected included qualitative and quantitative data. Information was analyzed across the key themes of the review, and findings triangulated as far as possible².

There was no opportunity to undertake original research for the review, which limits the conclusions which can be drawn about the impact of the ACSSP program. Data for this section is based largely upon the reports from organisations and upon anecdotal information from other sources. Further, while the researchers sought to gain a wide representation of views, the majority of organisations interviewed were those already being funded by AusAID under ACSSP. This obviously places some limits on the representative nature of the information gathered.

3. Key findings

The findings are divided into the areas identified in the Scope of the TOR (Terms of Reference) for the review.

² As far as possible and in line with good practice in qualitative analysis, the data has been examined and major themes and ideas extracted if they are supported by responses from more than two sources. Where specific examples or opinions are used they are credited to those respondents.

3.1 Overall Fiji Civil Society sector³

Fiji civil society organisations (CSO) are a highly diverse sector. According to a recent report⁴ the CSO with the largest memberships are religious organisations, followed by trade unions, education groups and sports organisations. In addition, there is a range of non-membership type, not-for profit organisations which provide services across various sectors. These include human rights education, counseling, social services, environmental protection, consumer protection and other areas. It appears that this latter group has developed in strength and importance in recent years, in part through donor funding⁵.

3.1.1 Sector focus

The sector is characterised as most effective at basic service delivery, environment protection and in advocating for consumers and service users. It is considered less effective at holding the interim government to account and providing a voice for human rights issues⁶.

Organisations contacted for this research confirmed this general situation. They reported their frustration at being unable to fulfill their entire mandate, especially that of holding interim government to account. Some recognised their role in assisting people to demand more effective and accountable leadership at every level, described by respondent as “building the bridge between communities and government”. However, there was a general view that this was very difficult at the moment. A common view was that the interim government administration was difficult to engage, in part because of political differences but also because of the political differences between the interim government and the donors providing support to the CSO. In addition, CSO have to be more focused on trying to provide basic services in a climate where there is increasing need and decreasing resources.

By way of contrast, it is important to note that some respondents reported that the interim government administration was sometimes more efficient and responsive than that of past

³ There was limited opportunity to obtain evidence about the whole Fiji CSO sector beyond a two day CSO forum at which many did participate. This was extremely useful event in demonstrating the wide ranging nature of the CSO sector in Fiji but did not provide extensive time for data collection. Much of the information for this section therefore comes from organisations and others directly connected to the ACSSP and therefore is not representative of the whole sector. While every effort has been made to look at sector-wide considerations, the authors note that further review of a wider range of organisations and community based groups would be required to be conclusive about the many variations in the sector.

⁴ CIVICUS (2007), “Fiji Civil Society Index Report”, Suva.

⁵ The organisations that are funded by AusAID under ACSSP represent only part of the full range of CSO in Fiji. This makes it difficult to extrapolate from the information gathered for this review to the wider sector. However there are indications from several sources of a growing divide between organisations focused on service delivery and specific sectoral work, which tended to be supported by external donors; and those organisations more rooted in communities, which were less likely to appear in donor funding lists.

⁶ Op cit. Note that this research was undertaken prior to the current change of government. It is to be expected that CSO are now likely to find it even harder to influence the interim government on human rights and other accountability issues in the current climate.

administrations, with one reporting they were getting “a two week turn around in response to requests for information and were seeing public complaints mechanisms working more effectively”.

3.1.2 Poverty in Fiji

Poverty in Fiji appears to be increasing especially in rural areas. ADB (Asian Development Bank) research⁷ indicates that the average incidence of basic needs poverty across all households was estimated at 34% in 2008, up from 29.7% in 2006 and 25% in 1990. In rural areas, 43% of people are estimated to live in poverty, compared with 36% for the urban population. The research suggests that rural Indian households are worst hit.

UNICEF (United Nations Children’s Fund)⁸ predicts that following the global economic crisis the most vulnerable groups in the Pacific will continue to be the young, the old, the infirm, those who had no source of regular income, or those with no access to adequate land on which to grow food for consumption and/or sale. They add that poverty is also likely to be experienced by new groups such as the urban poor, small-holder farmers (many of whom are women), communities or groups that have been excluded such as ethnic minorities and low-skilled workers.

In Fiji organisations were reporting increased need in poor communities, particularly those in rural areas and squatter settlements. Further, that the more marginalised people in those locations, such as people with disability, people suffering ill health including people living with HIV/AIDS (Human Immune Deficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome), women especially single mothers, landless and/or the unemployed were those most in need of assistance.

3.1.3 CSO response

It is not clear that the Fiji CSO sector currently has the capacity to respond to this increasing poverty and marginalisation of particular groups.

The Australian High Commission has reported that the interim government is seeking to control religious organisations, youth organisations, local governance structures (both traditional and elected) and unions. These organisations tend to be the ones with the most widespread and community based membership, and thus represent the most likely networks for connection to the most vulnerable groups. They also appear to be the weakest CSO and those least likely to receive assistance from donors or other supporters.

For other types of CSO, their work seems to be in traditional areas of need, such as support to schools, social welfare work and single sectors like disability, environment or livelihoods. These overlap but do not entirely align with the emerging needs. Further, many of these organisations are urban based and have limited reach on their own into rural areas.

⁷ ADB http://www.adb.org/Documents/Economic_Updates/FIJ/IN230-09.pdf

⁸ UNICEF (2009), “A Road Map to Protect Pacific Island Children and Women during the Global Economic Crisis: Care>Recovery>Prevention”, June.

There are some considerable problems with this unevenness in the sector. In particular, the lack of connection with grassroots organisations leaves many larger scale and more able CSO with limited understanding of what people need and what services are most effectively meeting those needs. This leads to work in communities lacking depth and effectiveness when working with local governance, power structures and deep-set gender inequalities. To take gender as an example, many organisations commented on gender inequality in families and communities, however, most organisations interviewed displayed weak analysis of gender relations, power and inequality.

For example PCASS Pacific Counseling and Social Service) and Marie Stopes in their work in reproductive health have recognised the importance of working with men, since men have a major influence over women's reproductive health choices. However, both report difficulties expanding their work to men due to insufficient resources and connections in the communities and settlements. In another example, FRIEND (Foundation for Rural Integrated Enterprises 'N' Development) report to be working with 'change agents' who are the women and young people in communities. However, they are having difficulty bringing community action plans to effective completion, because those in power in the communities do not see the relevance or importance of the plans of the marginalised groups.

Where organisations did identify changing needs, they did not necessarily have the capacity to respond as required. For example, most of the organisations interviewed recognised the need for income generation. Many were dabbling in income generating or saving schemes with groups. It is important to note however, that most did not have the capacity to run these sustainably or effectively, nor did they have the capacity to broaden the reach of these schemes to the very poor and marginalised.

Finally, when organisations lack the feedback and connection to communities that would enable them to develop the specific and local strategies required for real change in those areas, there appears to be a tendency to replace reach with 'workshops'. Organisations feel they have to roll-out workshops in as many places as possible without the connections or the resources to sustain follow-up support in communities. As one respondent said, "they've had thirty years of workshops". Organisations that do have reach into communities reported that their networks and connections into communities and settlements were often 'used' by NGO wanting to run workshops or gain access for other reasons.

3.1.4 ACSSP response

From the perspective of ACSSP, organisations appeared to be well-informed about the nature of the growing needs but less well positioned to address these. Annex Five outlines the membership, target groups, governance arrangements and focus areas of a range of the organisations funded under ACSSP. Of particular note are the following points:

- Although many of the organisations mention rural and disadvantaged groups as their aspired targets, many also discussed the difficulty of reaching them in a regular or sustained way (Salvation Army, CAL (Competency, Assessment and Local Solutions Program), FRIEND, FWRM (Fiji Women's Rights Movement), NCSMED (National Centre for Small Micro-enterprise Development), Consumer Council; FCOSS (Fiji Council of Social Services) and DCOSS (District Council of Social Services)).
- Only one organisation, Save the Children, has a focus on the urban squatter settlements, where the urban disadvantaged live.
- Only one organisation, FRIEND, has a membership and/or Board representing its 'beneficiary groups'. Save the Children is trying to establish this. Both FRIEND and Save the Children find it difficult to engage their beneficiary groups in their governance, which is often indicative of the connection or engagement organisations have with beneficiary communities.
- Other organisations deliver services (Marie Stopes, PCASS, Salvation Army, CAL Program); act as statutory bodies (NCSMED, Consumer Council); are capacity building and funding focused (FCOSS); or are advocacy and information focused (FWRM, FCOSS). Their 'reach' into disadvantaged communities is therefore limited by their resources and their connections/networks.
- Of all the organisations visited in person, FCOSS is the closest one to a 'membership organisation', run by those it serves. FCOSS' members are mostly organisations and community groups with some individual members. Some members mentioned feeling disenfranchised from the umbrella organisation and there is evidence to suggest FCOSS isn't consistently meeting its member's needs. The membership is still in need of revitalisation and re-engagement.

3.1.5 Capacity development and sustainability

An additional issue for civil society in Fiji appears to be the development of capacity of organisations and communities to support more self-reliant and self-directed development. Among the ACSSP agencies at least this emerged as a real issue.

PCDF (Partners in Community Development Fiji) spoke about their realisation that they had been quite successful in transferring technical training and skills building to the communities, but less successful in training and mentoring in program management in order that the community were able to take on management of the project. They were clear about the extra level of engagement and resourcing necessary to do this properly and are trying to address this issue with

the Mainstreaming of Rural Development Innovations (MORDI) program (a regional initiative of Foundation of the Peoples of the South Pacific International, FSPI)⁹.

This issue of capacity development is echoed in the current situation of the FCOSS. Although they have a membership network of Community Based Organisations (CBO), the findings indicate that those CBO and the district councils are not getting the support they require to successfully support the poor and marginalised. FCOSS currently don't have the money or the capacity to fulfill this aspect of their mandate despite being otherwise well positioned to do so. FCOSS have consequently gone in the direction of program delivery, in part because this is where donor support was available.

3.1.6 Sector funding

Donor funding preferences seem to play a significant part in directing the CSO work. Some agencies noted the lack of funding or resources available to meet community determined needs. There were very few examples of a functioning link for CBO to tap into for this kind of funding. FCOSS was not currently able to fulfill this aspect of its mandate. Save the Children has a program focused on this for schools, although it is small scale, and FRIEND were trying to link communities directly with interim government for this support although funds flowing were limited.

Two organisations mentioned that they refrain from asking communities directly what support they need as they are not confident of being able to access the funds from donors to provide it, and they don't want to raise the expectations of communities.

There is some danger that CSO, dependent upon donor funding, are developing their roles in response to donor interest rather than in response to genuinely perceived and understood needs of people. For example, as noted earlier, many organisations appear keen to move into income generation work because they perceive donors are interested to support this area, but few seem to have undertaken the analysis or capacity development to work effectively in this sector.

3.1.7 Sector Coordination

Earlier research has found that civil society organisations are generally weak in their ability to work together and especially to cooperate across ethnic and religious lines. There appears to be some competition among organisations, exacerbated by limited available donor funding. Perhaps of more concern, the sector is characterised as insufficiently transparent.

This research identified some of the same concerns. There appears to be deep, and in some cases long running, distrust and competition between organisation and their leaders, which is seriously inhibiting collaboration and coordination of support to communities. At the same time, there was

⁹The MORDI program works with a community facilitator, whereby they are mentored and supported to take on project management and community development. The community facilitator has accountability to the village traditional governance structure and the district council.

less evidence of divide along ethnic lines within organisations or among the groups they served. At least for organisations supported by AusAID, there appeared to be an ability to both engage and serve both major ethnic groups.

The Fiji Council of Social services (FCOSS) operates an umbrella organisation for part of the sector. It includes up to 150 organisations as members, mostly organised through district councils (DCOSS). These DCOSS have in the past been able to operate as coordination points for various local CSO. With less available funding there is declining membership and declining interest in such coordination. FCOSS appears to have less to offer the sector as a whole and is less able to support the DCOSS (although several of the DCOSS interviewed were able to point to ongoing local coordination among their members).

The other avenues for coordination seem to be the strong networks among some women's groups and religious organisations which appear to cover wide areas of the country and to reach into communities.

AusAID has tried to support some collaboration in the sector. For example, they provided funding resources for the recent CSO Forum. Their difficulties seem to come from the lack of one overall coordinating body as well as the diversity of organisations and the competition which has developed between them.

3.1.8 Challenges in the Sector

The most significant challenge for the CSO sector seems to be the enabling environment. With the declining economic situation, local fundraising is becoming more difficult and there are fewer volunteers. For example, DCOSS members consistently noted the difficulty of finding people who were willing to give their time to social work and the number of organisations competing for volunteers.

There is a perceived decline in donors and available funding streams. Organisations report that they lack capacity and also that they are feeling less informed and less able to meet the new challenges being created by the declining economic situation. As one respondent noted, "CSO are largely fulfilling their role in working with the disadvantaged, but they have sustainability issues – when the grant stops, they stop."

Organisations are generally weak at formal program management, monitoring and reporting, with many organisations reporting their ongoing struggle with meeting donor requirements, although some organisations, mostly those with considerable international support, seem to be less concerned about such requirements. Even in these cases however, such as PCASS and Marie Stopes, reporting to donors was the responsibility of the director, who was the only staff member with the conceptual understanding and skills to meet the requirements.

There have been some instances of misuse of funds¹⁰.

Some organisations appear to be highly dependent upon individual leaders with relatively weak organisational governance arrangements. Most organisations reported a lack of accountability to those they serve, with insufficient mechanisms for hearing from them and feeding back to them regarding their programs. There are some exceptions. The functioning Community Education Committees facilitated by Save the Children is an example of an organisation doing this well and consistently.

Finally, many organisations are facing difficulty retaining staff, as there is a lot of competition for skilled staff.

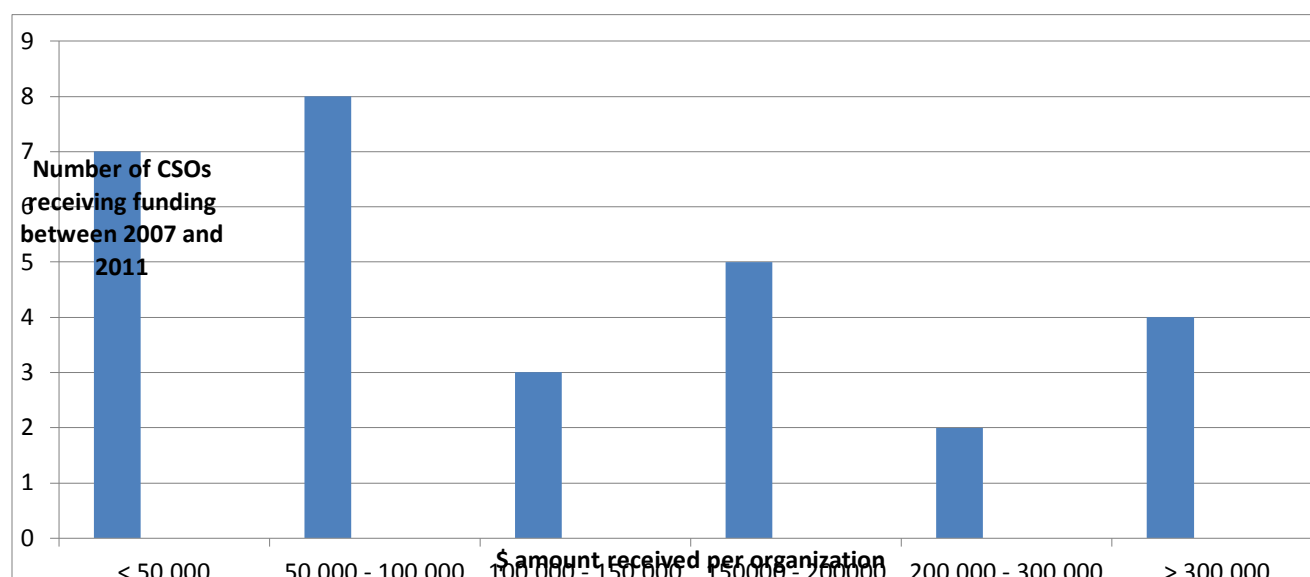
As noted above, there are few opportunities for CSO to influence the interim government, although some groups such as the Consumer Council and the National Centre for Small and Micro-enterprise Development, which have statutory status, are able to undertake some ongoing consultation with the interim government. Some organisations such as PCASS have agreements with departments for specific sectoral work areas. In addition other organisations report that they have been invited to participate in government forums or work areas but have been reluctant to do so either because of perceived political differences or because they understand their donors have political differences with the interim government.

3.2 AusAID support

Since 2007 AusAID has supported 29 CSO, 14 with core funding and some program work and 15 for program work alone. The program has changed in recent times. Originally operating as a small grants scheme, the impact of the 2006 coup led to a decreased focus on work directly with the Fiji interim government and more attention to support for the civil society sector. Added to this was the concern in 2008 about the impact of the global financial crisis which further focused the AusAID interest on direct assistance to people who were more likely to be affected. Both changes have led to a growth in the ACSSP with the funding for the four year period from 2007 to 2011 amounting to more than A\$5,726,000.

Funding agreements run for between one to three years, depending upon the nature and focus on the funding. The amount of funding varies between organisations and type of funding but in general smaller amounts are provided to more organisations, as illustrated in the following chart.

¹⁰ Details about organisational financial capacity and management are contained in the report accompanying this review.



It is difficult to identify a particular focus for the AusAID supported CSO. While there are defined funding criteria (see Annex Six) and each application undergoes an appraisal process at the Fiji Post, the spread of organisations (see Annex Seven) suggests the program has responded to opportunities presented by submitted proposals rather than actively sought to fund organisations. (This is in line with normal procedures under small grants arrangement). Funding proposals are expected to fit one of four broad focus areas:

- Civic education and human rights
- Promoting gender equality
- Community driven development
- Improving the quality of or access to services

3.2.1 Core funded organisations

A distinction can be made between the core funding versus project funding for the organisations. Core funding is a different approach, allowing AusAID to support the overall work and direction of organisations, gaining the benefit of both the outcomes of their work as well as the indirect contribution to building diverse and, hopefully, more competent participants in the Fiji civil society. Organisations reported their appreciation of core funding, one respondent noting that it “gave them the freedom to use it towards their priority issues”. Another noted that “AusAID were the first organisation willing to give core funding and endeavor to build capacity” and that they “could make an immense contribution if they focused on organisational development”.

To this end, the selection of the core funded organisations is significant. At present there are 14 organisations which have received some amount of core funding for a three year period. The work of some organisations covers more than one of the focus areas for the program but a rough

division based upon the major focus of each organisation seems to show the following emphasis in ACSSP.

Focus area	Number of organisations receiving core funding	Total amount of program funding for the period 2007-2011¹¹
Civic education and human rights	2	\$220,000
Promoting gender equality	4	\$660,000
Community driven development	4	\$1,240,000
Improving the quality of or access to services	4	\$1,250,000 ¹²

3.2.2 Project funding

The project funding is more akin to a small grants scheme. It provides a flexible and responsive mechanism for AusAID to support projects which are broadly in line with its focus areas. In regard to project funding, the AusAID data is similarly mixed, but again with a stronger emphasis upon community driven development and a focus on service provision.

Focus area	Number of projects funded in this focus area	Total amount of program funding for the period 2007-2011¹³
Civic education and human rights	6	\$325,950.00
Promoting gender equality	2	\$320,166.20
Community driven development	4	\$580,213.00
Improving the quality of or access to services	10	\$1,059,764.00

¹¹ It should be noted that different organisations are being funded for different time periods and for varying lengths of time. Further that various organisations are receiving quite considerable differences in the amount of funding.

¹² This picture is a little confusing as there are two organisations which receive considerable larger amounts of core funding compared to other organisations (PCASS and FRIEND), leading to particular high amounts in the two last categories.

¹³ It should be noted that different organisations are being funded for different time periods and for varying lengths of time. Further than different organisation are receiving quite considerable differences in the amount of funding.

3.3 Outcomes from the ACSSP

It is extremely difficult to summarise the overall impact of the core funded programs. The organisations are quite diverse and their reporting is almost uniformly at the level of outputs and activities. Reports are characterised by numbers of participants, general descriptions of events and activities and in some cases interesting and detailed case study material which suggests some impact in people's lives but lacks any contextual analysis or explanation.

There are several organisations which receive core funding under ACSSP. Of these five were identified by AusAID as being of particular interest as potential longer term partners. For this reason additional attention was directed at the strengths and limitations of these organisations. The following snapshots¹⁴ outline a summary of each organisation.

Fiji Council Of Social Services (FCOSS)

Performance in relation to their agreement with AusAID

AusAID have given core support focused on training and capacity building for membership organisations and district councils (DCOSS). There was activity towards: consultations at district level; a rejuvenation of membership and council organisation; and the development of training courses. The focus of the support seems to be sensible, although the outcomes have not been achieved; in particular, the rejuvenation of membership and capacity building of district councils is still to be achieved.

Major strengths

The major strength of FCOSS is the breadth of membership and reach through civil society networks/groups – youth, faith-based, women's, teachers associations and school committees, elderly and disabled organisations, Red Cross, philanthropists. In some places these district councils are also associated with the local governance structures.

Support for the elderly and those caring for them is something FCOSS and its membership have focused on and this work is welcome.

Major weaknesses or issues

FCOSS seem to be straying from their primary function to support their membership and to act as a coordinating, capacity building and peak representative body when required.

FCOSS are not necessarily in touch with their membership's needs, nor able to meet them. One DCOSS member expressed "if they expect DCOSS to be the eyes and ears on the ground they need to come down to the ground to

¹⁴ The snapshots are of five organisations visited for a full day during the ACSSP review. During the day long visits there was an opportunity to meet with a number of staff members from across the organisations and in most cases some of the program participants/beneficiaries. The snapshots have been developed through the notes from the visits and only contain findings and recommendations that were able to be verified by at least two sources.

provide the link back to expertise and funding.” FCOSS are not currently able to meet the needs of the DCOSS or their CBO members, which was articulated to be expertise, funding and capacity development support.

Staff capacity and second line leadership is a problem within FCOSS and one they probably have to address immediately. Volunteerism in Fiji is declining and this will impact on CBO, DCOSS and FCOSS.

The marginalisation of women in the CBO and civil society networks and groups who form the membership was mentioned by some stakeholders. Women do seem to be involved in FCOSS’ membership, so the consultant is unsure of the need in this regard. It may be something to explore with FCOSS leadership.

Marie Stopes

Performance in relation to their agreement with AusAID

AusAID’s support focused on Garment Factory Workers Project and Outreach of reproductive health services. The Garment Factory Workers Project seems to have successfully reached factory workers with awareness and information about sexual and reproductive health. The outreach work is young although appears to be reaching women in rural locations with information and raising awareness on issues otherwise unknown in these locations. It is also extending sexual and reproductive health services to populations that were otherwise not able to access them.

Major strengths

Marie Stopes has a well-developed model and program which is directed mainly from Australia via an Australian-based board and organisational strategic plan. The organisation in Fiji has support from the Australian Marie Stopes in organisational development and program management.

The organisation is filling gaps in reproductive health services for women, with recognised technical proficiency in this area. There are some outputs and outcomes such as increased awareness of women, increased access to and use of health services and family planning options. They are using innovative and flexible methods to raise awareness of sexual and reproductive health and adapting these successfully for different contexts.

Marie Stopes appear to be working effectively with/for interim government health service in their outreach work.

Major weaknesses or issues

Although the quantitative monitoring and IT (Information Technology) solutions are good, the gathering of outcome focused qualitative information is not consistent (an exception is in the Garment Factories Workers Project). Marie Stopes do not appear to be working with strong baseline information in Fiji and therefore programs run the risk of addressing needs as identified by Australian directors rather than Fijian women.

There are needs identified by women Marie Stopes are reaching that they are not in a position to assist with. For instance support to single mothers and women’s empowerment in relationships including decision-making capacity about their reproductive health. Women Marie Stopes have assisted with family planning options have spoken of the power and conflict issues between themselves and their male partners around reproductive health. Making choices without the knowledge of male partners can put women in danger of violence and abuse. Marie Stopes is not currently able to address these issues with women and their partners.

In the situations observed women are being encouraged to take long term contraception options – in some cases 5 to 10 year solutions. It was unclear the full extent of the counseling and information women were provided with before agreeing to those solutions. It is also unclear what ongoing health service support they can access during those years, either from Marie Stopes or the interim government health services. This could lead to health complications, which are not immediately and expertly addressed.

Pacific Counseling and Support Services (PCASS)

Performance in relation to their agreement with AusAID

PCASS has received funding for core; prisoner's programs; HIV and AIDS counseling; training of counselors. The organisation has grown substantially over the last two years and is extending its services into new areas. It has also taken on significant organisational development work, which is to be commended. The program areas funded by AusAID are discussed below as strengths.

Major strengths

PCASS are providing high quality counseling services in Fiji that otherwise would not be accessible to most of the population. They are training counselors in Fiji and the skills are spreading to institutions other than PCASS such as the Interim Ministry of Health and within the prison system.

HIV/AIDS counseling for pregnant women is reaching much of the pregnant population and increasingly their partners. It is also developing as a high standard service that is informing HIV and AIDS work in the Pacific region.

PCASS are undertaking transformative rehabilitation work with prisoners. Although the consultant only spoke with a small sample of stakeholders, there are indications that the programs they are offering in prison are relevant and effective, changing the behavior of prisoners and prison staff for the better and beginning to address re-offending.

The organisation are tackling organisational development issues such as structure, management, performance monitoring and appraisal and would have good lessons to share with other civil society organisations about this aspect of their development.

PCASS are currently working on a comprehensive database of qualitative and quantitative information and are otherwise able to point to a number of examples of gaining client feedback and learning from their work.

Major weaknesses or issues

PCASS are building on trust and the relationships built through the prisons and sex worker programs and broadening into other areas, specifically income generation and micro-finance. This seems primarily due to the fact that they are not finding satisfactory programming and support from other organisations in this area. This is not necessarily a cause for concern but is worth being aware of and assisting PCASS to assess whether they have the resources and capacity to effectively branch into new areas.

PCASS are primarily a service provider and are structured as such with contact with community members predominantly as clients. Their support is individually empowering for clients although PCASS would require

development in structure, accountability mechanisms and possibly staff training and management if they were to move into more demanding community development work.

PCASS may need to strengthen the independence and activity of their Board into the future. Currently their staff elect their Board (which is unconventional although may not be concerning). Their Board have also been inactive in the past.

There are some culture issues that PCASS are aware of and will have to tackle as they deepen and broaden their work internally and externally. For instance, the following are largely foreign ideas in Fiji and these can impact on the acceptance and effectiveness of the counseling method/approach:

- Helping yourself rather than asking for help
- Confidentiality
- Boundaries of a client/counselor relationship
- Analytical thinking

Save the Children Fiji

Performance in relation to their agreement with AusAID

AusAID agreements have focused on child rights training in civil society organisations and core funding for program and administration. Outcomes of the child rights work are unclear. Follow up workshops seem to be required and institutions may require ongoing mentoring and support to fully adopt and operationalise child rights concepts and principles.

Major strengths

The Save the Children Mobile Playgroup Project (MPP) seems to be effectively based on a good understanding of need with a strong development process. For instance: links with other groups; community based governance and advisory committees; and a comprehensive approach/model of support. This program is recording outcomes such as an increase in children's readiness for school.

Save the Children are now a Fijian NGO (Non-Government Organisation) with a Fijian board. They are conscious of and are attempting to increase their accountability to children, their primary stakeholders, by having children on recruitment/interview panels for instance.

Major weaknesses or issues

Some areas of Save the Children's programming are under-resourced, such as child rights advocacy and emergency response work.

The monitoring, evaluation and learning systems could be more systematic and focused on outcomes. They do however have the reporting and meeting systems/structures to support this and recognise the need.

Foundation for Rural Integrated Enterprises 'N' Development (FRIEND)

Performance in relation to their agreement with AusAID

FRIEND has been supported by AusAID for core organisational work and for the model kitchen development. A main aspect of the core funding has been for the development of a strategic plan although this seems to have taken a long time to develop and has been relatively expensive. The model kitchen project has been delayed substantially and has now taken a turn towards a much more significant infrastructure development, which AusAID will need to consider carefully before continuing to fund.

Major strengths

FRIEND's Youth Employment Network is successfully providing work skills and opportunities for young people.

Their income generation work is providing regular income for a small number of people.

FRIEND have the potential to continue to expand their income generation, enterprise development and marketing work.

Major weaknesses or issues to be aware of

FRIEND generally seem to be over-extended into many areas of work. They are a young organisation although are working across a number of demanding areas simultaneously. Work with youth at risk (FRIEND's Art and Culture Enterprises (FACE)) and on community organising and governance (Participatory Action for Community Empowerment (PACE)) seems particularly under resourced with limited outcomes. There are some specific concerns about these areas of work:

- Working with youth at risk is currently supported by volunteers although they are a difficult and demanding group to work with. There are indications that the volunteers are not sufficiently supported in their work. Also the youth involved in the program have had subsequent difficulties with the authorities suggesting that their involvement may be making them more vulnerable to harassment.
- The community organising and governance work is demanding, although it has only been supported by four workers in twenty communities. Although participatory action plans have been established in communities, in some cases they have been developed outside of the community governance structures, thereby undermining those structures and deeming the plans difficult to achieve. In one circumstance observed this has led to conflict in the community and difficulty with interim government departments.

FRIEND's monitoring and evaluation processes seem to be limited and are not providing them with information useful for learning or accountability purposes.

As noted in the snapshots above these organisations, as well as other ACSSP funded organisations, are able to report on some project outcomes across their programs. For example, reported behavior and life choice changes of clients (PCASS and Marie Stopes); small scale increase in regular income (FRIEND); small scale environmental protection and income generation (PCDF); training of carers and counselors to deliver better services (FCOSS, CAL and PCASS); and potential institutional/cultural change in a prison site (PCASS).

Further, some of the agencies are able to attribute specific change for people as a result of the AusAID funding. For example, a senior counselor at PCASS has now reached over 700 clients and reports having established rapport with all but a handful. He says he is now able to “make people cry and laugh constructively... and help people climb back up to the surface with hope and dignity”. He reports that Fijians are getting a satisfaction from counseling that they were never able to get before.

However because the ACSSP program has grown in a way which has responded to changing circumstances in Fiji rather than against a clear program objective, it is very difficult to either aggregate outcomes or provide a view about the overall contribution of the various projects to specific AusAID objectives.

Looking across the four focus areas and all the available reports and information about the agencies the following general outcomes can be reported:

1. Civic education and human rights

This area will receive approximately 9.6% of total funding under ACSSP between 2007 and 2010. There are a range of small projects funded under this area and reports were not available for all projects or for all core funded organisations.

However, particular outcomes include the development of a corporate code for governance in private business, increased consumer protection and education about consumer rights and for a small group of people, increased awareness raising about the constitution.

2. Promoting gender equality

This focus area will receive approximately 17.3% of total funding under ACSSP between 2007 and 2011. Outcomes which are noted in reports include;

- Completion and submission of the shadow report for the UN Convention on Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). Coupled with this has been increased awareness among other organisations about issues of violence against women
- Extensive use of media and other forums advocacy on women's rights
- Awareness raising on conflict and peace building

Unfortunately there were limited sources of information for this focus area. The organisations more connected into the community were not those reviewed for this research.

3. Community driven development

This focus area will receive 32.2% of ACSSP funding between 2007 and 2011. It was easier to identify the outcomes in this area. They are wide ranging and include considerable focus on income generation, especially in rural areas and among young people. Outcomes to date suggest some modest success in establishing some businesses in some locations.

In addition, this category includes those organisations working in environmental awareness and education. Outcomes include attention to water and sanitation awareness and provision of services in schools. They also include working with communities in coastal areas to restore reefs and develop community awareness and commitment to protection of natural resources.

4. Improving the quality of or access to services

For this focus area 41% of ACSSP funds are expected to be used between 2007 and 2010. The area covers a very wide range of services, with a strong emphasis upon health services, services for people with disabilities and prevention and education about HIV/AIDS. Outcomes are readily identified but the significance and relevance of the outcomes are not assessed in reports.

Specific outcomes include development of a social work service for people in Fiji, with an emphasis upon professional and high quality counseling services. These services include work with prisoners and with people affected by HIV/AIDS, assisting them to address their personal situation.

There are also considerable outcomes in reproductive health, with opportunities provided in communities and in factories for women to access reproductive health services and resources.

People with disability were particularly assisted, especially those with a hearing disability. There were no reports available to track the specific outcomes of this assistance.

The Fiji Council of Social services (FCOSS) operated a range of training to assist in areas of caring for the elderly. They also used other methods to raise awareness of this area and to direct interim government attention to the needs of the elderly. FCOSS were also active in supporting other CSO although most of their specific activities for this period seem to be directed at training and information processes.

3.4 Program coordination

At present ACSSP has limited focus on wider program coordination with other donors or AusAID programs. However there seems to be potential for ACSSP to utilise synergies with other programs to increase its impact and influence.

To date there has been no deliberate coordination between ACSSP and other bilateral programs, although this is currently under exploration in the new design of both health and education sector

programs. There does seem to be considerable opportunity for such coordination in various areas of ACSSP, especially in health and HIV/AIDS.

Gender offers another such area for joint programming. At present AusAID supports the Fiji Women's Crisis Centre under a funding pool apart from ACSSP. This preferential treatment of one CSO is not well understood in the wider sector and the alignment between this funding and other funding for gender issues in ACSSP is not clear. Potentially bringing together all the programs directed at gender under one strategy would increase synergies between the projects and organisations and contribute towards clearer outcomes for the work.

Finally, AusAID funds a regional program of support to civil society organisations around leadership, the Pacific Leadership Program (PLP), which is based in Fiji. This program provides funding to different organisations in Fiji but offers potential for some synergy with the ACSSP program. While the targets of both schemes are different, there has been some discussion about shared learning and approaches between the two programs and ongoing exploration and shared strategies between the two programs has potential to strengthen both.

Coordination with other donors is dealt with in more detail in the following sections. While AusAID have sought to promote such coordination and while other donors also provide funding to some of the same organisations, there is presently no formal coordination between the donors. There is clearly enormous potential to develop a more coherent and focused approach to funding both of core and program funded organisations if the donors were able to develop their own shared strategy for CSO engagement.

3.5 Current NGO Monitoring and Evaluation practice

A consistent theme in almost all of the information gathered was the difficulty of obtaining reliable, valid and outcomes focused monitoring data. This had been identified by AusAID as a significant factor in previous reports¹⁵ and was a reason for the review being reported in this document.

Review of the available reports for the twenty nine organisations which have received funding from AusAID, reveals few which are able to provide reliable outcome focused information. Most reports either fail to address outcomes and focus on activity reporting, or fail to provide any reliable data about their achievements. Some include some useful data but it is not systematically reported or collated and it is difficult to appreciate the significance of the data without considerable additional contextual explanation. As a result, it is very difficult to make useful comments about the real impact of these organisations.

Further investigation indicates that the problem with monitoring stem from several issues:

¹⁵ See for example the Quality At Implementation report 2008/09

- Several organisations, particularly those receiving core funding, struggle to define what they are trying to achieve and their overall intentions. (For example, PCDF, PCASS, FRIEND and FCOSS all have objectives and goals which are extremely broad and hard to assess in reasonable terms. FRIEND and FCOSS have struggled to finalise their strategic plans, which suggests some difficulty in defining and communicating their core mission and central activities.) Thus, their monitoring is confused and their outcomes hard to describe against an organisational goal.
- Further to this, the agreements for several of the projects do not link to clearly defined objectives.
- Qualitative data is being collected by some organisations, including through use of methodologies like the Most Significant Change approach. Some of this is for marketing purposes. Some is included in donor reports although in a far from systematic manner. There are long lists of case studies and of statements from service users which might be valuable information for AusAID and for the organisation itself, if these were analyzed with a contextual understanding and against organisational intentions and objectives.
- Organisations are collecting a large amount of activity data, including quantitative data but appear unable to understand how to use this data as a starting point to explore the impact of those activities. The notion of impact and outcomes do not appear to be well understood by most organisations.
- Formal mechanisms for feedback from service users are weak and therefore not available for either program improvement or reporting to donors.
- Most organisation are gathering more information than they report to AusAID. This is in part because of poor documentation and analysis skills and also because of time and capacity to synthesise qualitative data into appropriate reports.

From the other perspective, a small number of organisations are using some creative and innovative approaches to understanding the progress of their work. Again this is mostly qualitative and informal data collection and hard to systematically report in simple formats, but potentially could provide a rich picture of what is being achieved with AusAID funds.

Some organisations seem to be working on their donor reporting and provision of outcome information. This appears to be confined to those better resourced organisations with either international connections or at least some international forms of support. There are some examples of organisations making changes to the direction or quality of activities after receiving feedback from recipients, for instance Fiji Women's Rights Movement, PCASS and Save the Children, although these do not represent changes in overall strategy.

There does seem to be a focus on evaluation over monitoring among some organisations. Such evaluations, usually undertaken with assistance from donors and expatriate consultants, do provide better quality information. This is less useful however for ongoing program accountability or program improvement.

Finally, it was reported by the program manager for ACSSP that there was limited time to engage with such a wide variety of organisations and she was therefore highly dependent upon the reports from those organisations to assess their activity and outcomes. In general these were far from satisfactory for her needs.

Interestingly, these issues are similar to those identified in wider investigation of AusAID experience with monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of CSO programs. Other research¹⁶ has shown that typically CSO struggle to formalise their data collection systems in a way which makes information available to others and struggle with adaption to donor reporting requirements. Further that AusAID program management typically feel that there is more information available but that limited time for engagement with CSO means that information is hard to access.

3.6 Current internal ACSSP management processes

As noted above, the processes for management of the ACSSP have developed from those of an AusAID small grants scheme. The requests for funding are received throughout the year. Organisations are assessed internally through an appraisal process, which allows for wider program input from Post but no ongoing records are maintained of this process. There are limited objectives for the program and due to the lack of ongoing records little scope for tracking of the internal logic of the selection of organisations and programs, except through discussion with the Program Manager.

Core funded organisations are generally larger and more established organisations which can demonstrate basic credentials and an organisational plan and sound financial system. Project funding is provided to those organisations which have sound credentials and an adequate proposal. All organisations or projects must fit within one of the four focus areas of service delivery—gender equality, community driven development, civic education and human rights—an extremely broad range of options.

There is limited time for AusAID program manager engagement with any particular program, which creates a dependency upon the organisational reports as the main source of information and program assessment.

¹⁶ AusAID (2008), “Guidance on M&E for Civil Society Programs”, Demand for Better Governance Program.

The respondents for this review generally found the systems to be flexible and responsive to their needs. Responses were quite varied with all being appreciative of the funds received but some seeing these as one source among many while other organisations felt the funding had made considerable impact in their organisational development. The core funding was considered particularly helpful in development of organisational capacity. Some organisations did note however, that three years was short time in which to build a solid organisational base.

Reporting requirements were considered onerous by a few organisations, especially when smaller amounts were involved. Other organisations reported that they found the reporting requirements easy and appropriate.

The quality of the relationship was noted by some respondents. Generally this was considered to be reasonable. At the same time, one organisation noted that they do not really feel they are in partnership with AusAID. In a partnership they would expect technical advice as well as funding; to be working towards the same vision and goals and shaping the strategic direction of the partnership; to be equal; and to see a two-way traffic of information. (It is noted that AusAID have never intended this program to be a partnership program, although AusAID is considering this approach for future funding agreements.)

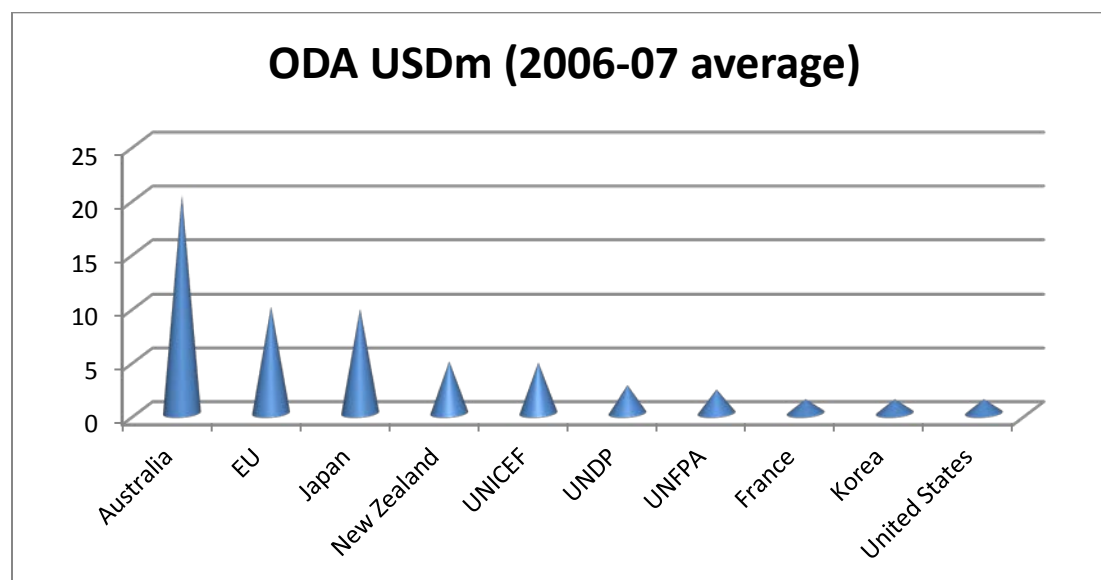
Overall, the responses seemed to depend upon the wider capacity of the organisations, especially the degree of support or internal capacity they had to manage donor funds in general. Again, the organisations with international connections or those with international support, appeared to find the funding and accountability systems easier to manage (although invariably only one individual within the organisation had the capacity to report to donors) and certainly saw less need to increase their engagement with AusAID.

CSO feedback on how AusAID could function as a more effective donor included how it could support greater cooperation and coordination across the sector. Suggestions included:

- Encourage consortia models when organisations with different expertise work together;
- Encourage and initiate opportunities for learning together such as peer reviews;
- Encourage recognition of the different roles and expertise of civil society groups and how they can work together. The CSO forum enabled such diversity to be explored. Other opportunities for this sort of interaction should be developed;
- Reduce need for competition – for example try not to move the focus of grants too regularly and expect organisations to move into different focus areas (e.g. income generation);
- Try not to favor one or two organisations too liberally.

3.7 Current donor funding and coordination

As the following table shows, Australia has been one of the major donors to Fiji.



More up to date figures are difficult to obtain but research from the European Commission suggests that for 2008 and 2009 the following are likely donor disbursements for Fiji:

Donor	Disbursement in 2008 (Euro x 1 million)	Disbursement in 2009 (Euro x 1 million)
Australia	9.3	7.3
EU	12.5	7.1
Japan	NA	6.8
New Zealand	0.7	0.8
UNICEF	NA	0.3
UNDP	1.0	0.4
UNFPA	0.2	0.4
France	NA	NA
Korea	NA	0.5
United States	NA	NA

While these figures are very approximate and need to be verified against actual expenditure, they show Australian continues to be a significant donor in Fiji.

The research indicates that in line with this, AusAID appears to be the largest donor supporting the civil society area at this time (although the emerging EU funding may change this scenario). Organisations funded by AusAID typically receive funding from other sources as well as AusAID and the impression is that many agencies have worked hard to judge the range of international donors and adapt to available funding across the donor spectrum.

Recipient organisations funded by AusAID did not choose to compare donors in their responses to this review so it is difficult to assess the comparative systems of the ACSSP against other donor funding systems. Typically people suggested that streamlining of funding and reporting requirements would be useful, as well more information about which donors were able to fund what sort of work. The impression was that many CSO spent a lot of time sending applications to multiple donors to try to secure funding for their work. The current scenario appears inefficient and fragmented and less likely to support cooperation and partnership between organisations.

The consultants were able to speak with three other donors in Fiji during the review: New Zealand International Aid and Development Agency (NZAID); the British High Commission (HC); and the European Union (EU). Details of their funding arrangements are contained at Annex Eight.

These donors suggested that their current level of cooperation with each other was mainly around information sharing. This included sharing information about which agencies were trustworthy and able to meet reporting requirements. This matched the view of some CSO who reported the only donor cooperation seemed to be about sharing the information about problems and failures among organisations.

Of the three donors contacted, NZAID shares the most natural alignment with AusAID. NZAID's support to civil society is available through the Informal Settlements Support Program (FISSP) and Civil Society Support Program (CSSP). Both NZAID and AusAID fund some of the same organisations (FRIEND, PCASS, Save the Children Fiji and Fiji Women's Crisis Centre (FWCC)¹⁷) and both have a two tier system of core and program funding. The CSSP is currently being reviewed and developed.¹⁸ Intentions of the program include:

- Core funded agencies are funded for six years with an emphasis upon higher trust and lower compliance. Policy discussions are held with these organisations once a year

¹⁷ Fiji Women's Crisis centre, a large organisation focused on serving women, is supported by AusAID through another program.

¹⁸ A report from a recent review of civil society by NZAID is now finalised although the consultants were not able to access the report. A request to NZAID for the report is current.

focusing around the agency outcomes. (It is noted however that only one organisation (FWCC) has moved into this type of relationship so far.)

- A focus on capacity development of organisations, including training in financial management and M&E.
- Development of ‘Learning Circles’ with partners and NZAID, to look at systems and processes.

NZAID see the joint funding between themselves and AusAID to the FWCC as a good model of cooperation between donors with each taking responsibility for different aspects of the funding arrangements. They see some potential for further collaboration around establishing common criteria and shared selection processes.

In some contrast the other donors who responded to this review tended to have less in common with the current AusAID approach. The British HC has a small grants scheme with a focus on specific areas (conflict prevention, good governance and climate change) with a strict one year funding limit and a preference for organisations which meet their needs for clear outputs and outcomes. The program does not appear to have much flexibility to develop beyond this.

The funding available from the European Union (EU) is divided into three areas. One stream focuses on non-state actors (NSA) in the education sector, the other on NSA in environment and human rights and democracy, the third for civic education. They are interested in supporting large established organisations which can deliver the desired outcomes. They do not have a focus on institutional strengthening although the funding to NSA through the education sector is accompanied by technical support.

Both the British HC and the EU representatives saw some merit in consideration of different niches for donors and some allocation of responsibility between donors. There seemed to be little interest in collaboration beyond this point, although they felt that information sharing about the capacity and trustworthiness of organisations was important.

From the other perspective there are no obvious mechanisms to hold donors accountable for their practice and their impact upon civil society. There is no umbrella body to cover the whole sector, and the government department which would normally undertake that role is not operating in this way at present. There is some real risk therefore that the approach of donors is contributing to further divisions within the CSO sector.

4 Discussion of findings

The ACSSP potentially offers AusAID a good position from which to respond to the emerging economic and social difficulties for people and communities in Fiji. The program uses an

innovative mix of core and program funding. It is flexible and able to provide funds across a range of sectors with apparently minimal restrictions or exclusions. It is generally well regarded by both CSO and other donors and has developed a good local knowledge of the sector and the potential within the CSO in Fiji.

At this time the program lacks clear intent, and also lacks sufficient means to make assessment of outcomes and impact. It also appears to be resource intensive in regards to AusAID program management. The opportunities to focus and use the program for specific ends, or to create synergies with other programs and donors, are only just being explored. Perhaps of even more concern, the CSO sector in Fiji seems to be low in capacity and poorly coordinated. There are many problems across the sector, and any substantial donor engagement is likely to require further investment in time and resources to support the sector overall.

Further discussion of these issues follows below.

4.1 AusAID engagement in the CSO sector

AusAID guidance on civil society engagement notes that the most important decision for an AusAID program area is to be clear about the intent of its engagement and the strategy which will best support that intent¹⁹.

At present, due to the history of its development, the ACSSP lacks such clarity. The current program seems to combine many ideas into one funding stream. It has sector specific activities, with particular strengths in health and working with women, a small grants type function that supports small and emerging examples of community and local action and enterprise, a reach into some areas of rights and consumer action and a less well developed, but important, set of interventions in both environment and community development. In turn, it lacks effective reach into communities and groups of the poor and most marginalised.

The final decision about how to develop a clear intent and direction for ACSSP will rest upon careful analysis of the AusAID contribution in Fiji at the present time, and attention to how effectively civil society can contribute to the outcomes AusAID want to bring about. However, there are some wider learning and considerations which might guide this development.

AusAID guidance suggests that the agency engages with civil society to achieve the following outcomes:

- Policy Dialogue: Contributing to policy, program and strategy development in Australia and overseas.
- Program Delivery: Facilitating better access to basic service delivery and humanitarian activities for poor and vulnerable communities; strengthening the role and capacity of

¹⁹ AusAID 2008, "Guidance on M&E for Civil Society Programs", Demand for Better Governance Unit.

civil society in partner countries and supporting interim government systems to work better for the poor.

- Building Community Support (both within Australia and abroad): Undertaking development awareness activities and advocating on international development issues; facilitating partnerships and promoting people to people and organisational links, including through volunteer and other programs²⁰.

Currently the Fiji ACSSP has a strong focus on program delivery, with particular attention to service delivery and some capacity building of the sector. If this remains the major focus of the program, then it is important to consider how to strengthen the focus on the most poor and how to increase the likelihood of real outcomes for marginalised people. Some possible ways forward include the following:

1. The ACSSP could choose to specialise in particular sectors, such as environment or health, focusing its support to a range of appropriate organisations, encouraging their collective action and cooperation and developing up a program focused around specific sector outcomes. This would mirror the approach taken to the support for the FWCC. It would allow a few organisations to develop up expertise and impact in selected sectors. ACSSP could then in turn develop more clear objectives and expect evidence of impact and change in those sectors.
2. The program could choose to develop a more deliberate focus into more marginalised communities. This might involve further development and direction of existing partner organisations towards these sorts of communities. However, drawing upon the experience of other AusAID civil society programs, it is likely to involve engagement with new partners, such as churches or grassroots youth organisations and women's organisations. This necessarily increases the program management required for such a program. So it may be best undertaken in partnership with existing NGO in Fiji. Or similar to the Churches Partnership Programs operated in Papua New Guinea (PNG) and Vanuatu and the NGO partner program operated in Solomon Islands, through intermediary international NGO. Alternatively, it could draw from the example of civil society supported programs in PNG and Indonesia and utilise a managing contractor to provide the program management.

There is potential to expand the service delivery focus of ACSSP, with more deliberate strengthening of the role and capacity of the CSO sector in Fiji. At a more general level ACSSP could work to develop up the overall strength of the CSO sector through more focus on governance, management and assessment capacities. FCOSS have undertaken some of this work

²⁰Taken from the AusAID NGO and Community Engagement Section discussion Paper, "AusAID Engagement with NGO", draft, October 2009.

in the past and there is a current proposal for a more deliberate program of Australian Government support through a civil society training course²¹. ACSSP would be ideally placed to develop up a wider program of support based upon their experience with the sector through such programs.

Going beyond service delivery ACSSP could look to greater policy engagement with CSO. This has the benefit of drawing upon the wider experience and knowledge of the civil society sector to inform the AusAID work, as well as looking for synergies across program areas. Some possible ways forward might include:

3. The program could split its focus with the sector specific programs moving to be included in existing bi-lateral programs. Health, livelihoods and support for women could readily be absorbed into existing sectors. This would leave the ACSSP the option of retaining a small grants scheme to support emerging and community based initiatives as well as support for partner organisations which lie outside the existing AusAID sectors. This approach would be more in line with sector type aid approaches more commonly found in AusAID bi-lateral work, ACSSP could work to operate the small grants scheme to support emerging CSO work as well as facilitate the wider information sharing and program learning between CSO and the bi-lateral programs..
4. ACSSP could choose to engage with only those projects which it considers to have useful learning and understanding for the wider bi-lateral program and for other donors. In this case, the program would make selection of partner organisations or projects based upon their wider application to development needs in Fiji. For example, there might be merit in focusing upon these projects which provide support for income generation or livelihood development and generating information for AusAID and other donors about how to effectively undertake such work in the current content. ACSSP would become the 'expert' program in selected sectors.

Finally there is some potential to increase the engagement between the Fiji work and the Australian community. While current political considerations mean this needs to be approached carefully, there are some options for such development. These include:

5. Increased volunteer placements and coordination. There already seems to be considerable volunteer engagement in ACSSP programs and this could be further encouraged. Under the new AusAID volunteer program the emphasis is upon increase coordination between volunteer work and the wider bi-lateral program. Consideration of this within ACSSP has potential to contribute to better CSO capacity development and more visibility for the program in Australia.

²¹ The Macquarie Group are currently undertaking a consultation process around the feasibility of developing a NGO capacity building initiative for the Pacific and East Timor, supported by AusAID.

6. At present there seems to be limited Australian NGO work funded under ACSSP (although Australian NGO are funding some of the same organisations supported by AusAID) and this could be a way to deepen the connections between the Fiji program and the Australian involvement in Fiji. Potentially it could also lessen the management role for the Post, with Australian NGO taking on more direct management and risk management responsibilities.

As noted clarification of the intentions of ACSSP in relation to the wider objectives of the AusAID Fiji program is the first step in this process. Once this is clear the CSO themselves could be invited to explore with AusAID how their work could best achieve those objectives and what form the program would take. The options given above could provide a starting point for such explorations and discussions.

Recommendation 1

It is therefore recommended that ACSSP decide upon the intent of the program, based upon its best fit with both the AusAID program and the emerging needs in Fiji, and then begin discussions with key organisations that are likely to be able to contribute to those intentions, to explore the best directions and shape of the program.

4.2 CSO Sector

Alongside discussion of the AusAID intent for the ACSSP there has to be consideration of the state of the civil society sector in Fiji. Currently the sector provides a diversity of programs and services however it seems to face many challenges. These include the reach of the sector, the low capacity and the lack of coordination and synergy within the sector.

4.2.1 Increasing CSO 'reach'

The roles of civil society appear underdeveloped in Fiji. According to the Advisory Group on Civil Society and Aid Effectiveness²² civil society roles in any country include:

- promotion of citizen participation
- provision of effective delivery of development programs and operations
- social empowerment of particular groups and realisation of human rights.

For most of the mainstream CSO in Fiji, citizen participation is not well developed, especially if this includes participation and representation of the poor and marginalised. While there are several organisations focused on rights, these appear to be struggling to find expression and activity in the present political environment. Service delivery is the better served role of the three

²² Advisory Group on Civil Society and Aid Effectiveness, Civil Society and Aid Effectiveness Concept Paper, 2007

but even here CSO are focused on particular sectors such as health, services for women and some work on livelihoods and natural resource management, rather than the emerging needs of poor rural people and marginalised urban groups.

Part of the problem seems to be associated with the ‘reach’ of the mainstream CSO. Notwithstanding a widespread rural and community focus within church and some women’s groups, most of the CSO represented in ACSSP, and indeed in the mainstream NGO forums, seem to be either based in major towns with some outreach to community areas, or focused entirely in urban areas covering selected population and service needs. And while urban focused, they are largely not reaching into the urban settlement areas, which are growing and house poor and vulnerable groups.

AusAID could work with its existing partners and with selected new partners to consider how they might increase their connection into rural areas and into poor communities and marginalised groups. This should include attention to the way in which different communities operate and the connections and networks which need to be developed to enable real engagement. Potential ways forward might include:

1. Increased attention to grassroots organisations, with donors such as AusAID shifting their support to include church organisations or those youth and women groups that operate in rural areas or reach out to marginalised people.

This would not be without some difficulty. It appears (although this review did not explore the area in sufficient detail) that these organisations are generally weak and under developed and would struggle to fulfill donor accountability requirements. Support for such organisations might require additional focus on new management arrangements such as through international NGO or through managing contractors.

2. Increased development of the more established NGO so that they can reach more effectively to the grassroots people and communities.

This would require some development of the approach and analysis of those organisations so that their work was based in more effective understanding of marginalised populations. Alternatively, or as well, it might come about through more partnerships and coalitions of different types of CSO, with recognition of their relative strengths and roles. NGO and intermediary organisation could be better supported to fulfill the role of capacity development of CSO groups and CBO as well as providing a link to donor and government funds for community projects and infrastructure.

Some examples of this sort of collaboration already exist, such as the shared work between Fiji Women’s Rights Movement (FWRM) and the Fiji Women’s Society (SSV) around the CEDAW monitoring. FWRM report that this enables them to “hear the

perspective of rural women”. They have also found that they can work with groups that are able to continue to engage with interim government. Those groups can speak to government on behalf of the wider group of actors, without compromising the stance of those that aren’t willing or able to engage.

3. Encouragement of larger organisations to make use of advisory and consultation processes drawn from their target groups.

An example of this was given by Save the Children (SCF). They explained that they were having difficulty working with faith-based organisations, so have established a faith-based advisory committee to guide them on engaging with churches and through them to church connected populations.

Recommendation 2

It is therefore recommended that AusAID continue to explore with the civil society sector the ways in which they might cooperate and collaborate to develop more effective responses to the emerging needs of people in Fiji, with a particular focus upon reaching marginalised people in rural communities and settlement areas.

4.2.2 Increasing synergy and capacity

Generally the Fiji CSO are weak in key areas such as governance and program assessment and also in their ability to cooperate together. This is very concerning at a time when the interim government is seeking to control civil society participation, and also when donors are seeking to increase their use of CSO to channel funds. The present situation, with organisations competing for funding, divided by donors and their leaders and challenged by different approaches to working with the interim government, is not favorable to CSO capacity development or improvement. Some attention to strategies to move past this present arrangement, perhaps in cooperation with FCOSS (given they are the major, if partial, representative body), would be a useful starting point for improvement in the sector.

Efforts to develop sector capacity would be easier if the sector was more coordinated and able to speak with a united voice, or at least with representative voices across different areas. Such cooperation would also provide a basis for increased peer accountability and some setting of shared standards. This was discussed at the civil society forum, and collaboration in civil society seemed to be an unofficial objective of the forum. CSO and NGO will need to continue to discuss the best way to move ahead with this given their failed experiences of developing umbrella bodies in the past.

At a minimum AusAID could choose to support a range of umbrella organisations in order that they work within the sector to both develop capacity and develop coordination. It is difficult for donors to do such work directly, but working through appropriate umbrella organisations would

be possible. This is likely to include FCOSS, but also National Church, Women's and Youth organisations.

Recommendation 3

It is therefore recommended that a select group of umbrella organisations be supported to develop up representative structures which are able to both support the further development of the sector as well as represent the needs and views of the sector to external stakeholders.

4.3 Program management

It is clear from the review that the current program management arrangements for ACSSP do not serve the needs of either the program or AusAID. The program manager is spread thinly across many organisations. She is unable to meet the needs of these organisations for assistance with capacity development and organisational improvement. In turn, they are generally poorly placed to meet the needs AusAID has for reporting and assessment, leaving the program manager struggling to coherently report about the program.

It is the experience of other AusAID Posts that civil society programs (at least beyond small grants schemes) are management intensive. In a situation like Fiji where there are considerable weaknesses across the sector, then any program is likely to involve considerable additional program management work. It is noted that in its review of its CSO work in Fiji NZAID is coming to similar conclusions.

What seems very unlikely is that an effective civil society program can be developed which will require less program management. A narrow focus on those few organisations which are better at reporting and assessment (and they are very few) would mean that the program itself would be likely much less effective at meeting the range of emerging poverty related needs. Alternatively, more contracting out directly to CSO, without several safeguards, runs some considerable risk, given experience to date, of mismanagement of those funds and failure to achieve outcomes. AusAID needs to develop an implementation strategy that allows it to develop the program while also identifying assistance with the program management roles.

AusAID has some choices it could make about this area. It could choose to engage intermediary organisations like international NGO or contracting firms to manage some of these areas. It could choose to develop up some key local NGO to take responsibility for capacity development and program management of smaller organisations. It could choose to dedicate more resources to the program, especially if it seeks to develop the program as an opportunity for learning and modeling for the wider AusAID program and that of other donors.

Recommendation 4

It is therefore recommended that ACSSP develop an implementation and management strategy, in line with the program intent, that addresses the resources required for adequate program management.

4.4 Program Assessment

In regard to the M&E for civil society organisations it is clear that there needs to be a strategy to develop both CSO and donor capacity in this area. AusAID now have detailed guidelines on how to monitor civil society programs²³ which provide a useful starting point, but which have not been utilised in the current Fiji program. It would be useful for the program to consider these and to explore their application in the Fiji context. In particular the program could consider the following suggestions:

- Development of M&E processes which are part of the process of engagement with the CSO. That is, use of annual reflection approaches, shared evaluations, peer reviews and other mechanisms which encourage cooperation, learning and organisational development of CSO.
- Some training or mentoring around M&E practices that builds upon best practice examples. Some of the CSO have developed some creative and useful M&E approaches. These ought to be widely shared and CSO enabled to develop their own approaches using such examples
- Reconsideration of reporting requirements to address the minimum requirements AusAID has for accountability. AusAID does need to have accurate and high quality information about use of funds and activities undertaken. Apart from this there are few requirements for AusAID reporting. This provides an opportunity for CSO to either use existing reporting mechanisms they have developed in their organisation or to develop minimal reporting.
- Allow for M&E practice which develops over time. CSO can be supported to enable them to develop their M&E as part of the process required for core funding.

Further, once the shape of the program is clearer the options can be developed in a more specific way. Establishing the overall intent of the ACSSP program would allow some clearer direction to organisations about the areas of interest to AusAID and what their reporting should include. This would also challenge AusAID to understand what it is looking for in regard to outcomes and lead to discussion with the CSO agencies about what is realistically possible in the current environment.

²³ AusAID 2008, "Guidance on M&E for Civil Society Programs", Demand for Better Governance Unit.

Recommendation 5

It is therefore recommended that having established the intent of the ACSSP, AusAID move to utilise the existing guidelines on monitoring and evaluation for civil society programs.

In the meantime there might be some space for other actions to improve the current assessment process. These could include,

- While there is limited usefulness in generic training given the diversity of the organisations in the current program, some basic training in the AusAID requirements and the potential methods and tools to meet those requirements would at least inform organisations about AusAID expectations. NZAID are interested in development in this area and have commenced support for some organisations.
- AusAID could reduce the focus on written reports, having organisations required to meet with the program manager more often and provide more wide ranging verbal reports (backed by evidence as required). This would enable the program manager to explain AusAID interest and requirements, model a focus upon outcome information and inquire as required into particular aspects of the program function.
- Donors could jointly sponsor evaluation of major work areas as part of both accountability and learning across the sector. Such shared assessment between donors of sector outcomes would streamline the burden on organisations and also encourage learning and collaboration among donors.
- There could be development of a pool of local expertise to have people who could work across organisations to facilitate their M&E in ongoing ways. This might be in collaboration with the proposed capacity building for NGO.
- ACSSP could sponsor peer support between organisations to enable them to learn from each other about how to collect and make use of data. The best examples from selected organisations could become the learning opportunities for others.

Recommendation 6

It is therefore recommended that ACSSP take up some immediate strategies to improve the outcome assessment of the program; these should focus on enabling all stakeholders to improve communication about the program.

4.5 Donor coordination

AusAID have a considerable opportunity as the largest, and possibly more experienced donor, to provide some leadership to other donors in Fiji around the civil society sector. As part of the TOR for this review a summary of donor funding considerations and interest was sought as a basis for increased donor coordination efforts. It is notable that the other donors contacted for the review were reluctant to share specific details about their program. While general information was provided, there does not seem to be a strong inclination between the other donors to do more than share information and experiences.

In part, it seems that the other donors have a more narrow view of the CSO sector in Fiji and seem to be somewhat pessimistic about what can be achieved through the sector. There is a tendency to focus only on organisations which meet donor needs and which can easily accommodate donor demands. This is in some contrast to recommended practice for donors in working with civil society. Review of current literature on good donor practice²⁴ raises several issues which might form the basis of discussion among civil society donors in Fiji. These include,

- Donors tend to have a bias towards urban and English-speaking civil society organisations, neglecting rural organisations such as farmers' groups and community based organisations. Yet formally organised, western-type associations are not always representative. It is recommended that donors avoid engaging only with English-speaking CSO in contexts where English is not the main language spoken
- Donors have also been overly cautious in working with non-traditional organisations like religious organisations, trade unions and social movements, missing the opportunity for community links and alliances with organisations with greater legitimacy.
- The lesson for donors is to "work with the institutions you have, and not the ones you wish you had". This includes learning to live with informal institutions and practices, and learning how to engage with these informal systems. It means resisting the temptation to import formal institutional frameworks from the outside.
- Legitimacy is an important criterion. Donors need to pay attention to issues of integrity, quality and capacity when selecting CSO partners. To promote voice of the most marginalised, donors should choose to work with groups that have close and demonstrable links among excluded, marginalised and otherwise discriminated against groups (such as women and ethnic minorities).

²⁴ Taken from the ODE 'Review of Literature: Good practice Donor engagement with Civil Society', Draft, 2009.

- Donors need to be acutely aware of increasing evidence that greater dependence on official funding may compromise CSO performance in key areas, distort accountability, and weaken legitimacy.

These lessons suggest that donors need to approach CSO as a sector with distinct range of qualities and roles to play as part of civil society. CSO work should go beyond serving the program delivery needs of donors and donors need to encourage the range and diversity of CSO, and support their various contributions. However, donors also need to be very careful to work in selected ways with each organisation, allowing it to build independently and in a sustainable way.

ACSSP has started some of this type of engagement with civil society. It has supported the CSO forum and has provided funding to organisations to allow them to undertake core functions. These are useful and indirect contributions to building civil society. They complement the NZAID plans for capacity building in the sector. This more sophisticated understanding of donor engagement does not seem to be as well shared by some other donors in Fiji.

ACSSP might want to consider how it would cooperate with NZAID in particular to model an approach to donor engagement that includes overall sector support as well as specific organisational support for selected work areas. AusAID may want to carefully consider if this type of collaboration is possible beyond NZAID at this time.

Recommendation 7

It is therefore recommended that AusAID consider providing leadership among CSO donors, perhaps in cooperation with NZAID, with an emphasis upon challenging other donors to match existing understanding of good donor practice.

At the same time, while overall donor practice may not change in the short term, there are several options for better organisation among donors which would streamline their demands upon organisations and also reduce competition between those organisations. These include,

- Development of shared organisational assessment processes with one set of application procedures and one process of appraisal;
- Development of joint monitoring and evaluation processes;
- Opportunities for division of sector specialties so that certain donors focus their funding and support into sectors understanding that other donors are complementing their work in other areas. For example the EU have already suggested possible sector divides might include:
 - EU: Human rights and the environment

- **NZAID:** Social justice in squatters settlements and capacity building of regional organisations
- **AusAID:** Women's organisations

NZAID have suggested the following divisions:

- **NZAID:** Good governance, poor and vulnerable groups, economic development
 - **AusAID:** Service delivery, livelihoods
 - **EU:** Human rights, democracy
- Some shared work on capacity development for the civil society sector with a view to meeting the needs of donors and the CSO themselves.
 - Shared research into the strengths and impact of civil society and ongoing analysis of its place in the further development of Fiji in order to inform the development of CSO and donor programs.

There is some interest among donors in sharing more about each others programs. However, the CSO organisations wanted clearer understanding of what donors wanted to fund, for what reasons and for what periods. AusAID has already undertaken some leadership in this area, organising informal donor coordination meetings and joint assessment of proposals. It is seeking to expand this leadership role as far as possible.

AusAID seem to have the most varied experience in CSO support in Fiji and should take some of the lead as a major donor in the country.

Recommendation 8

It is therefore recommended that AusAID consider ways in which donor practice with CSO might be coordinated, and where opportunities might be developed for learning and shared improvement.

5. Conclusions

The review of the ACSSP reveals a program which has developed considerable reach and experience. It is a program with much to offer in terms of learning and ideas yet due to limited resources for management and assessment, has not realised its potential. It is operating in a challenging environment, with poverty increasing in Fiji and the opportunity for poor and marginalised people to realise their rights being limited, especially through government interventions.

Some work to shape the intent and management of the program would provide considerable opportunity for the program. The ACSSP could be positioned in several ways to provide better coordination with the wider bi-lateral program. It could draw upon ideas from other AusAID programs to develop the best practice approaches to management and assessment. It could offer considerable leadership to other CSO donors.

Some attention to the future of the program at this time would ensure these areas are addressed and develop as the program finalises the current round of funding. This would place it in a good position to make the best possible contribution to the ongoing Australian commitment to Fiji.

Annex One: Terms of Reference for the ACSSP Review

TERMS OF REFERENCE AUSTRALIAN CIVIL SOCIETY SUPPORT PROGRAM MID-TERM REVIEW

1. Introduction

These terms of reference have been prepared to direct the mid-term review of the Australian Civil Society Support Program (ACSSP), which will be undertaken by independent consultants. The mid-term review is designed as a component of AusAID's quality management systems, to assist ACSSP to incorporate review findings into the next Annual Planning cycle and to be considered in relation to future implementation of ACSSP activities over the remaining period of the program.

2. Background

The key objective of Australia's overseas aid program is to deliver an effective Australian aid program which is strongly responsive to interim government priorities, and responds effectively to changing international development circumstances.

ACSSP was developed in recognition of the fact that functioning and effective states require a strong and active civil society, capable of generating demand for reform, improved accountability, and enhancing service delivery.

Based on funding provided to CSO to date, support can be divided into four focus areas, which are:

- Increasing opportunities for livelihoods;
- Increasing access to quality health services;
- Promoting gender equality;
- Increasing Demand for Better Governance: Civic education & human rights, including anti-corruption.

ACSSP support entails specific project(s) and/or core funding for up to 3 years duration i.e. 2007-2012. Financial Year (FY) 2008/09 has a total of 42 agreements with 29 organisations out of which 14 agreements are core funding agreements. Funding agreements range from FJ\$30,000 - \$240,000 per annum.

3. Mid Term Review (MTR) Objective:

3.1 To provide a situation analysis of the civil society sector, identify program impacts, and provide recommendations to improve program service delivery by identifying clear objectives and providing recommendations to:

- a) enable effective program monitoring and evaluation;

- b) improve internal program management;
- c) improve donor coordination;

4. Scope of Services

The MTR report should outline the following:

- 4.1) Overall Fiji CSO Sector Snapshot and provide recommendations to improve program responsiveness to current CSO environment and community needs in line with AusAID's priority i.e. mitigating impacts of the Global Economic Recession
- 4.2) Inform the development of ACSSP Action & Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Framework by identifying the following:
 - a) Quality and progress in delivery of activities to meet AusAID funded project and/or organisational objectives;
 - b) Current individual CSO M& E practice i.e. the key strengths and weaknesses and how it can be linked with program level monitoring and evaluation.
- 4.3) Assess the current internal ACSSP management processes and provide recommendations for improvement, with a particular emphasis on streamlining the program.
- 4.4) Outline the financial management practices of funded CSO and provide recommendations for improving financial management

BDO Aliz to:

- prepare a checklist of requirements for good financial management practices, to be reported against by CSO during review consultation;
 - provide recommendations for improvements and additional requirements to reduce risk of financial mismanagement
 - provide AusAID a checklist to use as part of selection criteria when assessing funding requests.
- 4.5) Conduct a mapping exercise to record donor funding programs and provide recommendations to enable effective donor coordination. (A paper to be used by donor coordination committee)

5. Consultancy Team

The consultancy team will comprise of two consultants

5.1 Team Leader & Field Researcher

5.2 BDO Aliz (Financial Management Adviser)

- To develop a checklist of basic requirements for acceptable financial management practices for CSO to report against during the assessment; and
- To provide:
 - a) recommendations to reduce the risk of financial mismanagement by CSO; and

- b) a basic checklist for basic financial management practice for AusAID to use as part of its selection criteria when assessing funding requests.

The consultant may be joined by AusAID Demand Governance and Civil Society Program Manager at various points of the review.

8. Methodology

The assessment is expected to identify and use credible data sources. Project and Organisational information may be used and cited, including a clear identification of its limitation and prospects for data continuity.

A *two step approach* is expected to be applied to this review. There are:

8.1. Literature Review - going through all information sources available at initial stage of review and identifying additional sources of information.

8.2. Interviews and stakeholder meetings are likely to be critical in the work. Site visits may be made to verify information and collect further information (Subject to approval from AusAID).

9. Outputs

The consultant will provide the following outputs (all documents to be supplied in MS Word including both hard and soft copy)

- a) Draft Review Report, including executive summary (not more than 30 page) and Donor Coordination Paper (not more than 5 pages) – these drafts will be provided to AusAID by 15 August, 2009
- b) Final report and donor coordination paper by 30th August, 2009 (integrating AusAID's written feedback –to be provided to the consultant by 11 June, 2009)

The consultants will need to attend briefings at the beginning of the contract and provide updated to peers on the work and findings until work completion.

11. Oversight

AusAID Suva Post Demand Governance and Civil Society Program Manager will provide technical and logistical oversight. Post will be provided for introductions, meetings, any field visits and any data collection.

12. Documents and Reports

AusAID will, as soon as practicable, make available to the Team information, documents and particulars relating to the civil society sector and to AusAID's requirements for the program. Consultants are also expected to provide their own-sourced materials. Other potential documents to be considered are:

- AusAID Demand Governance Position Paper
- Fiji Engagement Framework
- Monitoring and Evaluation Civil Society Organisations (AusAID Document)

- Australian Civil Society Support Program background information i.e. selection criteria, application guidelines etc
- Project and Organisational Reports

Annex A: Australian Civil Society Support Program Issues

1 Monitoring and Evaluation:

Whilst the ACSSP funded activities can be divided in to four focus areas, there are no clear objectives for the program. The ACSSP also lacks a program level action and monitoring & evaluation framework. Contributions of the program are evaluated against the objectives of the Fiji Engagement Framework. Individual Funding Agreements have objectives and M&E frameworks. Core funding arrangements are evaluated against organisational objectives. However, these individual M&E Frameworks are output based, hence are valuable in monitoring but fail at evaluation stages. In addition, as a result of unclear objectives and the absence of a program level M&E framework, it is difficult to measure impact of ACSSP.

Each Civil Society Organisation (CSO) has its own monitoring and evaluation processes and systems, which are further, complicated by the lack of M & E specific skills within the CSO Sector. The different type of M&E systems makes it difficult for one reporting template to suit all funded CSO.

2 Management:

Internal:

Current internal processes to manage the Australian Civil Society Support Program (ACSSP) are resource intensive. ACSSP is managed by Suva Post's Program Manager for Demand Governance and Civil Society through the Development Cooperation Section of the Suva Australian High Commission.

Program management entails ensuring funding agreement compliance by funded CSO i.e. report due date reminders, providing feedback on reports, certifying payments, facilitating audits, monitoring and evaluation to measure the impact of activities under ACSSP arrangements and measuring its contribution towards the achievement of the Fiji Engagement Framework objectives .

The post managed a total of 42 agreements with 29 organisations in FY2007/08, which has been resource intensive. Post has acknowledged that reduce the number of organisations supported by ACSSP needs streamlined to ensure strategic use of funds, i.e. by funding key selected organisations.

CSO (External):

FY 2007/08 and 2008/09 audits identified cases of mismanagement of funds by CSO. This has been a result of poor financial management systems and absence of proper accounting processes in place by CSO. This has, in turn, cost AusAID additional funds to carry out additional audits and explore options for recovering mismanaged funds.

3 Delivering a flexible and responsive program

The impacts of The Global Financial Crisis (GFC), 2006 coup and January 2009 floods have resulted in a severe downturn in Fiji's economic outlook. AusAID has undertaken a rapid review of the aid program and is realigning the Fiji aid program to mitigate the social impacts on the vulnerable groups in Fiji. This will include ensuring the essential services are maintained, particularly health and education services, as well as supporting livelihood opportunities. ACSSP has been identified as a key area in which to pursue these efforts.

4. Donor Coordination

There are a number of key development partners working with CSO in Fiji. These include: NZAID, UNDP PC, USAID, EU, AusAID etc. Feedback from civil society organisations highlight that the different reporting requirements and internal processes of each donor continue to add burden and confusion among civil society organisations.

AusAID had initiated donor coordination meetings early 2008, these meetings were used as an opportunity to look at improved coordination by development partners e.g. sharing the funding arrangements with CSO with other development partners so they are all aware of which CSO receive funding, and merging of reporting requirements. These meetings will recommence in May 2009 and it is anticipated that this review will inform efforts to improve and increase donor coordination. A Donor Coordination Committee comprising of key donors will be established to agree on actions to follow to enable effective donor coordination.

Annex Two: List of documents reviewed

Organisation	Documents
Capital Markets Development Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion Report 7-09
Citizens Constitution Forum (CCF)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project 07-08 • Financial Audit 08 • Annual report 07 • Report - CCF Jan-Dec 07 • Report - CCF Jun 07-May 08
Competency, Assessment and Local Solutions program (under the auspice of the Fiji School of Medicine)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NSCMED/CAL Workshop for People with Disabilities Report, 2008 • A case study process evaluation of CAL Oct 2008 • Report - CAL National Roll-out Module One Ba Feb-Mar09 • AusAID Funding Agreement - CAL 08-09 (45882) • Module 09 • Narrative • Module 1 in BA workshop report • Evaluation of CAL
Consumer Council of Fiji	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Report 07 • Annual report on performance contract • 6 monthly report 07
Femlink Pacific	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Core 6 monthly report 07 • Final Organisational review 2008 • ENews Bulletin – The Thirteen 25 Report
Fiji Council of Social Services*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report Jan 09 • Annual Report 07 • Pamphlet: Towards Understanding FCOSS • Social Leadership Training Course Evaluation Form • FCOSS Strategic Plans 03-07 and Draft 07-11
Fiji National Council for Disabled Persons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AusAID Funding Agreement - Fiji National Council For Disabled Persons (48239)
Fiji Network for People Living with HIV&Aids	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Core 6 monthly report 08 • AusAID Funding Agreement - FJN+ 08-10 (46307) • Report - FJN+ Jul-Dec 08
Fiji Red Cross	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health and Welfare Annual 07 • AusAID Funding Agreement - Red Cross (41498) • AusAID Funding Agreement - Red Cross 08-09 (46291) • Report - Red Cross Feb 08
Fiji Women's Rights Movement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 monthly report Aug 08 • CEDAW Monitoring Report Feb 08
Foundation of the Peoples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participatory Budgeting 6 monthly report 08

of the South Pacific International (FSPI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stepping Stones 6 monthly report 08-09 • AusAID Funding Agreement - FSPI-PB (45735) • AusAID Funding Agreement - FSPI Stepping Stones (47679) • Report - FSPI People, Participatory Democracy and Policy First Project Report • Report - FSPI Stepping Stones Nov-Jun 09
Foundation for Rural Integrated Enterprises "N" Development (FRIEND)*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Model Kitchen project update • Model Kitchen 08 • Financial Acquittal 6 monthly Aug 08 • Narrative report with stories of change • AusAID Funding Agreement - FRIEND 08-11 (45589) • Report - Jan-Jun08 • Report - FRIEND Activities in 2007 • Special report from FRIEND to illustrate outcomes
Live and Learn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Core 6 monthly report 08 • Report Jan 09 • AusAID Funding Agreement - Live and Learn WET (41493) • AusAID Funding Agreement - Live and Learn 08-11 (45594) • Report - Live and Learn Jul - Dec 08
Marie Stopes International Pacific	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 monthly report Nov 08 • 6 monthly report Garment Factory Workers Dec 08 • Garment Factor Workers Program Completion Report • Organisation Chart 09
Na Soqosoqo Vakamarama I Taukei (Fiji Women's Society – SSV)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Core 6 monthly report 09 • AusAID Funding Agreement - SSV 08-11 (45628) • Report - Jan-Mar 09
National Centre for Small and Micro Enterprises Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legislature Review 6 monthly 08 • CEFE Training 08 • 6 month report Sep07 • 12 monthly report 08
Pacific Counselling & Social Services*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gen training report 3rd quarter 08 • 6 monthly report HIV program • Core 6 monthly report 09 • Prison program six monthly report 08 • Prison program annual report 08 • Organisational year end report 08 • Revised AOD • Annual Report 08 • Organisation Chart 09

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NZAID profile of PCASS – Rae Julian • Strengths and Weaknesses Report • Report - Jul-Dec 08 • AusAID Funding Agreement - 08-11 (45492) • AusAID Funding Agreement - 07-10 (41915) • Report - Jan - Jun 09 • Participatory Qualitative Evaluation Sekoula Project
Partners in Community Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Report 08 • Just Water For Fiji Publication
Save the Children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Report 08 • Final Report 08
Transparency International Fiji	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 07 Six monthly report • 08 Six monthly report • AusAID Funding Agreement - TI Fiji 07-09 (41490) • Report - TI Fiji Apr-Sep 08 • Report - TI Fiji Aug-Dec 07
Women's Action for Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 08 Six Monthly report • Report - WAC Feb-Jul 08 • AusAID Funding Agreement - WAC 08-11 (45609)
Donors	Documents
AusAID	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Australia Aid Program Engagement Framework for Fiji 2008 – 2010 • ACSSP Review – Approach and Method • AusAID Quality at Implementation report • ACSSP Question Table (v2) • ACSSP Reporting template • AusAID Selction Criteria for Stand Alone Activity • Australian High Commission document – Direct Aid program
Donor Agencies in Fiji	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Records of Civil Society Development Partners Meetings – April, May & July 08
NZAID	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft New Zealand Civil Society Strategy for Fiji - Nov 08 • New Zealand Civil Society Sector Strengthening Programme - Fiji
British High Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • British High Com Bilateral Funding Form, Objectives, and Funding Criteria
Other	
Reserve Bank of Fiji	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State of the National Economy and Fiji's Future – Speech by Filimone Waqabaca, Chief Manager Financial Systems Development & Compliance
Fiji Island Bureau of Statistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2007 Census Population of Housing • Report on 2002-03 Household Income and Expenditure

	<p>Survey, Dr Wadan Narsey</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2004-2005 Employment and Unemployment Survey, Dr Waden Narsey
The Centre for Social Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fiji Visit Note – Research and consultation about building capacity of NGOs in Pacific and East Timor Emele Duituturaga, Anne Measday & Deirdre O’Neil
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civicus (2007), “Fiji Civil Society Index Report: A civil society in transition – 2007” Hassan Khan and Sulianna Siwatibau
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNICEF Pacific, June 2009 “A Road map to Protect Pacific Island Children and Women during t he Global Economic Crisis: Care, Recovery, Prevention: A working document for debate and guidance”, Will Parks, Chief of Policy, Advocacy, Planning and Evaluation • ADB Pacific Economic Monitor – June 09 • ADB Pacific Economic Monitor – May 09

Annex Three: List of people consulted

Organisation	Name	Position
FCOSS	Hassan Khan	Executive Director
	Tevita Tokalauvere	Project Officer
	Shahana Bi	Project Officer
	John Lee	Finance Manager
	Ambalika Kutty	Ex Program Director
District Council of Social Services	Unaisi Sekenana	Labasa DCOSS
	Vasiti Pettitt	Nadi DCOSS
	Surjeet Ram	Nadroga DCOSS
	Sitiveni Kunaika	Nadroga DCOSS
	Samuel Reuben	Tevua DCOSS
British High Commission	Agnes Rigamoto	Projects Officer
Fiji Women's Rights Movement	Virisila Buadromo	Executive Director
NZAID	Rae Julian	Consultant – Civil Society Support
	Fanga	
	Tom	
Consumer Council	Premila Kumar	Chief Executive/Executive Secretary
	Devika Narayan	Manager Research and Policy
	Joshika Samujh	Manager ADR and Advisory
	Josua Namoce	Manager- Campaign, Information & Media
Partners in Community Development	Alisi W Daurewa	Executive Director
	Matilita Kedrayate	Natural Resource Management Program Staff
	Iliapi Tuwai	Project Director
Marie Stopes International – Pacific	Jennifer Poole	Regional Program Director-Pacific
	Mrs. Sai Tabualevu	Outreach Program Manager

	Ms Elenoa Foiakau	Outreach Project Assistant and Community Educator – Western and Central District
	Wilson Ackroyd	Outreach Peer Educator – Suva and Central District and urban outreach (corporate and MSM)
	Roko Onabalarua	Community Educator and Mobile Outreach Driver
	John Carr	M&E Officer – regional
	Doctor Nerlina Pangilinan	MSIP Fiji Medical Doctor – Outreach Program.
	Sereima Senibici	Peer Educator on Garment Factory Workers Project and Procurement Officer
National Centre Small and Micro Enterprises Development	Asaeli Tamanitoakula	Project Development Specialist
AusAID	Archana Mani	Demand Better Governance and Civil Society Support Program Manager
	Jacqueline Clark	First Secretary, Suva Post
Save the Children	Chandra Shekhar	Chief Executive Officer
	Iris Lolo-McKenzie	Program Director
	Sera Vulavou	Kids Link Alumni President
	Mere Khrishna	MPP Project Manager
	Isireli Rogoivatu	Emergency Response and Schools Development Coordinator
	Sosaia Tapueluelu	Child Rights Manager
	Angela	MPP Community Development Officer
	Ana Colati	MPP ECE Teacher, Jittu Playgroup
	Laisiana Tikinavou Baleira	Teacher Aide, Jittu Playgroup
	Subesh Prasad	MPP Community Development Officer
	Sesoni Talavutu	MPP ECE Teacher, Caubati Playgroup

	Savitri Prasad	Teacher Aide, Caubati Playgroup
	Prabha Wati	Teacher Aide, Caubati Playgroup
Salvation Army	Murray McIntosh	Divisional Business Administrator
	Maika Ranamalo	Divisional Social Service Secretary
	Jan Smitties	Divisional Commander
	Major Uraia	Public Relations Officer
Pacific Leadership Program	Yeshe Smith	Regional Program Manager, Pacific Leadership Program
	Meriani Rokotuibau	Project officer
Arya Samaj	Murai Lal	
Assembly of God	Anare Lovobalavu	
Methodist Church	Apisalome Tudreu	
Catholic Church	Peni Werebanivau	
Shree Santam Dharam	Chengaiya Naidu	
Catholic Women's league	Asela Naisara	
Commonwealth Local Government Forum	Karibatse Taoba	
Pacific Youth Council	Tarusila Bradburgh	
European Union	Michael Graf	Third Secretary, Social Sector

Annex Four: Interview Schedule and Questions

Review Schedule

25 July 2009 Arrival in Country	26 July 11am meeting with Archana	27 July 9.30am - FCOSS ED and Staff 12.45pm -1pm – Ambalika Kutty 3- 4pm British High Commission	28 July 9am Fiji Women’s Rights Movement 11.30 am Ray Julian – NZAID consultant 2.30pm Consumer Council
29 July 2 – 4.30pm PCDF	30 July 9am – 3pm Marie Stopes International 3 – 5pm PCDF 5 – 6 DCOSS Members	31 July 3 -5pm NCSMED	1 August
2 August Archana – AusAID Management	3 August 9 – 10am AusAID 10am – 3pm Save the Children Fiji 3 -4pm Salvation Army	4 August 9am CAL Program 2 – 3.30pm NZAID to Raki Raki	5 August Marie Stopes in Raki Raki DCOSS Raki Raki DCOSS Lautoka
6 August Pacific Counselling and Social Services (PCASS)	7 August FRIEND	8 August Final Brief with AusAID PM DCOSS Nadi	9 August Departure Day

Interview guide

Area	Potential, ongoing partner	Core partners
Rationale, goals and objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are the purpose and mission of the organisation? - And the goals and objectives? - And of the project work funded by AusAID? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are the purpose and mission of the organisation? - And the goals and objectives? - And of the project work funded by AusAID?
Targeting & accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How do you determine the people you work to benefit? - How do you determine the focus of your work? - What part do those you're working with playing in the org and its work? - What part do they play in determining outcomes and benchmarks? - What mechanisms are in place for transparency and feedback? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How do you determine the people you work to benefit? - How do you determine the focus of your work? - What part to those you're working with playing in the org and its work?
Governance and staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are your governance structures and who is represented? - Who are your staff? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are the governance structures and who is represented?
Progress and outcomes (Organisation and Program)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How is your progress against your goals and objectives? - In what areas are you seeing greater progress? Why? - In what areas are you finding it's more difficult? Why? - What is your vision for a strong organisation? - How has your org changed over the past ... years – resources, programming, systems, management capacity? Why? - How do you track your progress? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How is your progress against your goals and objectives? - In what areas are you seeing greater progress? Why? - In what areas are you finding it's more difficult? Why? - How has your org changed over the past ... years – resources, programming, systems, management capacity? Why? - How do you track your progress?
Civil society strengthening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is your vision for a strong and effective civil society? What different roles do they play in Fiji? - What role do you play in civil society? What other roles are there? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is your vision for a strong and effective civil society? What different roles do they play in Fiji? - What role do you play in civil society? - What contribution is the ACSSP making to civil society?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are the main issues being faced by the sector and how are civil society addressing them? - What contribution is the ACSSP making to civil society? - What are the opportunities for and barriers to CSO cooperation? - What's the relationship of CS with interim government and the private sector? 	
M&E and Program Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What processes do you use to design and plan initiatives? - What kind of analysis is the program's built on? - What information do you collect upfront (baseline)? - What systems do you have for monitoring? - What information are you finding out and capturing? What level (outcomes, outputs, inputs) is this information on? - Who's involved? - How systematically? - How do you use this info? - Are there any things you do that help you pick up the unexpected outcomes or impacts? - What processes do you use to evaluate and assess the outcomes of initiatives? - What's working well in your program management systems? Why? - What do you find more difficult? Why? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What information are you finding out and capturing? - How do you use this info? - What processes do you use to evaluate and assess the outcomes of initiatives? - What's working well in your program management systems? Why? - What do you find more difficult? Why?
Partnership & accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Why did you choose to partner with AusAID and join the ACSSP? - What are the strengths of your partnership with AusAID? - What kind of partnership would you like to have with AusAID? - Are there any requirements of AusAID that are difficult for you? Why? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Why did you choose to partner with AusAID and join the ACSSP? - Are there any requirements of AusAID that are difficult for you? Why?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What other partners do you work with? 	
Global Economic Crisis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What impacts have you witnessed of the economic crisis? - Has it exacerbated the situation of the people you work with? In what ways? - How are you able to respond? - How are civil society responding? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Has the economic crisis exacerbated the situation of the people you work with? In what ways? - How are you able to respond?
Donor Coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do you work with other donors? Who? - What is AusAID's niche in comparison to other donors? - What are the relative strengths and weaknesses of the donors you work with? - How are the relationships between donors? - What are the opportunities in working with different donors? - What are the difficulties? - Are there ways in which donors can help with these difficulties? 	

Area	AusAID	Donors	Other CS Groups
Rationale, goals and objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - For ACSSP? - For the new direction? - What aim do you have for the spread or scope of the program? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are the purpose and mission of the agency? - And the goals and objectives? - Are these changing? 	-
Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How have you chosen partners for the ACSSP? - What informs your decisions? - What helps you determine if the proposals and/or the strategic plans are feasible/do-able? - And what are the reasons for choosing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How do you chosen partners? - What informs your decisions? - What helps you determine if the partnerships and proposals are feasible? 	

	<p>the 5 agencies for partnerships in the future?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Who else do you partner with in Fiji and do they assist you with CS management at all? 		
<p>Progress and outcomes</p> <p>(Organisational and Program)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is your sense of the progress of the ACSSP against its goals and objectives? - What are some of the key strengths and outcomes of the ACSSP? Why? - What have been the more difficult parts to achieve? Why? - What information helps you make judgments about progress and outcomes? - What approach are you taking to strengthening organisations? How do you build the vision for success in organisational strengthening? 	-	
Civil society strengthening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is your vision for a strong and effective civil society? What different roles do they play in Fiji? - What's the relationship of CS with interim government and the private sector? - How is the ACSSP contributing to civil society? Why? - What roles of civil society are you targeting or most contributing to? - What parts of civil society are you able to reach and work with? - What parts are more difficult? Why? - Are there parts of civil society that AusAID are not working with? Why? - What are the issues in strengthening civil society? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is your vision for a strong and effective civil society? What different roles do they play in Fiji? - How are you contributing to civil society? - What parts of civil society are you able to reach and work with? - What parts are more difficult? Why? - Are there parts of civil society that you are not working with? Why? - What are the issues in strengthening civil society? - What are the opportunities? - What are the opportunities for and barriers to CSO cooperation? - What's the relationship of CS with interim government and the private 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What role do you play in civil society? - What are the main issues being faced by the sector and how are civil society addressing them? - What contribution is the ACSSP making to civil society?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How would you like to direct the program differently in the future? Why? - What are the opportunities? - What are the opportunities for and barriers to CSO cooperation? 	sector?	
M&E and Program Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are you familiar with the guidelines? Which aspects are most difficult or weak in the program? - What processes do you and your partners use to design and plan initiatives? - What kind of analysis are you doing re the program, the projects and the partnerships? - What systems do you have for monitoring? - What information are you finding out and capturing? - How systematically? - Who's involved? - How do you use this info? - Are there any things you do that help you pick up the unexpected outcomes or impacts? - What processes do you use to evaluate and assess the outcomes of initiatives? - What's working well in your program management systems? Why? - What do you find more difficult? Why? - Is there a program that are doing it well that you know of? What are they doing? - Are there any opportunities for learning together with other donors and partners? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are there any opportunities for learning together with other donors and partners? - What kind of analysis are you doing re the program, the projects and the partnerships? 	
Global Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What impacts have you witnessed of the economic crisis? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What impacts have you witnessed of the economic crisis? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What impacts have you witnessed of the economic

Crisis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How are you able to respond? - How are civil society responding? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How are you able to respond? - How are civil society responding? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - crisis? - Has it exacerbated the situation of the people you work with? In what ways? - How are you able to respond? - How are civil society responding?
Donor Coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In what ways do donors coordinate now in Fiji? - What is AusAID's niche in comparison to other donors? - What are the relative strengths and weaknesses? - What specifically about the relationship between countries is influencing donors and their niche? - How are the relationships between donors? - What are the opportunities for coordination and what are the barriers/difficulties? - What role do you see for AusAID? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In what ways do donors coordinate now in Fiji? - What is your niche in comparison to other donors? - What are the relative strengths and weaknesses? - What specifically about the relationship between countries is influencing donors and their niche? - How are the relationships between donors? - What are the opportunities for coordination and what are the barriers/difficulties? - What role do you see for AusAID? 	

Annex Five: Overview of major ACSSP organisations contacted for this review

Organisation	Governance	Membership	Main Beneficiaries	Focus Areas
FCOSS	Management board, sector representatives & DCOSS chairs. Appointed by FCOSS executive and confirmed by membership at AGM.	Social service organisations, including faith based. District councils (DCOSS) made of roughly 10 member organisations.	Varied depending on member focus and FCOSS funds – elderly, schools, young people, women’s groups. Mostly in towns and urban centers. Limited funds to reach rural communities.	Social research and advocacy; training and capacity development; information and public education; and providing a benchmark for CSO.
Consumer Council	Four member board appointed by department of commerce and industry. Service agreement with interim government.	NA. Statutory Body.	Consumers, particularly those who make complaints. Towns and urban centers with some outreach.	Consumer rights.
Fiji Women’s Rights Movement	Ten member board and three trustees – one man and rest women. Mostly lawyers with one seat reserved for a young woman.	Mostly middle class professional women in urban centers. Also students. Fee \$5-\$10.	Targets all women and girls. Strategic needs and legislative reform focused on middle class women. Basic needs, health and education focused on rural women. Violence affects all women and girls. Largely similar basic needs now (post 2006).	Legislative reform in favor of women’s rights.

PCDF	Seven member board and	15 financial members. Fee	Indigenous Fijians, landowners,	Empower communities to
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	three trustees. Made up of ex-Ministers, academics, private sector representatives and a regional NGO. Board appointed by membership. Archbishop is their patron.	\$20/year. One community representative; private sector representatives – hotels and industry; politicians; public figures; other NGO staff; young people; academics.	living in rural communities. 13 different projects, each with different groups of communities. Target communities based on interim government recommendation.	make their own decisions about their own development.
Marie Stopes	Branch office of Marie Stopes Australia. Australia-based Board, largely medical professionals.	Australia-based.	Focused on women. Institutional outreach focused on women in universities, ministries and corporations. Rural outreach new and focused on Indigenous Fijian communities in the Western District.	Family planning, sexual reproductive health, HIV and STI prevention.
NCSMED	Six member board appointed by the Interim Minister. Described as semi-government, semi private, not-for-profit organisation.	NA. Statutory Body.	Aspire to be working with disadvantaged groups although are not able as yet. Micro-finance is largely Indigenous Fijian women. Enterprise development is those with more financial capacity – although have reached small numbers of disadvantaged.	Small and medium enterprise development.
Save the Children	Eight member board. Education specialist; child rights specialist; accountant; business people. Three are women and most are young. Elected by Save membership.	Membership is relative closed at the moment as they are a young organisation and members require screening due to their child focus.	Children. Mobile playgroup project focused on disadvantaged centers – settlement and squatter communities.	Child rights and protection, education, emergency response.
Salvation	Managed and administered	NA. Church congregation	Towns and urban centers. Find they don't have the resources to	Sponsorship education; prison and court visits;

Army	from HQ in New Zealand.	affiliation.	reach the poorest of the poor in rural areas and settlements.	alcohol and drug programs; and family crisis centers.
CAL Program	Housed within Fiji School of Medicine (FSM). FSM has two boards – one governing and one academic.	NA. Program is answerable to coordinator of physiotherapy and Department of Health Science.	Community Disability Workers in towns and urban centers.	Care for people with disability.
PCASS	Six member board. PCASS Director; staff representative; principal of International School; Superintendent of Lautoka Prison; head of Legal Aid; head of Paediatrics at a major hospital. Nominated and elected by PCASS staff.	NA.	Varied. Pregnant women using major hospitals; male prisoners; sex workers.	Counseling and social work; HIV testing; prisoner rehabilitation.
FRIEND	Six person board. Academics and business people. Appointed by executive and confirmed at AGM.	30 – 50 ‘circle of friends’ members who pay fees dependant on financial statues. 30 – 50 community representative members although difficult to engage at AGM.	Western and Northern Divisions – Indigenous communities and disadvantaged people.	Youth; community governance; enterprise development; and income generation.

Annex Six: ACSSP funding criteria



AUSTRALIAN CIVIL SOCIETY SUPPORT PROGRAM – Fiji **Updated for 2007 Applications**

1.0 BACKGROUND

This is the second year of the revised the Australian Civil Society Support Program of support in Fiji. A number of revisions have been made to these guidelines following experiences in the first year of operation and to improve the synergies with other initiatives under way within the Australian Aid Program in Fiji.

The key objective of Australia's overseas aid program remains to assist developing countries to reduce poverty and achieve sustainable development in line with Australia's national interest. In order to achieve this objective, the White Paper on Australian Government's Overseas Aid Program organises the aid program around the following four themes: (i) accelerating economic growth; (ii) fostering functioning and effective states; (iii) investing in people; and (iv) promoting regional stability and cooperation. Working in partnerships and promoting gender equality are overarching principles of the Australian aid program.

A strong and active civil society is essential to functioning and effective states. Citizens need to know their rights and have the ability to exercise them to be involved in their nation's development. Through this Program the Australian Government seeks to support the development and work of community¹ and civil society organisations to:

- (i) generate demand for reform
- (ii) strengthen government accountability
- (iii) promote community self-reliance and development and
- (iv) enhance service delivery.

2.0 PURPOSE

This Program is designed to be a strategic means of supporting the development of strong and self-reliant communities capable of participating in all aspects of the society in Fiji. To this end the Program will support organisations and/or projects which:

- involve direct engagement with communities to promote self reliance, address inequalities in men and women's life experience, to improve livelihoods, provide enhanced service delivery or promote government accountability;
- increase the knowledge and capacity of women and men to actively participate in development and electoral decision-making: this may be through new research or analysis of data already available or information dissemination programs;
- preferentially focus on support for those in greatest need (i.e. the poorest and most vulnerable); and
- incorporate an element of organisational strengthening to improve the efficiency and effectiveness.

¹ For the purposes of this Program, community organisations include media, academic, private sector and other non government organisations. See eligibility criteria for details.

3.0 ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Funding under this Program is open to regional and/or Fiji-based non government organisations and Fiji statutory bodies. This includes registered or reputable civil society organisations; sports organisations; trade unions; employee or employer associations; private sector organisations; media outlets; academic institutions; and researchers.

To be eligible for funding applicants must demonstrate:

- (i) an understanding of needs of the target communities or constituencies;
- (ii) clearly articulate the benefits for men and women in areas supported by this Programs and preferably one or more of the identified priority areas for funding (see section "4.0 Funding");
- (iii) have a good track record of providing the services to be funded;
- (iv) an adequate performance monitoring and financial accountability systems; and
- (v) compliance with Australian Government requirements relating to family planning activities if relevant.

To be eligible for funding projects need to demonstrate direct beneficiaries in Fiji, even if the projects may have regional application or be part of a larger regional activity.

Applications from the following will not be considered:

- proposals from individuals, other than reputable researchers;
- organisations which have any office-bearers who have been convicted of either fraud or child-exploitation related offences; and
- organisations with outstanding acquittals or reports from previous Australian Government funding, until such reports and acquittals are received and accepted.

4.0 FUNDING

Funding will usually be in the range of FJ\$30,000-\$100,000 per year for up to three years duration. Organisations requesting more or less than this range will be assessed competitively but it is expected that funding outside this range will only be accepted in special circumstances.

Core Funding: Registered or reputable civil society organisations may apply for Core Funding for up to 3 years duration. Core Funding will be provided to support the implementation of multi-year organisational or strategic plans. It is expected that activities to strengthen the organisation's own planning, delivery, monitoring and human resource capacity would be included in these plans.

Specific Project Funding is available for up to 3 years duration to eligible applicants, including civil society organisations. Specific Project Funding may include local research and/or data analysis projects. Such projects will only be expected to be funded for multi-years in exceptional circumstances.

In all cases, funding for future years will be dependent upon good performance. This will include both demonstrated project delivery and the provision of on time, good quality 6-monthly progress reports and financial acquittals.

Organisations already receiving Core Funding support under this Program may apply for either additional Core Funding or Specific Project Funding. Applications for additional Core Funding will be competitively assessed but will not usually be prioritised unless there is a demonstrated need and proven track record.

Funding decisions will be based on a competitive evaluation of applications, an assessment of the spread of activities and/or organisations and the Program's annual financial allocation. As a result funding requests may be only partially met and the scope of activities may need to be negotiated.

In this funding round, priority will be given to applications focused on the following themes:

- **Civic Education and Human Rights** eg: building values and principles of transparency, participation, responsiveness, accountability, empowerment and equity within communities.
- **Promoting Gender Equality** eg: improving women's participation in decision-making and leadership at any level of society; addressing gender-based violence (including targeting men); addressing the unequal participation of women in the paid economy; addressing pay inequities or other workforce related issues; or improving women and girls access to social and government services.
- **Community-driven development** eg: addressing issues related to the overall well-being of society such as building social inclusion; assisting communities to build their economic resource base and increase access to external resources, including via the development of networks and coalitions with other communities, civil society organisations, government or private sector agencies.
- **Improving the quality of, or access to, services** eg: promoting greater government accountability in service delivery; building links between communities in the planning, delivery and performance assessment of local services; providing services not otherwise available; building partnerships with other providers to extend the reach of services.

5.0 NON ELIGIBLE EXPENSES

The following items are not eligible for funding under this Program (neither Core Funding nor Specific Project Funding):

- fundraising, donations or prizes
- loans
- activities for individual interests or benefits
- expenses incurred prior to funding approval
- evangelical or party political purposes
- activities that do not comply with the guiding principles for Australian aid assistance to population and family planning activities

Capital expenditure for example, infrastructure, buildings and land will generally not be eligible for funding. Attendance of conferences may be considered on a case-by-case basis and require clear justification.

Activities considered contrary to the Australian Commonwealth interests may not be funded.

Annex Seven: Organisations funded under ACSSP

Organisation	Project (P) or Core (C) Funding	Duration (start and end dates)
Capital Markets Development Authority (CMDA)	P	16 May 2007- 15 Jan 2009
Citizen's Constitutional Forum (CCF)	P	1 June 2008 - 31 July 2009
Consumer Council of Fiji	P	1 May 08 - 30 Feb 2009
Consumer Council of Fiji	C	1 January 07 - 30 April 2010
CreatiVITI	P	22 April 2008 - 30 September 2009
Equal Ground Pacifik (EGP)	P	21 May 2007 - 31 December 2008
Family Support and Education Group trading as Pacific Counselling and Social Services (PCASS)	C	1 January 2008 - 31 May 2011
FemlinkPacific	C	1 January 2008 - 30 April 2010
Fiji Association of the Deaf	C	1st January 2007- 30th April 2010
Fiji Australia Business Council	P	6th Oct 2008 -28 Feb 2010
Fiji Council of Social Services (FCOSS)	C	1 January 2007 - 30 April 2010
Fiji National Council for Disabled Persons	P	29th OCT 2008- 29 OCT 2009
Fiji Network for People Living with HIV and AIDS	C	1 July 2008 - 30 November 2010
Fiji Red Cross Society	P	2 June 2008 - 31 October 2009
Fiji School of Medicine (CAL Program) in conjunction with The Spastic Centre NSW	P	1 January 2008 - 31 March 2009
Fiji Women's Rights Movement	P	23 November 2007- 31 January 2010
Fiji Women's Rights Movement	P	16 May 2007 - 31 October 2009
Foundation for Rural Integrated Enterprises 'N' Development (FRIEND)	C	1 January 2008 - 31 May 2011
Foundation for Rural Integrated Enterprises 'N' Development (FRIEND)	P	23 May 2007 - August 2009
Foundation of the Peoples of the South Pacific International (FSPI)	P	1 April 2008 - 31 August 2010

Foundation of the Peoples of the South Pacific International (FSPI)	P	1 November 2008 - 1 December 2009
Live and Learn Environmental Education	C	1 January 2008 - 31 May 2011
Live and Learn Environmental Education	P	16 May 2007- 31 December 2008
Marie Stopes International Pacific (MSIP)	P	1 April 2008 - 30 June 2011
Marie Stopes International Pacific (MSIP)	P	1 January 2007 - 31 December 2008
Na I Soqosoqo Vakamarama I Taukei (Fijian Women's Society) (SSV)	C	1 January 2008 - 31 May 2011
National Centre for Small and Micro Enterprise Development (NCSMED)	P	1 June 2008 - 31 October 2010
National Council of Women Fiji (NCWF)	C	1 Jan 2008 - 31 May 2011
Pacific Counselling and Support Services (PCASS)	p	5 June 2007 - 15 June 2010
Partners in Community Development Fiji (PCDF)	C	1 January 2008 - 31 May 2011
Partners in Community Development Fiji (PCDF)	P	18 May 2007 - 31 July 2009
RRRT /SPC	P	16th October 2008- 31 Jan 2009
Salvation Army Fiji	P	11 June 2007 - 31 July 2008
Save the Children Fiji (SCF)	C	1st January 2007- 30th April 2010
Transparency International Fiji (TIF)	C	1 April 2007 - 31 July 2010
University of The South Pacific (USP)	P	June 2007 until 31 July 2010
Women's Action for Change (WAC)	C	1 January 2008 - 31 May 2011

Annex Eight: Description of Other Donor Funding for Fiji Civil Society

Note: There was limited opportunity to meet with all donors in Fiji. Interviews were undertaken with the European Union, NZAID and with the British High Commission.

Their programs and approaches cover the following:

British High Commission:

The British High Commission (British HC) has a small bilateral fund with the objectives of: Prevention and Resolution of Conflict; Good Governance; Climate Adaptation. Sometimes they get extra funds – such as for emergency relief and a contribution to larger programs such as the UNIFEM Violence Against Women Program.

They have shifted their approach to funding over the past few years to focus on larger recipients who are able to meet their management and reporting requirements. British HC was reluctant to discuss the details of organisations to be funded or the amounts of funds available. They did mention possible funding to larger UN agencies for climate change focused work.

Largely sees the benefit of donor coordination as being able to swap notes on CSO regarding their reliability and management capacity.

NZAID:

NZAID's support to civil society is available through the Informal Settlements Support Program (FISSP) and Civil Society Support Program (CSSP). Although as yet undecided, they suggested the following niche areas emerging:

- Informal Settlements, which they are certain to be continuing and would like to build activity in this area. They partner/work with Rotary, ECREA, Habitat and Save the Children on the work in settlements. (Some are managed via the Informal Settlements Program and Civil Society Support Program)
- Working with the National Trust Stat Body who is the managers of reserve land. They have had a partnership for 20 years and may branch into the economic development with them now.

In their support to civil society they intend to have two tiers of partnership:

- Longer term partnership – these partnerships will be higher trust and lower compliance. Orgs will be chosen on the basis of meeting some criteria such as good governance, national/local organisations, servicing the local community, strategic fit and management capacity. At the moment they have one partner that fits this description, FWCC and they

have just signed a six year agreement with them. They will have annual policy discussions with these partner organisations and they will be more outcomes focused.

- Shorter term and project driven with some capacity building. Largely service delivery grants. Currently there is overlap with ACSSP with both donors funding PCASS, FRIEND, Save the Children Fiji, PCDF, FWRM

The CSSP is currently being reviewed and developed.²⁵ They have a consultant, who will now work in support of the NZAID civil society support program, focusing on capacity development of organisations. Intentions of the program include:

- A focus on capacity development of organisations, including training in financial management and M&E.
- Development of ‘Learning Circles’ with partners and NZAID, to look at systems and processes.

They are keen to collaborate with AusAID on these capacity development initiatives. For increased donor collaboration, they suggest that one way forward may be to establish common criteria and undertaking a shared selection process with a joint committee to make selections of partners/projects.

European Union

The Bilateral Aid Program has three streams of funding available to civil society in Fiji:

1. Fiji Education Sector Program (FESP) support to Non-State Actors (NSA) – this focuses on support of the key result areas including formal and informal education. They fund an eclectic array of projects and organisations within this program including to school committees, the gospel school for the deaf, water and sanitation facilities for education facilities. The FESP includes some technical support to NSA, although this is currently winding down.
2. There are Budget Line Programs available to NSA – historically focused on the environment and human rights and democracy. These streams of funding are in line with the overall global EU strategies and the human rights and democracy program is in line with a 07 – 10 strategy, the guidelines for which have changed slightly over that time. They are relatively large amounts of funding and therefore the EU is looking for we established organisations with the capacity to deliver and report.

²⁵ A report from a recent review of civil society by NZAID is now finalised although the consultants were not able to access the report. A request to NZAID for the report is current.

Within the human rights and democracy budget line (a call for proposals is currently out) they offer 3-4 grants of around 300,000 Euros each. This seeks to support human rights and democratic principles in Fiji. It seeks to support partnerships and collaborations between CSO. Recent recipients of these grants include Live and Learn (who is a long term recipient of EU funding).

Recent recipients of the Environment Budget Line Project grants are Live and Learn and Birdlife International

Capacity or institutional development is not the focus of the budget line project funding and the EU office does not have the capacity to be involved in any significant capacity development work with civil society.

3. The National Initiative for Civic Education (NICE) is a relatively new program being implemented by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). Many CSO mentioned that they were reconsidering their applications to this fund as the reporting requirements were burdensome and the amounts of funding were low. Not much more is known about this funding stream and its current status is unclear.

The EU is prepared to coordinate. They consider that there are opportunities for donors getting together to discuss and share information on common organisations and experiences – quarterly discussions of their portfolios for instance. They believe donors could learn from one-another in this way.