



Mid-term review of *Empowering Indonesian women for poverty reduction: Verification of the Performance Story and Forward Plan*

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Executive summary

The *Empowering Indonesian Women for Poverty Reduction Program* (MAMPU) is an Australian Government investment that intends to improve the lives of up to three million poor women in Indonesia. It aims to do this by supporting networks and coalitions led by Indonesian civil society organisations (CSOs). These networks and coalitions are expected to influence key government policies, which will catalyse widespread positive changes in the lives of poor women across Indonesia.

MAMPU has been designed as an eight-year program (2012-2020) with two four-year phases. Phase 1 is from 2012-2016, with a budget of up to \$60 million. Phase 2 is from 2016-2020. The program is managed by Cowater, a managing contractor. It funds 10 national CSO partners who work with over 150 partners at the sub-national level.

This report is part of the mid-term review of MAMPU. The purpose of the mid-term review is to help DFAT Indonesia decide how to progress to Phase 2 (July 2016 - July 2020). The review can also assist the MAMPU team, DFAT Indonesia staff, and other DFAT staff learn from MAMPU's implementation and about gender equality programming more broadly.

Methodology

The mid-term review is in two parts.

For the first part, Cowater and national partners conducted an internal evaluation and produced:

- › A Performance Story which outlines MAMPU's achievements to date; and
- › A Forward Plan, which provides direction for MAMPU's second phase.

For the second part of the review, an independent evaluation team assessed the Performance Story and Forward Plan. The verification involved assessing the evidence base of the documents, ensured they are consistent with Australian and Indonesian government policy, and ensured they reflected the views of MAMPU stakeholders. The findings of the independent verification are outlined in this report.

The two parts of the MAMPU mid-term review are designed to build on the strengths of internal and external perspectives. The internal team (Cowater) has high levels of understanding of the program and has the most to learn from conducting the review. The external team, composed of impartial outsiders, is well placed to assess the accuracy and evidence-based nature of the internal team's findings.

Ideally, this report should be read with the Performance Story and Forward Plan of MAMPU. We provide a brief summary of the Performance Story and Forward Plan below for those readers who have not yet read the two documents.

MAMPU Performance Story

The Performance Story outlines MAMPU's achievements to date. It provides solid evidence of performance during Phase 1 of MAMPU. The program has progressed well against its design objectives. MAMPU's progress is documented in the Performance Story through three key findings.

The first finding is that MAMPU has strengthened partners' and their networks' capacity to influence government reform. The Performance Story states that MAMPU national partners have, for example, improved internal decision-making and financial management. Training provided by MAMPU and tailored technical assistance has made an important contribution to these improvements. The Performance Story also shows that MAMPU contributed to national partners' increasing their networks particularly at sub-national levels.

The second finding is that Partners have influenced government reform in favour of poor women. Partners are influencing national level policy and sub-national policy implementation. The Performance Story cites three examples of national level policy influence. Migrant Care has contributed to the National Law on the Placement and Protection of Migrant Workers being considered by the National Parliament in 2015. KOMNAS Perempuan worked, ultimately unsuccessfully, to place a Law on the Elimination of Sexual Violence on the National Parliament's Legislative Agenda for 2015-2019. PEKKA has influenced the revision of national survey instruments to include details of female heads of households. MAMPU Partners have also influenced policy implementation. Partners have improved the way data is collected to ensure poor women receive services they qualify for. And they have helped local women voice their priorities and influence decision-making at the village level.

The third finding is there are early indications MAMPU is contributing to widespread improvements for poor women in Indonesia. The Performance Story shows that more women are accessing services than before MAMPU. The Performance Story also shows that at least four MAMPU partners report successful government responses to women demanding improved or new services.

MAMPU Forward Plan

The MAMPU Forward Plan aims to provide direction for the second phase of the program. It builds on established foundations in four areas and explores four new areas.

The four areas where MAMPU will continue to work, given the success of these approaches during Phase 1 are:

1. Building and strengthening political networks to influence government policies, regulations and service provision that improve the access of poor women to important services;
2. Engaging with parliamentarians (whether national or subnational);
3. Facilitating multi-stakeholder and community forums at the district level. These forums will consist of multiple MAMPU partners, local government and other stakeholders. The forums will strengthen relationships between MAMPU partners and local communities and encourage civic participation and local collective action; and;
4. Working with Government Departments through MAMPU's five Thematic Working Groups. These working groups provide strategic entry points for dialogue between CSO partners and government.

MAMPU will explore four new areas, based on the learning and emerging issues from Phase 1:

1. MAMPU will facilitate a conceptual framework of women's empowerment that reflects each of the Partner's approaches. Phase 2 of MAMPU will have a greater focus on a more holistic approach to women's empowerment at the village level. This holistic approach will support partners' engagement with government on MAMPU's five focus areas (social protection; access to employment; migrant workers; health; and ending violence against women);

2. MAMPU will strengthen vertical and horizontal networks. MAMPU will more deliberately facilitate the partner and sub-partner network; facilitate collective action with an increased policy focus and support partners in global and regional dialogue;
3. MAMPU will focus on developing women leaders; innovation; and adaptive learning systems to improve sustainability; and;
4. MAMPU will test five new approaches in Phase 2. These are: engaging with religious and customary leaders; challenging discriminatory laws and bylaws; engaging men as agents of empowerment; expanding into Papua; and testing small-scale approaches to support homeworkers.

Key findings from the verification of the Performance Story and Forward Plan

This report is the independent verification of the Performance Story and the Forward Plan. It answers two questions:

1. How strong are the findings in the Performance Story?
2. How strong is the case for the strategy and priorities in the Forward Plan?

In answer to the first question, the independent evaluators agree that MAMPU is progressing well and that the findings in the Performance Story are strong. The Performance Story meets four of the five criteria, which were developed to judge its strength. We found that MAMPU has made a positive contribution to Partners' and networks' capacity to influence government reform in relation to the needs and priorities of poor women. And there have already been improvements in livelihoods and access to services for poor women in Indonesia. These improvements are still small in scale (thousands of women), which is to be expected given the timing of the project. MAMPU expects large-scale change (millions of women) in the next phase: 2016–2020.

Some findings in the Performance Story can be strengthened by better citation of evidence or by enlarging the evidence base. These improvements are outlined in the report and summarized in Appendix 1. DFAT can consider instructing Cowater to amend the Performance Story to address these areas, as time and resources permit.

Key finding: The verification found that the Performance Story findings are strong – that is, there is solid evidence of good performance during Phase I and that the Program is progressing well against (and in some cases exceeding) its design objectives.

Recommendation 1

Based on the key finding of strong performance, recommend DFAT use the Performance Story to demonstrate the Program's achievements and lessons learned to a broader audience.

In answer to the second question, the independent evaluators found that the case for the Forward Plan is very strong. The MAMPU Forward Plan builds on four existing program strengths and proposes to explore four new areas. We found that these eight areas are aligned to the policies and priorities of key stakeholders (Government of Australia, Government of Indonesia and poor Indonesian women) and the international literature. We also found that the focus areas are based on evidence. We found that the case for the Forward Plan is very strong as it met all six of the set criteria.

Additional information and evidence can strengthen the Forward Plan in a number of areas. The report and Appendix 1 lists these areas. DFAT can consider instructing Cowater to amend the Performance Story to address these areas, as time and resources permit.

Key finding: The verification found the case for the Forward Plan is very strong - that is, it is aligned to the policies and priorities of key stakeholders (Government of Australia, Government of Indonesia and poor Indonesian women) and the international literature.

Recommendation 2

Based on the key finding that the case for the Forward Plan is very strong, recommend DFAT consider the strategy and priorities in the Forward Plan for Phase II decision making processes.

Other findings from the verification of the Performance Story and Forward Plan

The verification process identified a number of lessons from Phase 1 that can be useful for Phase 2. The Performance Story format focuses on outcomes. As such, it is not designed to capture lessons from the implementation process. In contrast, the verification process surfaced a number of lessons from Phase 1 as well as ideas for operationalising the Forward Plan. Although not strictly included in our terms of reference, lessons and operational recommendations became a new line of inquiry for the independent verification team. These lessons are presented for MAMPU and DFAT to consider.

The lessons and operational recommendations identified fall into two categories: those that have a strong evidence base (for example, they were raised by several stakeholders or featured strongly in international literature) and have been noted as part of the strategic recommendations; and those where the evidence base is weaker and so require further discussion and testing with MAMPU Partners - these have been noted as operational recommendations.

The six lessons that have a strong evidence base are:

- › Improving the quality and oversight of technical assistance: Three of the four MAMPU national Partners interviewed raised concerns over the quality of some of the technical assistance they had received from MAMPU, citing low quality delivery of some MAMPU subcontractors. All four cited the lack of a formal feedback mechanism as an issue.
- › Reporting on value for money: DFAT Indonesia highlighted that they need to know if MAMPU's achievements represent value for money.
- › Increasing the focus on people with disability: The Forward Plan does not include a focus on people with disability despite the strong policy position of the Government of Australia on inclusive development. One Bappenas interviewee, two MAMPU Partners and one community group recommended an increased focus on disability.
- › Taking account of particular lessons from the international literature: The Forward Plan's focus areas do not adequately take into account lessons from international literature on the benefits of formal employment, the need to recognize that women are a diverse group, and the systematic barriers to women's economic empowerment.

- › Increasing the policy facilitation between MAMPU national partners and government: MAMPU national Partners and Bappenas all asked for increased facilitation for policy interface. Bappenas requested assistance to coordinate working groups, while national Partners requested a framework and increased assistance to build connections with the National Government.
- › Improving the external communication of the program: All DFAT stakeholders interviewed highlighted that MAMPU's purpose and achievements need to be better and more succinctly communicated, particularly to internal DFAT audiences who may not be familiar with the program.

A further four issues were raised during the verification process, however the evidence is not as strong as those raised above:

- › Ensuring the quality of women's groups: The women's groups we visited had various capacities to critically engage with and address their priority issues. It may be useful for MAMPU (specifically Cowater, national and sub-national Partners) to consider the critical features, which facilitate quality women's groups.
- › Sharing MAMPU's strong internal systems: MAMPU's monitoring and evaluation and financial audit systems are very strong. DFAT Indonesia can consider sharing these systems with other Indonesia programs.
- › Improving program operation: Stakeholders made a number of suggestions for how DFAT Indonesia and Cowater could make MAMPU work better during Phase 2. These are: developing a cohort of champions for the program; forming an operational policy sub-committee to help translate MAMPU priorities into incentives for behaviour change for civil servants; and including national Partners more in program governance.
- › Considering the risk of personnel changeover: One stakeholder raised the issue of DFAT Indonesia and MAMPU further considering the risk of personnel changeover.

The following highlights the strategic recommendations to address the lessons highlighted above (note the lesson from international literature will be added to Appendix I).

Recommendation 3

Cowater and MAMPU national Partners work together to develop a formal performance review system that provides feedback to Cowater on its performance, the performance of its sub-contractors, and MAMPU national Partners.

Recommendation 4

Cowater develop methods for evaluating value for money, and include assessments of value for money in the Performance Story and future program reporting.

Recommendation 5

DFAT Indonesia and Cowater consider the best way to increase MAMPU's focus on people with disability without diluting its already strong programming.

Recommendation 6

Cowater, Bappenas and national Partners work together to implement a structured engagement process between national Partners and the Indonesian government.

Recommendation 7

DFAT Indonesia and Cowater work together to develop improved communication products and strategies for explaining MAMPU within DFAT.

Management Response

DFAT welcomes the findings of the Empowering Indonesian Women for Poverty Reduction (the MAMPU Program) mid-term review. Empowering women and girls in the Indo-Pacific region is a priority for the Australian Government and is a key focus of Australia's new Aid Investment Plan for Indonesia. Gender inequality undermines economic growth, reduces stability, and is a key barrier to a country's overall development. Despite significant efforts by the Government of Indonesia, women continue to face multiple barriers to equality, including a lack of participation in political and economic decision making, violence against women, and insufficient access to employment. Through the MAMPU program the Australian Government, in partnership with the Government of Indonesia, is helping to increase the capacity of women to participate in the economy and political life.

The review demonstrates that Australian aid is making important contributions to empowering poor women in Indonesia. The MAMPU Program is performing strongly, in some cases exceeding design objectives, and is well positioned to achieve widespread empowerment of poor women in MAMPU Phase II (2016-2020). The review also confirms that the strategy for MAMPU Phase II is strongly aligned to the policies and priorities of key stakeholders – Government of Australia, Government of Indonesia and poor Indonesian women – and the international literature.

DFAT agrees with the recommendations and will work closely with relevant stakeholders to implement the recommendations.

Recommendation	Response	Details
<p>Recommendation 1</p> <p>Based on the key findings, recommend DFAT use the performance story to demonstrate the Program’s achievements and lessons learned to a broader audience.</p>	Agree	DFAT will develop a communications package for the performance story.
<p>Recommendation 2</p> <p>Based on the key finding that the case for the Forward Plan is very strong, recommend DFAT consider the strategy and priorities in the Forward Plan for Phase II decision making processes.</p>	Agree	The strategy and priorities outlined in the Forward Plan will be considered in planning for MAMPU Program Phase II.
<p>Recommendation 3</p> <p>Cowater and MAMPU national partners collaborate to develop a formal performance review system that facilitates feedback on the performance of Cowater, its sub-contractors and MAMPU national partners.</p>	Agree	DFAT has requested Cowater to work with stakeholders to strengthen existing mechanisms to collect feedback on performance.
<p>Recommendation 4</p> <p>Cowater develops methods for calculating and describing value for money, and includes this in the Performance Story and future program reporting.</p>	Agree in part	DFAT has requested Cowater to identify strategies to capture results, and quantify reach and costs of MAMPU investment in selected policy influence cases. Value for money will be reflected in future program reporting.
<p>Recommendation 5</p> <p>DFAT Indonesia and Cowater consider the best way to increase MAMPU’s focus on people with disability without diluting its already strong programming.</p>	Agree	DFAT is committed to ensuring development activities include and benefit people with disabilities. The MAMPU program is already undertaking substantial work in this area; however reporting has been weak. DFAT has requested Cowater to report on the work currently being done as part of MAMPU six-monthly progress report and seek out further opportunities to increase focus on disability where appropriate.
<p>Recommendation 6</p> <p>Cowater, Bappenas and national partners work together to implement a structured engagement process between national partners and the Indonesian government.</p>	Agree	DFAT will work with Bappenas to discuss possible changes in the MAMPU governance structure with a focus on strengthening linkages amongst the program stakeholders.

Recommendation 7

DFAT Indonesia and Cowater work together to develop improved communication products and strategies for explaining MAMPU within DFAT.

Agree

DFAT is working with Cowater to develop new communication products, strategies and mechanisms to ensure the achievements and reach of the program are captured and communicated effectively within DFAT.

1. Introduction

1.1 About MAMPU

MAMPU is an eight-year program (2012–2020) with two four-year phases (Phase 1: 2012-2016 and Phase 2: 2016-2020). MAMPU aims to improve the lives of up to three million poor Indonesian women, their families and communities. The program supports women to improve their livelihoods and access to services.

MAMPU funds 10 national Partners who work with over 150 Partners at the sub-national level. MAMPU has strengthened the capacity and networks of these organisations so that they, and the women they work with, are now better placed to influence the government and private sector in the interests of poor women.

MAMPU is managed by Cowater, a managing contractor, and implemented by a team of over 30 staff.

1.2 Methodology

The mid-term evaluation of MAMPU has two parts. The first part is the internal review of Phase 1 (the Performance Story) and a plan for Phase 2 (The Forward Plan). The second part is the independent verification of the Performance Story and the Forward Plan, which forms this report.

1.2.1 Internal evaluation

The MAMPU team (Cowater and MAMPU national Partners) conducted an evaluation of Phase 1 and developed a plan for Phase 2.

Cowater developed two products from the review and planning processes:

- › a Performance Story outlining MAMPU's achievements to date. The Performance Story addresses three key evaluation questions:
 1. How and to what extent has the program affected the Partners and networks' capacity to influence government reform?
 2. How and to what extent have the Partners and networks influenced government reform in relation to the needs and priorities for poor women?
 3. How and to what extent is the program likely to contribute to improved access and livelihoods for poor women in Indonesia and what are the early indicators that this is happening?
- › a Forward Plan that provides direction for MAMPU's second phase.

1.2.2 Independent verification

An independent evaluation team, the authors of this report, verified the Performance Story and Forward Plan to ensure they are based on evidence, consistent with Australian and Indonesian government policy, consistent with priorities of poor Indonesian women, and reflect the views of stakeholders.

The verification report addresses the following verification questions:

1. How strong are the findings presented in the Performance Story?
2. How strong is the case for the strategy and priorities in the Forward Plan?

The findings for these verification questions are outlined in this report.

Independent team members

The independent evaluation team is made up of one independent consultant, Farida Fleming (Team Leader), and one DFAT staff member from the Office of Development Effectiveness, Penny Davis.

Approach

The evaluation team took a process approach to verification, engaging with the MAMPU team from the beginning of the evaluation process. The team provided feedback and preliminary findings to the MAMPU team throughout our review, rather than only through our final report.

Independent verification criteria

The evaluation team developed a set of criteria to judge the strength of the Performance Story and Forward Plan, as outlined in Table 1.

Table 1: Developing judgements on the verification questions

Verification question	Criteria	Judgement scale ⁱ
1. How strong are the findings presented in the Performance Story?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Claims are transparently supported by evidence ii. Multiple sources of evidence have been used to support claims iii. Multiple perspectives have been considered iv. The findings are consistent with the views of stakeholders and observations from the field v. Causal claims are supported by independent evaluators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One criteria met: Performance Story needs significant improvement Two criteria met: Performance Story needs improvement Three criteria met: Performance Story is adequate Four criteria met: Performance Story is strong Five criteria met: Performance Story is very strong evidence
2. How strong is the case for the strategy and priorities in the Forward Plan?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Aligns with the policies of the Government of Australia ii. Aligns with the policies of the Government of Indonesia iii. Aligns with the priorities of poor Indonesian women iv. Multiple sources of evidence have been used to develop strategies v. Areas of proposed activity are supported by 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One criteria met: Forward Plan requires major revision Two criteria met: Forward Plan needs significant improvement Three criteria met: Forward Plan needs improvement Four criteria met: Forward Plan is adequate Five criteria met: Forward Plan is strong

ⁱ Note that the judgement scale outlined here is slightly different from the original judgement scale included in the evaluation plan. The changes were made to use language which better suits the needs of evaluation stakeholders.

	<p>learning from DFAT's other gender equality work and international good practice</p> <p>vi. Areas of proposed activity are supported by gender specialists and key stakeholders</p>	<p>Six criteria met: Forward Plan is very strong</p>
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Sources of data

To make assessments against each criteria, we collected and analysed data from the following sources:

- › Interviews with five DFAT staff, three Bappenas staff, one member of the Indonesian Parliament, and one District Head;
- › Interviews with four MAMPU national Partners and four sub-national implementation Partners;
- › Focus group discussions (FGDs) with four beneficiary communities (for some of these FGDs, local politicians and local government officials were included);
- › A random selection of data from the MAMPU information management system (MANIS); and;
- › A review of over 35 documents including policy documents from the Governments of Australia and Indonesia, international literature on women's empowerment and coalitions/advocacy, and MAMPU design and planning documents.

Modifications made during the review

Performance stories focus on how well a program performed compared to its theory of change, helping to understand whether a program is making progress against its planned outcomes. During the review, it became clear that the performance story format is less useful for understanding *how* a program works and what needs to improve.ⁱ However, our verification process surfaced several lessons from MAMPU's first phase, which can be used to inform Phase 2. This uncovering of lessons became a new line of inquiry for our team, a number of which are included in this report.

1.3 Limitations

There are three limitations to the verification process.

The first is that data was collected from only a small number of MAMPU Partners and field sites. We did not have the time or budget to interview all Partners and sub-Partners, so we sampled Partners for interview. To ensure representation across the three categories of capacity development outlined in the Performance Story, we interviewed two organisations that have experienced the biggest changes in capacity (Aisiyiah and Migrant CARE), one partner who has evolved incrementally (PEKKA) and one partner who progressed in some areas and stagnated in others (KAPAL Perempuan). We then interviewed one sub-partner of each of these Partners and a beneficiary community that each sub-partner works with. This meant that we interviewed four national Partners (from a total of 10), four sub-national implementing Partners (from a total of 151) and four beneficiary communities.

ⁱ The Verification Team acknowledge the adoption of the Performance Story approach for the mid-term review was not MAMPU's decision. MAMPU originally proposed the Performance Story method in the Monitoring & Evaluation Plan as a collaborative way of capturing and learning from contribution to outcomes at a point in time.

The small size of this sample limits the generalizability of findings regarding operational recommendations for Phase 2. We have suggested these findings be tested with a broad range of MAMPU stakeholders before implementation.

The second limitation is that we were limited in access to Indonesian external perspectives on the Forward Plan. We were unable to schedule an interview with the nominated independent Indonesian gender specialist. We also did not interview any CSOs who are not working with MAMPU.

The third limitation is that neither member of the independent verification team speaks fluent Bahasa Indonesia. We used a translator for interviews with MAMPU national and sub-national Partners, and for focus group discussions with beneficiaries. As a result some nuances and detail may have been lost.

2. How strong are the findings in the Performance Story?

2.1 Summary

This chapter examines the strength of the Performance Story's three key findings. The summary of MAMPU's expectations, performance claims and our assessment are contained below. The rest of the chapter presents our detailed assessment.

MAMPU's plans and performance findings

The MAMPU design planned that by Years 2-3 there would be 'improved capacity and readiness for collective action' among MAMPU Partners. Measured against the plan, MAMPU has so far made good progress.

Over the next two years, the improved capacity of partners and the strengthened networks are expected to enable MAMPU Partners to better influence the Indonesian government, leading to large-scale positive change for poor Indonesian women between 2017-2020.

MAMPU's Performance Story sets out three key findings of what has been achieved so far:

1. MAMPU has contributed positively to partner and network capacity to influence government reform
2. Partners have started to influence government reform in relation to the needs and priorities of poor women
3. There are early indications of widespread improvements to access and livelihoods for poor women in Indonesia.

Our assessment

We found that the three Performance Story findings met four of the five criteria set out on the next page, and are therefore strong. The claims are transparently supported by evidence and there are multiple sources of evidence used. The independent evaluators and stakeholders also support the claims.

2.2 Performance story claims

The Performance Story makes three main claims.

The first claim is that MAMPU has strengthened Partners' and networks capacity to influence government reform. The Performance Story states that MAMPU national Partners have, for example, improved internal decision making and financial management. Training provided by MAMPU (for example in financial management and monitoring and evaluation) and tailored technical assistance (for example in research and strategy development) made an important contribution to these improvements. The Performance Story also claims that MAMPU helped national Partners' to expand their networks, particularly at sub-national levels, by providing financial incentives and pressures for national Partners to work together with local CSOs or local branches of their own organisations.

The second claim is that Partners have influenced government reform in favour of poor women by influencing national level policy and sub-national policy implementation.

The Performance Story cites three examples of this national level policy influence. Migrant Care has contributed to the National Law on the Placement and Protection of Migrant Workers being considered by the National Parliament in 2015. KOMNAS Perempuan worked, ultimately unsuccessfully, to place a Law on the Elimination of Sexual Violence on the National Parliament's Legislative Agenda for 2015-2019. PEKKA has influenced the revision of national survey instruments to include gender details of heads of households.

MAMPU Partners have also influenced policy implementation. Partners have improved the way data is collected to ensure poor women receive services they qualify for. And they have helped local women voice their priorities and influence decision-making at the village level.

The third claim is there are early indications MAMPU is contributing to widespread improvements for poor women in Indonesia. The Performance Story shows that there are now more women accessing services than before MAMPU. The Performance Story also shows that at least four MAMPU Partners (Kapal Perempuan, Migrant Care, Aisyiyah and PEKKA) report successful government responses to women's demands for improved or new services.

2.3 Verification findings

We assess the claims in the Performance Story to be strong. The claims meet four of the five criteria, as summarised in Table 2 below. Each criteria is discussed in the following section including a number of suggestions for improving the Performance Story.

Table 2: The Performance Story findings are strong

Criteria	Criteria met?	Assessment against criteria
Claims are transparently supported by the evidence	✓	Evidence is well used. The claim that 'significant' numbers of poor women have been affected should be reconsidered
Multiple sources of evidence have been used	✓	Multiple sources of evidence, including a mix of qualitative and quantitative data, have been used
Multiple perspectives have been considered	✗	The perspectives of the governments of Australia and Indonesia and of independent observers are not clearly presented
The findings are consistent with the views of stakeholders and observations from the field	✓	Stakeholders confirmed the findings in Performance Story are consistent with their views and experiences
Key causal claims are supported by independent evaluators	✓	We support the key causal claims. No alternative explanations for the claims in the Performance Story were uncovered

Number of criteria met

Rating

One criteria met	Performance Story findings need significant improvement
Two criteria met	Performance Story findings need improvement
Three criteria met	Performance Story findings are adequate
Four criteria met	Performance Story findings are strong
Five criteria met	Performance Story findings are very strong

2.3.1 Claims are transparently supported by evidence

The Performance Story claims are well supported by evidence. The findings in the Performance Story are consistent with our analysis of data available from the MANIS system, including case studies, monitoring reports and quarterly reports from MAMPU national Partners.

One claim in the Performance Story that should be revised is that MAMPU has increased the access of *significant* numbers of poor women to services (see, for example, page 23 of the Performance Story). Given the program targets reaching three million poor women by 2020, a ‘significant’ number could be expected to be in the millions or hundreds of thousands. The fact that thousands of women have accessed services can usefully be rephrased as ‘early indicators of widespread improvement in access to services and livelihoods’.

The evidence base for the three statements listed below, drawn from the Performance Story, is unclear or could be made stronger. However, these are small discrepancies that do not detract from the evidence-based nature of the Performance Story.

4. The claim of improved management—increased diversity and more delegated authority within several Partners—is not supported by evidence. Specific Partners (Migrant Care, KPI, Aisyiyah) are mentioned under the headline, so it is clear that the data has been derived from somewhere. However the sources are not cited under ‘The evidence’ section on pages 17–18. Citing the evidence can strengthen this claim.
5. The claim that MAMPU Partners are better positioned to influence government policy is only supported by quantitative data on the number of contacts between MAMPU Partners and policy relevant groups. To support this claim adequately requires either qualitative reports from relevant policy targets. Alternatively, the Story could make a more limited claim (change from ‘better positioned’ to ‘increased contact’).
6. The claim of increased cases handled by the CSO Forum Pengada Layanan (FPL) is documented in two Quarterly Progress Reports. The figures cited are an increase in the cases handled per month from 178 in the June–December 2014 to 198.5 in the January–March 2015 period. However, the total figure of cases handled over January to March 2015 is 795. If this figure is correct, the number of cases handled per month is 265. If this is the case, the increase is from 178 to 265. This is almost a 50 per cent increase. If the revised figures are correct, stating the 50 per cent increase strengthens the claim.

Conclusion: Overall, the Performance Story claims are well supported by evidence. One claim can be modified to ensure fit with the evidence.

2.3.2 Multiple sources of evidence have been used to support claims

In general, the Performance Story supports claims with multiple sources of evidence, combining qualitative and quantitative data. For instance, the Performance Story uses quantitative data on the reach and contact of MAMPU national Partners and their financial management capacity together with qualitative data from case studies and most significant change stories.

An exception to the use of multiple sources is the claim that there are early indications that MAMPU is contributing to improved access and livelihoods for poor women in Indonesia. The Performance Story provides only a single source of evidence: the quarterly reports from MAMPU Partners. This is a relatively minor issue, however, the addition of other sources would strengthen this claim.

Conclusion: Overall, the Performance Story supports claims with multiple sources of evidence.

2.3.3 Multiple perspectives have been considered

The Performance Story clearly presents three perspectives:

- › Cowater authored the report and had significant input to its contents through its role in data collection and analysis. Cowater also hosted a Performance Story workshop with MAMPU national Partners;
- › MAMPU national Partners produced much of the data which the Performance Story is based on. They also participated in the Performance Story workshop convened by Cowater; and;
- › Beneficiaries shared their views through the four Most Significant Change stories in the Performance Story.

The Story does not strongly present the perspectives of Government of Australia (GoA), Government of Indonesia (GoI), or independent observers. For example, the Performance Story provides recommendations regarding Cowater and the MAMPU national Partners. The Story only mentions—but does not make recommendations on—MAMPU’s engagement with other Australian aid activities and communication with strategic stakeholders (see page 16). These matters are important issues for DFAT. The views of GoI are also not clearly represented. The Performance Story could be improved by providing more comprehensive coverage on the views and needs of these stakeholders.

Conclusion: The Performance Story does not strongly present the perspectives of Government of Australia (GoA), Government of Indonesia (GoI), or independent observers.

2.3.4 The findings are consistent with the views of stakeholders and fieldwork

Overall, we found that the causal claims in the Performance Story are consistent with the views of stakeholders and observations in the field.

All MAMPU national Partners agreed that MAMPU has played a role in strengthening their capacity. Partners also agreed that MAMPU has allowed them to increase their networks and coverage at sub-national levels. On the topic of advocacy, the majority of MAMPU national and sub-national Partners stated that support from MAMPU has allowed them to increase the quantity and/or quality of policy engagement with different levels of government. Only one MAMPU national partner we interviewed disagreed, stating that they would have conducted the same advocacy work even without MAMPU’s support.

The stakeholders we interviewed also agreed that MAMPU Partners have influenced government policy and practice. While it was not possible to verify all the examples included in the Performance Story, some patterns did emerge. A number of stakeholders, including a member of Indonesia’s House of Representatives, agreed that Migrant Care has been influential in the proposed amendments to Law 39/2004 on the Placement and Protection of Migrant Workers. MAMPU sub-national implementing Partners and local communities also provided examples of how they have engaged with local and district governments to lobby for improved services, for example through meetings with head of districts (Bupatis) and local parliaments, and through reporting to government through newsletters. District government representatives

also confirmed that they had increased engagement with MAMPU sub-national implementing Partners.

Further, local communities and MAMPU Partners strongly supported the claim that women have accessed increased or improved services due to MAMPU. Examples include increased availability and uptake of health services (such as IVA and pap smear tests), improvements in the Rice for the Poor program, and increased activities to improve livelihoods.

The evidence we collected from MAMPU national and sub-national Partners, stakeholders and community members are consistent with the findings presented in the Performance Story.

Conclusion: Overall, the Performance Story findings are consistent with the views of stakeholders and fieldwork.

2.3.5 Causal claims are supported by independent evaluators

Overall, we support the causal claims in the Performance Story. We explored these claims through interviews and focus group discussions with MAMPU stakeholders and beneficiaries.

To make assessments against these criteria, we explored two areas with MAMPU stakeholders, Partners and beneficiaries:

- › Whether there were alternative explanations, besides MAMPU's support, for the claims in the Performance Story; and
- › The counterfactual, that is, what the current situation would look like without MAMPU.

Stakeholders provided no alternative explanations for the claims in the Performance Story and stated that the situation would be less positive without the support of MAMPU.

In relation to the first claim, that MAMPU has strengthened Partners' and networks capacity to influence government reform, all MAMPU national Partners agreed they would be less effective organisations without MAMPU's support.

In relation to the second claim, that Partners have influenced government reform in favour of poor women, stakeholders we interviewed could offer no alternate explanations for the specific government policy and practice changes discussed. However, one Partner noted that Migrant Care was only one group lobbying for the amendments to Law 39/2004 and that the amendments have not yet passed. The Performance Story notes such limitations to its claim.

In relation to the third claim, that there are early indications MAMPU is contributing to widespread improvements for poor women in Indonesia, local communities, stakeholders and MAMPU Partners did not offer any other explanations for increased access or improved services due to MAMPU. In many communities, the local partner and women were the only actors advocating for improved access or improved services.

Based on our interviews and focus group discussions with MAMPU stakeholders, we support the causal claims in the Performance Story.

Conclusion: The independent evaluators support the Performance Story's causal claims.

2.3.6 Adequacy of progress

As outlined in the sections above, the Performance Story makes a number of claims about its achievements and progress against its theory of change. These claims are generally supported by multiple sources of evidence and by MAMPU's stakeholders.

The Performance Story can be strengthened by making key claims more explicit. Each section of the Performance Story sets out the key performance claims, compares this to what was envisioned during the design, and presents the evidence that supports the claim. The reader can infer, given that the claims and evidence meet or exceed design expectations, that MAMPU's progress is strong. However, there is no explicit judgement made. Similarly, the Performance Story and Forward Plan are not explicit about whether MAMPU is on track to achieve its target of reaching 3 million women; that is, whether the foundations laid in Phase I mean the target remains feasible in the second phase. Readers can benefit from these judgements being made clear and explicit. Such information may be particularly useful for DFAT senior managers to assist them understand the program's achievements to date and the sufficiency of that progress.

Recommendation

Based on the key finding of strong performance, recommend DFAT use the Performance Story to demonstrate the Program's achievements and lessons learned to a broader audience.

2.4 Other issues

As noted in the methodology section, a new line of inquiry of the verification process was identifying lessons from Phase 1 to inform Phase 2. The three lessons raised during the verification of the Performance Story were:

1. Assuring quality of technical assistance;
2. Evaluating value for money; and,
3. Identifying critical features of women's groups.

Multiple MAMPU stakeholders raised the first two issues, the quality of technical assistance and understanding of value for money, providing a strong evidence base. As a result; we provide recommendations to address these issues. A further issue, the critical features of local women's group is largely based on the observations of the independent verification team. Given the weaker evidence base for this issue, it has been presented for Cowater and DFAT Indonesia to further discuss and consider and has been noted under operational recommendations (p.25).

2.4.1 Assuring quality of technical assistance

The MAMPU national Partners interviewed all raised concerns about technical assistance and training provided by MAMPU. Specific issues included lack of feedback mechanisms for quality control, low quality, delivery in a way that was not consistent with organisational values (in a non-participatory way), lack of capacity building in a priority area, and lack of understanding of the organisation in order to tailor assistance. One partner also reported that MAMPU had not

helped them with their priority in organizational strengthening, which is to increase their policy influence.

All four Partners interviewed suggested that Cowater develop a formal performance management system to address these issues. One partner recommended training for Partner Engagement Officers. Another Partner recommended that MAMPU Cowater staff familiarise themselves with Partner capacity before engaging with them.

Recommendation

Cowater and MAMPU national Partners collaborate to develop a formal performance review system that facilitates feedback on the performance of Cowater, its sub-contractors, and MAMPU national Partners.

2.4.2 Evaluating value for money

In consultations, DFAT raised the importance of value for money (VfM). It would be useful to DFAT for the MAMPU team to include VfM in its M&E reporting for the future. The Performance Story could be strengthened by including information on whether MAMPU's achievements represent value for money (i.e. whether the program's costs are reasonable, given the outcomes achieved) as such information is important for DFAT. Value for money evaluations will become even more important in the next Phase of the program, to gauge the impact of the program in supporting Partners to achieve policy influence.

Recommendation

Cowater develop methods for calculating and describing value for money, and includes this in the Performance Story and future program reporting.

2.4.3 Identifying critical features of local women's groups

The women's groups we visited varied in capacity to speak publically and critically engage and address issues that concern them. We observed a marked difference in how women at each focus group discussion interacted—how much they spoke and what they spoke about. In one setting, women were extremely vocal: in another, they were extremely reticent to speak. We also observed a difference in the issues women raised. In the first setting, women raised a range of issues of relevance to them. In the second setting, women only raised those issues that were on the agenda of the sub-partner.

There may be a number of reasons for the reticence of women to speak publicly. In the second setting it may have been because there were a number of men at the forum. Or it may be because we visited a more conservative community. There may also be a number of reasons for whether and how women address issues of importance to them.

Whatever the reasons, it seems important for MAMPU (particularly Cowater, national Partners and sub-national implementing Partners) to consider the critical features of women's groups, what factors facilitate 'quality' groups, and monitoring for 'quality'.

This is one of the four issues that is noted under 'operational recommendation (p.25)..

3. How strong is the case for the Forward Plan?

3.1 Summary

This chapter examines the strength of MAMPU's Forward Plan. We've summarised our assessment and the MAMPU Forward Plan below. The rest of the chapter presents our detailed assessment of the Plan (Section 3.2). Other issues are raised in Section 3.3.

MAMPU's Forward Plan

Over Phase 2, MAMPU expects Partners to be increasingly successful at influencing government reform (over the period 2015-2017) so that large numbers of poor women in Indonesia have improved access to services and livelihoods (over the period 2017-2020).

As MAMPU is a long-term investment, the design only detailed Phase 1. The Managing Contractor is responsible for developing a Plan for Phase 2 at the end of Phase 1.

MAMPU's Forward Plan sets out four areas where it will build on strong foundations established during Phase 1:

1. Continue to build and strengthen political networks to influence government;
2. Continue to engage with parliamentarians (national and/or subnational) to influence policy;
3. Continue multi-stakeholder and community forums to strengthen relationships between MAMPU Partners and local communities; and;
4. Continue to work with government departments to influence policy implementation.

The Forward Plan sets out four new areas it will explore during Phase 2:

1. Take a more holistic approach to women's empowerment at the village level;
2. Strengthen vertical and horizontal networks of MAMPU Partners;
3. Focus on sustainability; and,
4. Test new approaches to ensure MAMPU has maximum impact.

Our assessment

We found that the Forward Plan, based on the eight elements noted above, is very strong. This is based on the fact that the Forward Plan met all of the verification criteria. That is, the Forward Plan is strongly aligned to the policies and priorities of the three key stakeholders: Government of Australia, Government of Indonesia and poor Indonesian women. The Forward Plan is also based on multiple sources of evidence; learning from DFAT's other gender equality work and international good practice. Gender specialists and key stakeholders also support the proposed activities.

3.2 Verification findings

We found that the case for the Forward Plan is very strong, based on the plan meeting all of the six criteria for assessing this proposition. A summary of the assessment is contained in Table 3 below. Following the table, we discuss each criteria in further detail and provide suggestions for improving the Forward Plan. We also provide recommendations where the evidence base for doing so is particularly strong.

Table 3: The case for the Forward Plan is very strong

Criteria	Criteria met?	Assessment against criteria
Aligns with the policies of the Government of Australia	✓	The Forward Plan is strongly aligned to GoA policy. Policy alignment could be improved with a more explicit focus on people with disabilities.
Aligns with the policies of the Government of Indonesia	✓	The Forward Plan is strongly aligned to Gol policy at the national level. The Plan would be improved by discussing misalignment between different levels of Gol policy, the gap between policy and implementation, and considering contemporary issues of the Gol.
Aligns with the priorities of poor Indonesian women	✓	The Forward Plan is strongly aligned to the priorities of poor Indonesian women. Further explicit reference to MAMPU Partner research could strengthen the Plan.
Multiple sources of evidence have been used to develop strategies	✓	National and international research has been drawn on to develop the strategies. Drawing out the connections between Phase 1 lessons and Phase 2 strategies could strengthen the Plan.
Areas of proposed activity are supported by learning from DFAT's other gender equality work and international good practice	✓	Proposed activity is largely supported by lessons from DFAT's other gender equality and international good practice. There are three areas where MAMPU can further draw from the international literature to strengthen the Plan.
Areas of proposed activity are supported by gender specialists and key stakeholders	✓	Key stakeholders support areas of proposed activity. There are two areas where Partners have conditional agreement and other areas suggested to include in the Plan.

Number of criteria met	Rating
One criteria met	Case for the Forward Plan needs major revision
Two criteria met	Case for the Forward Plan needs significant improvement
Three criteria met	Case for the Forward Plan needs improvement
Four criteria met	Case for the Forward Plan is adequate
Five criteria met	Case for the Forward Plan is strong
Six criteria met	Case for the Forward Plan is very strong

3.2.1 Aligns with the policy of Government of Australia

The Forward Plan is aligned to GoA development policies. The Plan shares the aid policy's focus on improving women's decision-making and leadership, empowering women economically, and ending violence against women.¹ MAMPU contributes to three of the ten high level targets of the aid program set out in the aid program's performance framework.² The Plan is also aligned

to the four pillars of the current gender equality policyⁱ: engaging with the private sector, empowering women and girls and taking a mutual obligation approach with partner governments.

DFAT interviewees agreed that the Forward Plan is aligned to the Government of Australia's development policies. All five of the DFAT interviewees agreed that MAMPU is well aligned. While all DFAT interviewees agreed that Plan outcomes are well aligned there was some hesitation about whether the way MAMPU works (in partnership with CSOs) is well understood in the current policy environment. Communicating MAMPU's approach in language that is easy to understand is necessary to increase understanding and buy-in by senior DFAT officials.

While the Plan and GoA policy are substantively aligned there are two areas where alignment can be strengthened. First, the Plan can include a focus on people with disabilities to increase alignment to policy. Improving opportunities for people with disability, particularly women and girls with disability, is a focus for the Government of Australia's aid policy.³ The 2015 DFAT Inclusive Development Strategy commits the agency to taking the interaction between gender and disabilities into account in development efforts.⁴ An increased focus on people with disabilities was supported by a number of stakeholders during interviews (MAMPU Partners and Bappenas) as is discussed further in Section 3.3.6. Given the high-level policy commitment to inclusive development, the Forward Plan might increase its focus on people (women) with disability.

Recommendation

DFAT Indonesia and Cowater increase MAMPU's focus on people with disability without diluting its already strong programming.

Second, the Plan can better articulate its existing alignment to GOA policy by strengthening a number of arguments. The Forward Plan could usefully include details of MAMPU's alignment to Australian Government priorities from MAMPU's May 2015 Progress Report.⁵ The Plan could reference the Minister for Foreign Affairs' commitment to gender equality as well as the relevant commitments in the aid policy.ⁱⁱ There could also be a description of how MAMPU exemplifies 'leveraging' of aid; that is, how MAMPU's relatively small inputs could lead to significant outcomes for poor women. Such amendments to the Forward Plan would strengthen MAMPU's alignment to GoA policy.

Conclusion: The Forward Plan aligns to the policy of the Government of Australia.

3.2.2 Aligns with the policy of Government of Indonesia

The Forward Plan is well aligned to GoI policy at the national level. The Forward Plan describes the alignment between MAMPU and the Indonesian RPJMN (National Medium Term Development Plan), President Joko Widodo and Jusuf Kalla's Nawacita (nine priority agenda points), and the new Village Law.

ⁱ DFAT Gender Specialists informed us that the current revision of the gender equality policy will not substantially change the priorities of the current policy.

ⁱⁱ For example, the Minister's commitment that 80 per cent of aid investments must address gender issues outlined in her 'New aid paradigm' speech.

DFAT and Bappenas interviewees agreed that the Forward Plan is aligned to the Government of Indonesia's policies. However, while these interviewees agreed that the Plan is aligned at a high level, one interviewee noted that different parts of the Government may interpret policy differently. That is, it may not be possible to have alignment with different parts of government given the range of interpretations of policy.

While the Plan and Gol policy are substantively aligned, there are three areas for improvement: acknowledging differences between national law and local, religious or customary law; acknowledging differences between policy intent and policy implementation; and considering the contemporary issues of the Gol.

1. The Plan could discuss the misalignment between the national laws cited and local, religious and customary law. The Forward Plan has two sections that specifically focus on religious and customary leaders as well as the need to address discriminative laws and by-laws (sections 6.8.1 and 6.8.2). The differences between national law, local law, religious law and customary law act to constrain women's rights and inform the context of MAMPU's work. The Plan could usefully mention these issues in the Gol section.
2. The Plan could mention the gap between policy intention and policy implementation. Obstacles to policy implementation include discriminatory socio-cultural norms; gender-biased laws, regulations and policies; lack of gender sensitivity of relevant government officials; lack of analysis of disaggregated data; lack of support and concern of regional parliaments; misinterpretation of religious teachings on gender equality and equity concepts; and resistance among women themselves against women empowerment policies and programs.⁶ The gap between policy intent and implementation again works to constrain women's rights and informs the context of MAMPU's work. The Plan could usefully mention these issues in the Gol section.
3. The Plan could better refer to contemporary issues, other than the RPJMN, which are relevant to the Gol's agenda. One Bappenas interviewee noted that Bappenas is as concerned about *inequality* as they are about *poverty*.⁷ Bappenas is also concerned to build the capacity of the 'missing middle': people who are economically vulnerable, even though they are not below the poverty line, because they are not covered by government programs. Further discussions with Bappenas may determine whether explicit reference to this cohort in MAMPU's women's leadership program would be useful.

Conclusion: The Forward Plan is aligned to the policy of the Government of Indonesia.

3.2.3 Aligns with the priorities of poor Indonesian women

The Forward Plan is aligned to the priorities of poor Indonesian women. More explicit reference to these priorities and the background to establishing these priorities can strengthen the Plan.

In interviews and focus group discussions, all community stakeholders agreed that the Forward Plan addresses priorities for poor Indonesian women. Our document review also demonstrated that MAMPU addresses priority areas.

However, the Plan does not reference the research each Partner conducted during the design phase to identify priorities of poor Indonesian women. For example, Aisyiah conducted a needs assessment to identify reproductive health problems among poor women.⁸ Aisyiah used surveys, secondary data collection, in-depth interviews, focus group discussions with service providers and users, and observations. Through this process, Aisyiah identified a number of issues that limited women accessing reproductive health rights and developed their program

“*Strengthening of Women’s Leadership for the Improvement of More Accessible Reproductive Health by means of an Approach to Women’s Rights in the Mustadh’afin Poor Group*” in response to these issues. Further reference to Partners’ research could strengthen the Forward Plan (in Sections 1.4.3–1.4.5).

The Forward Plan does not provide a rationale for continuing to work in the five thematic areas. The rationale for each area is provided, and supported by evidence. However, there is no information on why these five have been chosen over others. Providing a rationale for the thematic area selection would strengthen the Plan. It may be useful to draw on the reasons for why these thematic areas were chosen during the design process⁹ and reinforce this with any updated research or data collected by MAMPU.

Conclusion: The Forward Plan is aligned to the priorities of poor Indonesian women.

3.2.4 Multiple sources of evidence have been used to develop strategies

The Forward Plan’s strategies are based on multiple sources of evidence. For example: the Plan’s strategies respond to the situational analysis (1.1–1.7) established using national level data such as the Indonesia Demographic Health Survey; international research such as the World Development Indicators March 2015; and micro-level research from Partners such as the *Baseline Report: Poor Women’s Access to Livelihoods and Public Services*.

While the Plan is based on lessons learned from Phase 1, there is minimal detail on the lessons in the Plan. The Plan devotes only one page to documenting seven lessons from Phase 1 and these are presented only at a high level. Further detail on lessons would strengthen the Plan as they provide the rationale for Phase 2 strategies.

Conclusion: The Forward Plan is based on multiple sources of evidence.

3.2.5 Areas of proposed activity are supported by learning from DFAT’s other gender equality work and international good practice

In general, program approaches are supported by DFAT’s other gender equality work and international good practice. There are three areas where lessons from international research can be considered to strengthen the Plan.

The Forward Plan is consistent with many DFAT and international lessons on gender equality and women’s empowerment:

- › MAMPU plans to take a more integrated approach to women’s empowerment that can address more than one factor in various spheres of a women’s life (i.e. education, income, sexual health etc.)¹⁰
- › MAMPU addresses access to services and infrastructure that are critical to women’s economic empowerment¹¹
- › MAMPU advocates for more gender aware social protection (i.e. child benefits, pensions) in insecure markets¹²
- › MAMPU ‘thinks and works politically’ by recognising and seizing opportunities when they arise and supporting strategic Partners at strategic times¹³

- › MAMPU is generally flexible in implementation. However the theory of change is not as flexible. International lessons point to the issue there is unlikely to be a causal relationship between advocacy/coalitions' work and policy change, and that there are many factors outside the control of coalitions and women engaged in advocacy that need to align for policy change to take place¹⁴. The theory of change does not appear to take this into account.

Areas where the Forward Plan does not appear consistent with international literature are:

- › MAMPU's holistic approach to women's empowerment, specifically the focus on livelihoods, could draw more on international lessons on the limitations of the informal economy. Research shows that those engaged in the informal economy are vulnerable to exploitation.¹⁵ Women's participation in formal economies increases gender equality and empowerment.¹⁶ And women's formal employment benefits those outside of the formal economy.¹⁷ These issues can usefully be acknowledged in the Forward Plan. Parallel to the existing focus on livelihoods, the Plan could also include a focus on ensuring women have access to formal employment. If the rationale for the livelihood approach has come about given that MAMPU and MAMPU partners work with the poorest women, the majority of whom currently work in, and will continue to work in the informal sector, then this can usefully be explained. While Section 6.8.5 of the Forward Plan outlines MAMPU's intent to test small-scale approaches to support homeworkers that bridge the formal and informal sectors, there is very little detail provided. As the focus on childcare options and the transition of home based workers from informal to a more formal based employment were identified as the contribution that MAMPU has a comparative advantage in and a unique opportunity to address, this can be usefully expanded upon.
- › MAMPU does not explicitly recognise that 'women' are a diverse group and different approaches are needed for different groups (e.g. young women).¹⁸ While MAMPU is planned and implemented in a way that addresses the needs of diverse groups of women, this point can usefully be highlighted in the Forward Plan.
- › MAMPU does not address systematic barriers to women's economic empowerment. For example, equalising property rights to land and housing is not mentioned in the holistic approach to women's empowerment.¹⁹ If MAMPU has judged the issues of land and housing to be highly complex and unrealistic to address within the available time and resources, this reasoning can be more clearly articulated.

Conclusion: Program approaches are substantively supported by DFAT's other gender equality work and international good practice.

3.2.6 Areas of proposed activity are supported by gender specialists and key stakeholders

Generally, key stakeholders support the proposed activity in the Forward Plan. Most DFAT, Bappenas, and MAMPU Partner interviewees agreed with the key elements of the Forward Plan. In particular, Partners supported more structured facilitation between Partners and the focus on livelihoods. Stakeholders gave conditional support for expanding into Papua and engaging with men, religious and customary leaders.

MAMPU Partners, including CSOs and Bappenas, supported increased structure in MAMPU's facilitation of networks. In particular:

- › At the national level, staff and/or frameworks to improve the interface between CSO Partners and government should be considered:

- For example, Bappenas suggested it would like additional TA to help it coordinate the working groups and build relationships with MAMPU Partners.
 - National Partners also reflected that they would like a framework which defines how MAMPU Partners should engage with government.
- › National Partners suggested that MAMPU should have a staff member who can assist national Partners to build connections with national government, for example by helping them recognise who they need to meet with and when to build policy influence. Structured engagement at the local level was also strongly favoured, while managing the competing tensions of different priorities and technical areas of Partners and stakeholders.

Recommendation

Cowater, Bappenas and national Partners collaborate to implement a structured engagement process between national Partners and the Indonesian government.

Partners and community members strongly support the focus on supporting livelihoods in the next phase of MAMPU, as part of a holistic approach to women’s empowerment. As mentioned above, this approach may need to be balanced against the literature findings about the importance of formal employment to poor women.

However, some stakeholders disagreed or had conditional agreement on two of the new approaches proposed in the Forward Plan:

- › Expanding into Papua; and;
- › Engaging with men, religious and customary leaders as agents of empowerment.

Stakeholders held a mix of views on expansion into Papua. DFAT interviewees were cautious about expansion and one DFAT interviewee disagreed with expansion. Reasons for caution included the additional cost, the different approach that Papua requires, and the political sensitivities of working in Papua. Partners, on the other hand, were supportive of expanding into Papua. They recognized the need to tailor approaches and take a staged approach. MAMPU’s proposed approach is cognisant of these issues and appropriately cautious.

While most stakeholders agreed with engaging men, one stakeholder disagreed and a number of stakeholders included a condition. The condition is that while men should be engaged by MAMPU in order to progress women’s empowerment, they should not become the focus or detract from the focus on women’s empowerment. The Forward Plan has clearly canvassed these issues, as evidenced by the following (section 6.8.3, page 6-5 of the Forward Plan): “...careful planning will be needed to enhance the effectiveness of engaging with men, and to ensure including this activity will not divert resources away from poor women. MAMPU will conduct social analyses to identify and better understand power relations between men and women, identify constraints, select and test possible solutions.”

There were a number of areas that stakeholders suggest should be included in the Plan:

- › **Including people with disabilities:** One community focus group and two of the partner interviews suggested including people with disabilities in the future phase.
- › **Focus on education:** A number of Partners noted that education was an important, and missing, sectoral focus.

Conclusion: Key stakeholders generally support the proposed activity in the Forward Plan.

Recommendation

Based on the key finding that the case for the Forward Plan is very strong, recommend DFAT consider the strategy and priorities in the Forward Plan for Phase II decision making processes.

3.3 Other issues

We found the Forward Plan to be very strong and largely supported by stakeholders. Through the verification process a number of issues related to improving the implementation of the Forward Plan were raised. Several stakeholders highlighted the issue of communication, thus we have made a corresponding recommendation. Three other areas—strengths of MAMPU systems, making MAMPU work better and personnel—are largely based on observations of the independent team or the comments of a smaller number of stakeholders. We suggest that DFAT Indonesia and Cowater discuss and consider these issues further. These have been noted under operational recommendation (p.25).

3.3.1 Communication

DFAT raised two communication issues regarding MAMPU: the need to develop succinct documents and presentations; and the need for language that is clear and accessible.

All DFAT stakeholders interviewed raised the issue of how MAMPU is communicated, particularly to DFAT stakeholders who do not have an in-depth knowledge of the program. This issue is not particular to MAMPU, but an issue across all DFAT programs. DFAT staff suggested program communication would be assisted by short summaries of key reports for circulation, plans for socialising reports, and suggestions of summarized communication packages (for example, five-slide powerpoint packs for DFAT staff to be able to take to stakeholder meetings).

Recommendation

DFAT Indonesia and Cowater collaborate to develop improved communication strategies and products.

3.3.2 Building on and drawing on strengths of MAMPU systems

The independent verification team observed that a number of MAMPU systems are very strong. The M&E system—including the information management system, MANIS—is highly useful and functional. This is evidenced by the high quality Performance Story. The approach to financial audit, with a focus on participatory audit, also appears very useful, with several Partners commenting on its benefits.

We suggest it would be beneficial for DFAT Indonesia to facilitate sharing such systems with other DFAT programs in Indonesia.

3.3.3 Operational support for Phase 2

Some stakeholders had concrete suggestions for improving the policy influence of MAMPU in the next phase including the following proposals.

Developing a cohort of champions or ambassadors for the program: One DFAT interviewee, one Bappenas interviewee and one Partner suggested selecting high-level ambassadors, such as esteemed women, who can communicate the program to others.

An operational level policy sub-committee: One DFAT interviewee suggested developing a sub-committee composed of bureaucrats who can help translate MAMPU policy priorities into incentives for behavioural change of civil servants.

Including Partners further in program governance: One national partner suggested that Partners should be further involved in program governance, perhaps through a Program Governance Committee. While Partners are currently involved in the MAMPU Directors Committee, the interviewee did not think the committee has a clear role in determining program direction. The MAMPU team, on the other hand, consider the partner Directors Committee has a strategic role. Cowater cite the discussion and debate at a recent Directors Committee meeting on issues such as collective action through Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), horizontal networking and a holistic approach to empowerment as evidence. It may be worthwhile for Cowater to test Partners' perspectives on this issue and address any concerns that Partners raise.

We suggest DFAT Indonesia and Cowater consider the usefulness and feasibility of these ideas.

3.3.4 Managing the personnel element to MAMPU's success

A large element of MAMPU's success is dependent on the particular people involved, including staff from Cowater, DFAT, Bappenas and national Partners. This was confirmed by contractor assessments and interviews with stakeholders. There has been much work to ensure that the right people are working on the Cowater team with the right sets of skills and this continues to be a work in progress. For example, MAMPU is currently negotiating the technical assistance position to work in Bappenas. Correspondingly, changes in personnel could have a significant negative effect on MAMPU's performance.

We suggest that DFAT Indonesia and Cowater should assess whether the risks associated with turnover of key staff are adequately monitored and addressed.

Operational recommendation

DFAT Indonesia and Cowater discuss the four issues outlined in 2.4.3 and 3.4.2-3.4.4 (identifying critical features of local women's groups, building on and drawing on strengths of MAMPU systems, operational support for Phase 2, managing the personnel element to MAMPU's success) to decide on whether/ how to address these.

Conclusion

The Performance Story from the *Empowering Indonesian Women for Poverty Reduction Program* (MAMPU) provides useful insight on the program's achievements to date. It is a short document that is easy to read and well supported by evidence.

Key finding: We verify that the Performance Story findings are strong and based on evidence.

The Forward Plan is well aligned to the policies and priorities of the GoA, Gol and poor Indonesian women and is supported by evidence.

Key finding: We verify that the case for the strategy and priorities in the Forward Plan are very strong.

Although both documents are strong, this report highlights a number of suggestions which could strengthen the evidence base and arguments in the Performance Story and Forward. If time and resources permit, Cowater can consider making these changes.

This verification report also highlights a number of lessons from Phase 1 and ideas for implementing the Forward Plan. Six issues have a strong evidence base as they were highlighted by a larger number of stakeholders or featured strongly in the international literature. We make the following recommendations to address these issues. Regarding the additional four issues raised through a small number of stakeholders or the observations of the verification team, we recommend that DFAT Indonesia and Cowater discuss and considered these issues further.

Recommendation 1

Based on the key finding of strong performance, recommend DFAT use the Performance Story to demonstrate the Program's achievements and lessons learned to a broader audience.

Recommendation 2

Based on the key finding that the case for the Forward Plan is very strong, recommend DFAT consider the strategy and priorities in the Forward Plan for Phase II decision making processes.

Recommendation 3

Cowater and MAMPU national Partners collaborate to develop a formal performance review system that facilitates feedback on the performance of Cowater, its sub-contractors, and MAMPU national Partners.

Recommendation 4

Cowater develop methods for calculating and describing value for money, and includes this in the Performance Story and future program reporting.

Recommendation 5

DFAT Indonesia and Cowater consider the best way to increase MAMPU's focus on people with disability without diluting its already strong programming.

Recommendation 6

Cowater, Bappenas and national Partners collaborate to implement a structured engagement process between national Partners and the Indonesian government.

Recommendation 7

DFAT Indonesia and Cowater collaborate to develop improved communication products and strategies.

Glossary

Key terms

Cowater	The MAMPU managing contractor
DFAT Indonesia	The Gender and Social Inclusion Unit in DFAT Indonesia
DFAT Interviewees	The evaluators interviewed four DFAT officers from Development Cooperation, the Governance and Social Development Section, the Gender and Social Inclusion Unit in DFAT Indonesia, and the Political and Economic Bureau
MAMPU team	The MAMPU implementing team, consisting of the managing contractor Cowater and national partners
National partners	The ten national civil society organisations (CSOs) which are directly funded by MAMPU
Sub-national partners	The partners of the ten national partners, who generally work at sub-national level

Acronyms

CSO	Civil society organisation
FGD	Focus group discussion
GoA	Government of Australia
GoI	Government of Indonesia
MAMPU	Empowering Indonesia women for poverty reduction program
MANIS	MAMPU information management system
NGO	Non-government organisation
RPJMN	Indonesian National Medium Term Development Plan
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals

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