

Grow Asia Mid-Term Review

DFAT Management Response (August 2018)

Recommendation	DFAT Management Response
<p>The Regional Secretariat should help to clarify the purpose of the working groups and provide greater guidance on how to foster inclusive business initiatives by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reiterating the primary focus of Grow Asia on bringing stakeholders together to identify and implement <u>inclusive business solutions that have the potential to benefit smallholders at scale</u>; • Encouraging working groups to move beyond corporate social responsibility and ‘single off-taker value chain project’ projects, to focus on the development of whole commodity, service or sector markets, where possible; and • Facilitate access by working groups to appropriate expertise in inclusive business and market systems development, to enable them to make that transition. 	<p>Agree, DFAT will request the Regional Secretariat to clarify the purpose of the working groups and provide greater guidance on how to foster inclusive business initiatives.</p> <p>Given the need to continue to inspire collaborative action and keep inclusivity and sustainability on the business agenda, DFAT would be keen for WEF & the Regional Secretariat to consider how they can more actively foster and support activities in the CPs where the private sector is less well developed. This might be combined with a proposal outlining the scaling down of support to the most established and self-sufficient CPs.</p>
<p>Country Partnerships should be encouraged to accelerate the process of moving towards financial self-sufficiency.</p>	<p>Agree, DFAT will request the Regional Secretariat to identify pathways for moving toward financial self-sufficiency for those Country Programs still requiring financial support</p>
<p>To enhance Grow Asia governance structures, the Regional Secretariat should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • continue to advocate for representation by the less powerful stakeholders, including local companies and farmer representatives, on GA governing bodies; and • advocate for increased transparency of all governance groups. It could lead by example by posting agendas and records of meeting discussions for all regional level governance meetings on The GA website. 	<p>Agree, DFAT will request the Regional Secretariat to take action to support more meaningful involvement of the less powerful value chain stakeholders while also ensuring increased transparency of all governance instruments, including by publishing minutes, decisions ROC’s on the Grow Asia website.</p>
<p>Adjust the narrative on results, so that reporting better reflects the actual impact of Grow Asia’s activities. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid including in results reporting, project benefits that cannot be attributed 	<p>Agree, DFAT will request the Regional Secretariat to adjust the narrative on results, so that reporting better reflects the actual impact of Grow Asia’s activities.</p>

<p>to Grow Asia activities, structures or processes;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report Grow Asia’s <u>contribution</u> to results, where that contribution can be demonstrated; • Where Grow Asia’s contribution or attribution cannot be demonstrated, phrase reporting to be clear that these are not being claimed as results of Grow Asia’s structures, processes or initiatives. 	
<p>Grow Asia reporting should de-emphasize quantitative results, instead giving greater prominence to monitoring qualitative factors and partnership processes, over which the Regional Secretariat and Country Partnership secretariats have more influence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building the capacity of country partnerships and working groups • Networking across the region and sharing knowledge; • Brokering and supporting multi-stakeholder partnerships, etc 	<p>DFAT appreciates the Regional Secretariat’s commitment to continue placing greater emphasis on the reporting of qualitative results.</p>
<p>Commission one or two rigorous evaluations/case studies of projects which have successfully piloted new business models that could be replicated on a commercial basis.</p>	<p>DFAT appreciates the efforts being made to develop case studies to showcase projects which have succeeded in developing inclusive, scalable business models.</p>
<p>Should DFAT decide to support Grow Asia beyond the existing period of commitment, such support should reflect a more modest expectation of the impact Grow Asia can achieve and focus on supporting the network’s convening, brokering, knowledge management and capacity building functions. A reduced level of support would be commensurate with this approach.</p>	<p>Agree, DFAT will consider a proposal for future funding based on a reduced level of support from DFAT and a greater level of support from other donors.</p>