



Australia Awards

Australia Awards Global Tracer Facility

Outcomes of Australia Awards Fellowships: Sport for Development in Fiji

March 2023



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Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

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Executive Summary

The Australia Awards Global Tracer Facility (GTF) is a research program developed to provide evidence of the long-term outcomes of alumni of development scholarships and fellowships funded by the Australian Government. This report explores the long-term development and cooperation outcomes of three Australia Awards fellowships in 2015 which were designed to support Australia's broader sport for development policy in the Pacific to improve public health, gender equality, and social inclusion.

In this case study, the GTF examines the use of Australia Awards fellowships to support the Pacific Sports Partnerships (PSP) and the *Australian Sports Diplomacy Strategy*.¹ During 2015 to 2016, Australia Awards fellowships were awarded to Australian host organisations to provide additional capacity building training to select sporting organisations, partner government officials, non-government organisations (NGOs) and community groups in the Pacific. Approximately 55 fellows from Pacific Island countries (PICs) participated, with many of them undertaking regional fellowships hosted by an Australian sporting organisation or development agency.

These fellowships were designed to support and strengthen strategic partnerships between Australian sporting bodies and development partners in Australia and Fiji, Nauru, Papua New Guinea (PNG), Samoa, Tonga, and Vanuatu. Fiji had the largest cohort who participated in this intervention and was chosen by the GTF to showcase the impact of the fellowships on capacity building through the lens of a single country.

This case study highlights the experiences of six Fijian alumni who attended three different fellowships in 2015. These fellowships and the host organisations are listed below:

- Burnet Institute: *Promoting inclusivity, equality, and diversity through sport in the Pacific (Fiji, and Tonga)*
- National Rugby League (NRL): *Expanding League Life in PNG and Fiji*
- Volleyball Australia: *Increasing physical activity levels of women aged 13 - 40 (Vanuatu & Fiji-Pacific)*

The aim of these fellowships was to provide leadership and capacity building training of local staff to run inclusive sport for development programming to reduce the 'risk factors associated with non-communicable diseases and support people with disability by improving the quality of their lives by increasing their inclusion in society' (DFAT, 2015). It also focused on building social cohesion through raising awareness of the values of diversity, gender equality and social inclusion through sport.

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

The case study found that over the last seven years alumni have contributed to inclusive development programming and governance within their sporting organisations. Table 1 outlines the key contributions.

Alumni reported that their fellowship expanded their skills and knowledge, and enriched their professional practice to deliver more inclusive development programs post award through program design, implementation, evaluation, and training others. Alumni noted that they have also been able to strengthen governance and professionalism within their sporting organisations or agencies through coaching and training others, which has contributed to organisational change through reforming policies and procedures and creating inclusive practices.

¹ Australian Sports Diplomacy Strategy (2015-2018). <https://www.dfat.gov.au/people-to-people/sport/Pages/sports-diplomacy-strategy-2015-18>

Table 1: Alumni contributions to sustainable development through sport for development

Inclusive development programming:	Governance:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender equality and increased female participation in sport • Planning for disability inclusion and participation in sport • Promoting diversity, equality, and social cohesion through inclusion of marginalised or vulnerable groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening governance and professionalism of sporting bodies through training and coaching certification • Development of sustainable funding through sponsorship and marketing skills

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

Many alumni in this case study described ongoing networks with other alumni, Australian colleagues, and stakeholders. This is relatively remarkable given that the alumni featured here completed their fellowship more than seven years ago.

These networks can be categorised into three types:

- Informal networks with other fellowship alumni
- Professional networks with other fellowship alumni; and
- Professional networks with Australian colleagues and stakeholders.

The strength of ongoing networks resulting from the fellowships is moderate, which, when examined seven years after a two to three-week course undertaken in Australia, is a positive outcome. The most significant impact of alumni networks on cooperation between Australia and Fiji is building collegiality in their work sectors.

Factors influencing these outcomes

The following factors were identified based on the alumni insights regarding their experiences during and after their fellowship which have influenced their ability to contribute to sustainable development and cooperation between Australia and Fiji.

The contributing factors which have positively influenced long-term outcomes included:

- fellowships consisted of cross-sectoral participants (e.g., government and community organisations),
- hosts used a collaborative partnership approach to engage with participants and partner organisations,
- fellowship course design and content were relevant to participant needs and partnership objectives,
- participants examined their own views on inclusion and equality, and built self-confidence, and
- participants used social media and technology to remain connected.

In contrast, the factors which have challenged the ability of alumni to contribute to the long-term outcomes included:

- host's discontinued engagement or no presence in Fiji, and
- alumni mobility and changing jobs.

Conclusion and recommendations

Overall, alumni across the three Australia Awards fellowships examined in this study are using their skills, knowledge, and networks gained from their award in 2015 to contribute to programs improving public health, gender equality, and social inclusion in Fiji. The fellowships have connected individuals and organisations working to these shared objectives and have contributed to collegiality in the sports for development sector in the Pacific region.

The case study found that careful selection of participants is needed to create cross-sectoral networks (coalitions for change) to contribute to sustainable development. To build capacity and ongoing partnership, it is important for the Australian host organisation to work collaboratively with the partner organisation during the planning stage to tailor the program to meet their training needs and create shared partnership goals for longevity of engagement.

Table 2 outlines the recommendations developed which reflect the contributing and challenging factors identified by alumni and host organisations in this case study.

Table 2: Case study recommendations for future Australia Awards fellowships

Recommendation	Rationale	Who can influence
1. Fellowship participants should comprise a mix of individuals from different organisations to facilitate a coalition for change (e.g., made up of cross-sectoral representation from government, civil society)	<p>Where Australian host organisations are engaging with more than one partner organisation for a fellowship, cohorts should ideally include a mix of individuals from more than one sector to develop cross-sectoral networks that can work collaboratively post award to enact change.</p> <p>These networks extend the Australia Awards from a developmental leadership program enhancing individual capacity to one that builds collective leadership and effectively breaks down social barriers to addressing equality and inclusion.</p> <p>In addition, collective leadership amongst alumni can support longer-term fellowship outcomes where Australian host organisations' presence in-country is limited.</p>	DFAT – Fellowship selection policy
2. Australian host organisations develop fellowships in collaboration with participants/partner organisations	<p>Fellowship course content should be conducted in collaboration or consultation with intended participants and partner organisations to ensure relevancy to partnership goals and training needs.</p> <p>Demonstrating this activity may help indicate the intentions of the organisational partnership objectives and embed collaborative partnering practices that will support sustaining the long-term outcomes of the fellowships.</p>	DFAT – Fellowship selection policy



Australia Awards

Global Tracer Facility



Outcomes of Australia Awards Fellowships: Sport for Development in Fiji

Australia Awards alumni are contributing to:

- Gender equality & increased female participation in sport
- Disability & social inclusion
- Governance & sustainability of sporting organisations



Australia Awards Results

1. Alumni provided strong examples of development contributions.



'Parents now know that girls can also play in contact sports like rugby league and rugby union...Letting them train is something that really changed the culture of Fijians.'



'I champion the inclusive program and go around the country to do awareness on disability, on how we can stop the stereotype, labelling...and get them to be part of the sporting communities.'



'LGBTQIA+ or non-conforming youth partake more in volleyball because they can be themselves...it does not really discriminate...those who are openly flamboyant, they come out to the court in their make-up. This is something which has been changing in the dynamic of the patriarchal system in Fiji.'

2. Alumni are contributing to cooperation between Australia and Fiji

The case study found that the sport for development fellowships undertaken in 2015 in Fiji produced ongoing networks with other alumni, Australian colleagues, and stakeholders which have contributed to building collegiality in the sports and development sectors. Some of these networks have been active for more than 7 years and can be categorised into three types:



- Informal networks with other fellowship alumni
- Professional networks with other fellowship alumni; and
- Professional networks with Australian colleagues and stakeholders.

Participants

6 Fijian alumni



2 women



4 men

5 employers/colleagues



3 Australian host organisations



1. Introduction

The Australia Awards Global Tracer Facility (GTF) is a research program developed to provide evidence of the long-term outcomes of alumni of development scholarships and fellowships funded by the Australian Government. This report explores the long-term development and cooperation outcomes of alumni of these programs as well as examine the long-term partnership outcomes by the hosts and partner organisations.

The discussion and findings in this report are based on interviews with six alumni from Fiji who completed an Australia Awards fellowship in 2015 and returned to Fiji to work in the sport for development sector. Additional interviews were undertaken to triangulate the data with a range of stakeholders including the three Australian host organisations, and five employers and colleagues of alumni. In addition, consultations were undertaken with representatives from the current Australian Government sport for diplomacy program in the Pacific, Team Up, and managing contractor for the Australia Awards Fiji and Tuvalu.

The GTF is designed to provide insight and evidence into the overall Goal of the Australia Awards and the two long-term Program Outcomes outlined in the following figure and the *Australia Awards Global Strategy* and *Australia Awards Global Monitoring and Evaluation Framework* (DFAT, 2022)² (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Australia Awards overall goal and intended outcomes

GOAL		
To support partner countries to achieve their development goals through education and knowledge transfer and to build enduring relationships with Australia that advance mutual interests.		
PROGRAM OUTCOMES		
1. Alumni use their skills, knowledge and networks to contribute to sustainable development.	2. Alumni contributes to cooperation between Australia and partner countries.	
INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES		
Alumni have necessary skills and knowledge to contribute to development.	Alumni have relevant and useful networks and relationships.	Alumni view Australia, Australians, and Australian expertise positively.

² For further information on both the Strategy and Monitoring and Evaluation Framework, see: <https://www.dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/australia-awards-global-strategic-framework-and-global-monitoring-and-evaluation-framework#global-strategic-framework>

1.1 Context

1.1.1 Sport as a vehicle for development

The concept of sport for development can be summarised as using sport as vehicle to 'exert a positive influence' on individual and community outcomes such as health, social inclusion, and economic development, and influence diplomacy outcomes by fostering intercultural exchange (Lyras & Peachey, 2011). Schulenkorf et al. (2016) state that the 'popularity' of using sport for development approaches is the access sport offers to engage communities and individuals with non-sport agendas.

Sport for development became more widely used because of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which set targets for member states to reduce inequalities worldwide from 2000 to 2015 and were proceeded by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by the UN in 2015 (Wanner, 2021). Several high-level policies and frameworks guide the use of sport for development. For example, the UN General Assembly adopted in 2003 *Resolution 58/5, Sport as a Means to Promote Education, Health, Development and Peace*.

1.1.2 Australia's investment in sport for development and diplomacy in the Pacific region

Since the 1990s, Australia has used sport to contribute to achieving development and diplomacy objectives in the Pacific Island region. Australia is an 'early adopter and strong supporter of the sport for development paradigm' to 'harness the power of sport to achieve sustainable development objectives' (Wanner, 2021, p. 111).

In 2015, DFAT released Australia's first sports diplomacy strategy, which set out a whole-of-government approach to 'maximise people-to-people links, development, cultural, trade investment, education, and tourism opportunities' (DFAT, 2015, p.2). The strategy signalled a 'new era of partnership between the Australian Government and sporting organisations' and outlined four goals (Minister for Foreign Affairs, 2015):

1. Connecting people and institutions
2. Enhancing sport for development
3. Showcasing Australia
4. Supporting innovation and integrity.

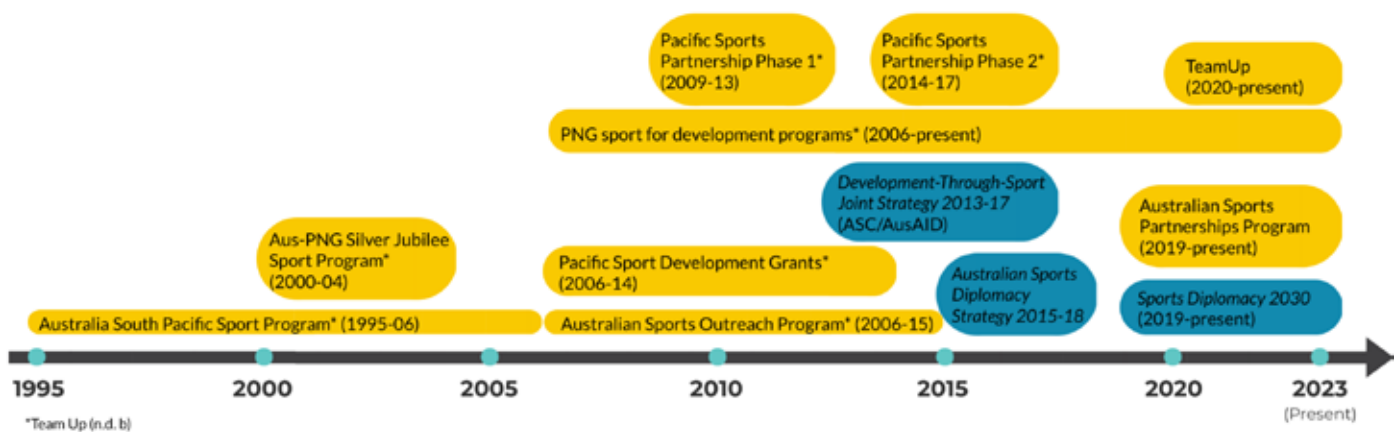
Under Goal 1 – Connecting people and institutions, Australia's strategy was to support people-to-people connections through sport that 'promote partnerships of value between Australia and the region.' This objective included utilising **Australian Sports Fellowships**, with AUD 1 million earmarked for 'athletes, officials, and administrators to visit Australia to develop skills and technical expertise, training, and networking' (Australia Awards, 2015; Minister for Foreign Affairs, 2015). These fellowships were included in Round 15 and Round 16 of the Australia Awards fellowships application cycles, with awarded fellowships conducted in 2015 and 2016 (Australia Awards, 2015).

Coinciding with the Strategy, Phase Two of the Pacific Sports Partnerships (PSP 2) program occurred from 2013 to 2017. PSP 2 continued the 'Development through Sport' strategy, with the objective to enhance efforts to 'prevent non-communicable diseases, enhance the lives of people with disability and promote gender equality' (Synergistiq, 2015, p.11). Several Australia Awards fellowships awarded for sports for development purposes included Australian host organisations delivering programs under PSP 2.

In 2019, *Sports Diplomacy 2030*, the second and current strategy, 'continues to have a global outlook' and strongly emphasises the Pacific region to build a 'thriving sports community' (DFAT, n.d.). More recently, The Honourable Mr Pat Conroy MP, Minister for International Development and the Pacific, described sports diplomacy as part of the 'whole-of-Australia approach to engaging with both Southeast Asia and the Pacific' (Development Policy Centre, 2022). The Minister stated that 'sport is an entry point into communities and families' and is 'another level of statecraft to promote a healthy and prosperous region.'

Figure 2 shows the timeline of Australia's sports for development and diplomacy programs and strategies from 1995 to the present.

Figure 2: Timeline of Australia's sports for development and diplomacy programs and strategies, 1995 to present.



1.2 Scope and approach

The approach to data collection and analysis in this report has been designed to examine the use of the Australia Awards fellowship modality as an additional mechanism to provide targeted capacity building training in support of Australia's broader development policy in the Pacific, as part of the *Development- Through-Sport: A joint strategy of the Australian Sports Commission (ASC) and the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAid) 2013–2017*. It provides a unique insight the use of this modality on building capacity training of targeted groups, especially at the grassroots community level.

Six in-depth interviews were completed with a select group of Fijian alumni who had completed a sport for development Australia Awards fellowship, in 2015. Fiji had the largest cohort who participated in this intervention, and this allowed researchers to examine the impact of these fellowships on a range of sporting bodies and organisations within a single country. A total of 14 Fijian alumni attended capacity building training in Australia from a range of sporting and community-based organisations. The GTF selected six alumni from three different fellowships to participate in the case study (see Annex 1: Interview Participants and Annex 2: Interview Guides for detail on the participants and the case study interview guides).

Additional interviews were also undertaken with colleagues, employers, Australian host organisations and other stakeholders to triangulate data. Interviews were carried out using a hybrid model of data collection which included the use of online video-conferencing platforms, telephone interviews and face-to-face interviews in Fiji in late November to early December 2022.

1.3 Limitations

It is important to note that two of the fellowships were used as a mechanism to provide additional Australian-based training to Fijian staff working on Pacific Sport Partnerships (Rugby League and Volleyball). As such, outcomes of these larger programs and those of the fellowships can become blurred. The GTF has focused on capturing alumni voices to ensure the skills, knowledge and networks that were developed on award are featured in this case study and not the overarching aims of the PSPs.

The effectiveness of sports to achieve development objectives is 'highly contested' by sports sociologists and development practitioners (Wanner, 2021, p.11). This case study acknowledges this ongoing debate. The scope of this study examines the use of alumni's skills, knowledge and networks gained from their Australia Awards fellowship and how their Australian study experience has supported their work in using sports for development and public diplomacy. This case study does not examine the outcomes and effectiveness of the sports for development and other community development programs the alumni have contributed to in their work.

2. Australia Awards Fellowships for Sports for Development

This case study demonstrates that Australia Awards fellowships can be used as an additional mechanism to provide targeted training to address capacity gaps of local staff involved in the delivery of Australian Government funded aid programs. The GTF have observed this phenomenon in several contexts and sectors and examples include *Timor-Leste Case Study: Disability and Development* (Doyle & Nietschke, 2020), and *Insights into Short Course Capacity Building* (Doyle & Clarke, 2021).

2.1 Fellowships in this case study

As noted above, this case study involves a focus on alumni who participated in three different fellowships, each conducted in 2015 and had participants from Fiji and other PICs. For context to the interview analysis that follows, these fellowships are described below.

2.1.1 Burnet Institute – *Promoting inclusivity, equality, and diversity through sport in the Pacific (Fiji, and Tonga)*, Melbourne, 8 to 21 November 2015

As former host organisation (Rounds 8,9,10,11,12 and 14), the Burnet Institute was invited by DFAT to apply for a Round 15 grant. Although not a sporting organisation, the Burnet Institute applied for a sports-focussed fellowship using their public health and development expertise.

The aim of the two-week fellowship was to promote inclusivity and diversity in sport in relation to sexual identity, gender, and disability in Fiji and Tonga through building cross-sectoral networks and collaboration (locally and regionally) to reduce the stigma and marginalisation of vulnerable groups. The nine participants in the fellowship came from a range of community based non-government organisations (NGOs), sporting bodies and government ministries including the Rainbow Pride Foundation Fiji (LGBTQIA+ advocacy), Fiji Network Plus (HIV advocates), Fiji National Sports Commission, Fiji Council for Social Services, Tonga Letis' Association (LGBTQIA+ advocacy), Tonga National Rugby League, Tongan Ministry of Internal (Sports Division), Tongan Family Health and the Talitha Project (female empowerment).



Group photo of alumni from the Promoting inclusivity, equality, and diversity through sport in the Pacific fellowship with their program leader, Chad Hughes. Photo: Burnet Institute.

Alumni undertook training in Australia on inclusiveness in sport, gender-based violence, sexism and homophobia, mental health, drug and alcohol abuse, and engaging disenfranchised and marginalised sub-groups. The program included site visits and guest speakers from a range of prominent Australian organisations including the Nossal Institute for Global Health (disability inclusion), Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission's 'Fair go, Sport!' program, Richmond Football Club, WaterAid, Play by the Rules, White Ribbon Australia, Melbourne Storm, and the Chargers Gay and Inclusive Rugby Union Club.



Group photo of the five alumni, and two of their NRL trainers. Photo NRL, 2015

2.1.2 National Rugby League (NRL) – *Expanding League Life in PNG and Fiji, Sydney, Brisbane, 20 April to 5 May 2015*

The Australian Sports Commission, through the PSP, originally approached the NRL with the opportunity to apply for Australia Awards fellowship funding to support training capacity of the NRL's Pacific Outreach Program – 'League for Life' (League Bilong Laif- LFL) which began in Papua New Guinea (PNG) in 2014. The fellowship helped support the set-up of the program in Fiji and train several Community Development Officers from Fiji and PNG in 2015.

The LFL focuses on Rugby League as a vehicle for grassroots community development in areas such as gender equality, disability, and social inclusion (GEDSI), education, health, and promoting social cohesion. It uses a 'range of rugby league-themed educational and reading materials developed with Macmillan Education Australia that encourage healthy lifestyles and boost students' physical, social, literacy and maths skills' and support 'improved education outcomes' of children in often rural and remote locations (NRL, 2015).

Five Community Development Officers were involved in the fellowship, two from the Fiji National Rugby League (FNRL) and three from the NRL PNG. Training included information around codes of conduct and good governance, cyber safety, gender equity and empowerment - focusing on women in sport through the NRL's Women in League Strategy, mental health inclusion, disability inclusion strategies, team coaching, and delivery of inclusive school-based programs.

Over the last seven years, LFL has broaden its reach in the Pacific and now includes PNG, Fiji, Samoa, and Tonga, and continues to provide inclusive educational programs to thousands of school children and promote female participation in rugby league.



The Fiji Volleyball Federation team delivering the Pacific Volleyball Partnership program in Waivou Village 2015. Photo: Fiji Volleyball Federation Facebook page.

2.1.3 Volleyball Australia, Increasing physical activity levels of women aged 13–40 (Vanuatu & Fiji – Pacific), Adelaide & Melbourne, 11 May to 1 June 2015

Volleyball Australia was encouraged to apply for an Australia Awards fellowship in 2015 through their links with the Australian Government as part of the PSP. At that time Volleyball Australia had received AUD 1.1 million dollars over four years to increase physical activity levels of women in the Pacific region to reduce the impact of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) as part of the Pacific Volleyball Partnership (PVP) program.

The fellowship was designed to provide targeted capacity building training to staff from the national volleyball federations in Vanuatu and Fiji to deliver inclusive, grassroots participation programs for indigenous women aged 13 to 40 in peri-urban areas as part of the PVP. A total of six fellows participated in the program, with one program manager and two community coaches from each country. The three-week fellowship was held in Adelaide and Melbourne with corporate sponsorship training provided by Power Sponsorship.



The fellowship also provided training in inclusive coaching techniques and engagement strategies, leadership and program management skills, partnership development, event management, and governance. The four community coaches received a Level 1 Coaching Certificate as part of their training.

The Fiji Volleyball Federation was awarded the Sport Federation or Governing Body of the Year in 2015 by Beyond Sport Global Awards for its targeted approach to helping indigenous Fijian women in Rewa province to include exercise in their daily activities to help reduce the risk of non-communicable diseases (NCDs).

2.2 Alumni interview participants

Six alumni from the three Australia Awards fellowships discussed above participated in this case study. Table 3 outlines their details.

Table 3: Case study participants

Case study alumni participants	Australia Awards fellowship	Position
Mr Ratu Josaia Naikatalautaba Koro (Joe Tuinamata) 	Burnet Institute: Promoting inclusivity, equality, and diversity through sport in the Pacific (Fiji & Tonga)	Role at time of fellowship: Sports Development Officer – West, Fiji National Sport Commission. Delivery of sport for development programming across all sectors of the Fijian community. Current role: Sports Development Officer (West), contributing to inclusive grassroots sport programming and raising awareness of participation of people with disability in sport on behalf of the Fiji National Sport Commission.
Mr Benjamin Christopher Lutukivuya 	Burnet Institute: Promoting inclusivity, equality, and diversity through sport in the Pacific (Fiji & Tonga)	Role at time of fellowship: Chair, Fiji Network Plus. Delivering health awareness programming and advocacy around HIV and AIDS in Fiji. Current role: Support Person – Rainbow Pride Foundation contributing to LGBTQIA+ rights, social justice, advocacy and health and well-being programming.
Ms Rochelle Naulunimagiti 	Burnet Institute: Promoting inclusivity, equality, and diversity through sport in the Pacific (Fiji & Tonga)	Role at time of fellowship: Director, Rainbow Pride Foundation. Delivering health and well-being programming and advocacy of LGBTQIA+ rights, equality, and social justice in Fiji. Current role: Board Member – Daulomani Safe Home, contributing to advocacy and funding support for LGBTQIA+, sex workers, and those suffering homeless due to violence and discrimination.

Case study alumni participants	Australia Awards fellowship	Position
Ms Semaima Lagilagi 	Volleyball Australia: Increasing physical activity levels of women aged 13 - 40 (Vanuatu & Fiji - Pacific)	<p>Role at time of fellowship: Program Manager-Fiji Volleyball Partnership. Delivery of grassroots health programs among indigenous Fiji women to reduce the impact of non-communicable diseases through physical activity as part of a Pacific Sport Partnership initiative.</p> <p>Current role: Consultant and Gender Advocacy Advisor. Vice President-Competition and High-Performance for the Suva Volleyball Association. Contributing to raising awareness of female participation in sport and the reduction of gender-based violence in Fiji.</p>
Mr Lagilagi Golea 	National Rugby League: Expanding League for Life in PNG and Fiji	<p>Role at time of fellowship: Development Officer (West) Fiji National Rugby League (2010-2019). Delivering inclusive school based and community programs under the League for Life initiative to improve health, social cohesion, and gender equality and participation of women & girls and people with disability in rugby league.</p> <p>Current role: Cementation Operator, Tritton Copper Mine, Nyngan, New South Wales. Currently contributing to coaching the Nyngan Tigers under 12s and runner for the Nyngan Tigers Reserves.</p>
Mr Suliasi Cakautabu 	National Rugby League: Expanding League for Life in PNG and Fiji	<p>Role at time of fellowship: Development Officer, Fijian National Rugby League. Delivering inclusive school-based and community programs under the League for Life initiative to improve health, social cohesion, gender equality, and participation of women & girls and people with disability in rugby league.</p> <p>Current role: Farm employee, Townsville, Queensland. Currently contributing to coaching the Townsville Burdekin Roosters and pastoral care of players from the Kaiviti Silktails (Ron Massey Cup).</p>

3. Development Outcomes

This chapter details the development impact of the participating alumni following their fellowship. It explores the Australia Awards long-term Program Outcome 1: ‘Alumni are using their skills, knowledge and networks to contribute to sustainable development’. It also provides a unique insight into the use of the fellowship modality on building capacity of targeted groups, especially at the grassroots community level.

3.1 Skills developed on award

The contributions made by alumni in their work and community are often accomplished using the skills and knowledge developed as part of their fellowship and are implicit in the exploration of examples of contributions in the sections below. However, it is important to also highlight the skills mentioned by alumni as being an integral part of the benefit of their award. Key skills identified through interviews in this case study are listed in Table 4, and illustrate the breadth of knowledge gained through the fellowships.

3.2 Alumni contributions

Summarised in Table 5 are the ways in which the six alumni in this case study have contributed to sustainable development in Fiji. These can be divided into two main areas: inclusive development programming and governance among participating organisations and sports associations.

Table 4: Alumni skills developed from their Australia Awards fellowship

‘Soft’ / interpersonal skills include:	‘Hard’/ technical skills include:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • leadership • communication (verbal and written) • intercultural cultural competencies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • gender sensitivity and inclusive programming • event management • sponsorship and sport marketing • coaching certification • programming for development.

Table 5: Alumni contributions to sustainable development through sport for development

Inclusive development programming:	Governance:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender equality and increased female participation in sport • Planning for disability inclusion and participation • Promoting diversity, equality, and social cohesion through inclusion of marginalised and vulnerable groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening governance and professionalism of sporting bodies through training and coaching certification • Development of sustainable funding through sponsorship and marketing skills

3.2.1 Inclusive programming

A key program outcome of the three fellowships in focus was increased knowledge and skills around inclusion and its use in development programming to achieve **gender equality, disability, and social inclusion (GEDSI)**. Alumni in this case study reported that their fellowship expanded their skills and knowledge and enriched their professional practice to deliver more inclusive programs post award through training, program design, implementation, and evaluation. This is supported by colleagues and employers who reported that alumni returned and made notable impact in designing and delivering inclusive programs at the grassroots level.

Gender equality and increased female participation in sport

One of the primary objectives of the 'League for Life' (hosted by the NRL) and the 'Increasing physical activity levels of women aged 13 – 40' (hosted by Volleyball Australia) fellowships was to promote the participation of women and girls in physical and sporting activities. The aim of increasing participation was enhancing their health outcomes, promoting gender equality, and fostering social cohesion through the reduction of gender-based violence and discrimination. These fellowships also aimed to cultivate female representation as players and sporting officials, with the goal of transforming Fiji's sporting culture over time, normalising female leadership, and expanding opportunities for women and girls in sport.

The NRL's League for Life Program was in its infancy in Fiji when Development Officers, Mr Lagilagi Golea and Mr Suliasi Cakautabu went on award in 2015. The fellowship provided them with a deeper understanding of gender equality, female participation, and social inclusion in sport which they went on to use as they delivered NRL's school-based program and their community outreach work.

Mr Cakautabu noted that the school program really helped change societal attitudes around Fijian girls playing contact sport.

Parents, now know that girls can also play in contact sports like rugby league and rugby union. You see the girls coming to train, so you know most of the time girls [are] something special in a Fijian family. Letting them, telling them to train is something that really changed the culture of Fijians...

Mr Golea recalled that after the fellowship, he joined forces with Mr Cakautabu to set up a 'women's club' in their regions of South and West Fiji. They enlisted women from their local clubs to help recruit interested women players to begin playing in the local competition and over time this evolved into its own women's league. Mr Golea noted:

After that we had two teams my province [West], and two teams from the East and two from the South so we started to develop women's rugby to the very best of our ability. And then two years back [2019] we made a history of winning our first test match against the PNG girls and we put them against the Australian team, and we won the gold medal in the South Pacific games.

This attitudinal change led to more interest in the game among women and girls, and ultimately the development of the Women's Rugby League in Fiji, which was an unexpected outcome of the fellowship. Mr John Wilson, former NRL Pacific Partnership Manager, recalled there was a 'side impact' of the fellowship, a 'ripple effect' which resulted in women becoming interested in playing and developing their own league. It also led to the NRL providing additional training opportunities to women as coaches and sporting officials. Elite women's teams in Fiji such as the Fijian Women's National Rugby Team (Fiji Bulikula) and the Women's National Rugby Union team (the Fijianas) have seen the benefits of these programs through increased awareness and acceptance of female participation in rugby, an expanding fan base, increasing pool of talented new players and female sporting officials.

Ms Semaima Lagilagi is a gender consultant, and former Program Manager of the Fiji Volleyball Partnership and the sport for development program, 'Get into Rugby PLUS'³. An alumna of the Volleyball Australia–hosted fellowship, Ms Lagilagi has been actively involved in promoting gender equality, increased female participation in sport, and the reduction of violence against women and children over the last seven years. As part of her fellowship, Ms Lagilagi received tailored development training to support her outreach work with indigenous women in Fiji to reduce the prevalence of non-communicable diseases (NCDs). She returned from award and employed a participatory approach to increase female participation in her program. Ms Lagilagi used knowledge and skills of participatory development theory from her fellowship to better understand the unique context of each village. This enabled her to work respectfully with traditional leaders and women in the villages to build a sense of agency and ownership of the program which led to greater participation and improved health outcomes for the women and girls involved.

According to Ms Lagilagi, domestic violence was the key barrier to female participation in physical activities within the communities she was working with at the time. Committed to do no harm, she first built trust among the traditional male leaders of the villagers through using kava ceremonies to build relationships. She engaged separately with the women and listened to their needs and challenges. This allowed her and her team to create an inclusive and safe environment without endangering the women and girls involved. Using her traditional cultural knowledge and insights into intersectionality from her practitioner training, Ms Lagilagi ensured her team was provided with 'gender sensitivity' and 'male advocacy training' to foster gender equality, reduce gender bias and discrimination, and minimise domestic violence triggers towards participating women.

I knew because I'm the head of the program and I'm a woman, I still need a man to go into some of the villages and with me to present. So, I trained someone with male advocacy, so he was our male advocate. He went to the Fijian Women's Crisis Centre, did the gender and sex training. I was also very strict on all the colleagues; they had to do the gender and sex training... and be gender sensitised before going to the villages.

The Fiji Volleyball Federation (FVF), who Ms Lagilagi worked for as part of the Pacific Volleyball Partnership, won several awards in recognition of the Federation's gender work including the 2015 Beyond Sports Award and the 2015 Peace and Sports Award. Although these awards were not directly linked to her fellowship, they demonstrate the impact of the program's work on promoting gender equality and female participation in sport in Fiji.

After leaving FVF, Ms Lagilagi began working as the Coordinator on the Get into Rugby PLUS initiative, which uses rugby to teach life skills to promote gender equality and violence prevention. She was responsible for recruiting girls to the program and utilised her development practitioner training, and language skills to help navigate the many cultural barriers to women's participation in the program.

Part of my job as a coordinator was to go to the schools and talk to the parents. So that they can allow their girls to play rugby. I spoke in iTaukei..., so I had to practice at home, the iTaukei language, to the point where I'm actually delivering to some of the very traditional villages... Because you have to connect with your people through your language. You can't be half talking in English and half talking in indigenous.

To ensure that coaches and officials were implementing the Rugby PLUS curriculum in an inclusive way, Ms Lagilagi employed her skills and knowledge of monitoring and evaluation to determine whether coaches and officials weren't 'affirming masculine behaviour' and were contributing to the 'changing mindset' making rugby a more inclusive sport through delivering the curriculum and skills correctly.

Planning for disability inclusion and participation

The fellowships achieved a notable outcome in promoting disability-inclusive programming among alumni. A shift in mindset following participation in the fellowships was reported as having a lasting impact on their professional practices by both alumni and their organisation over the last seven years. Alumni cited that post award they have applied the skills and knowledge they acquired to plan for disability inclusion in their community development work.

3 Get into Rugby PLUS is jointly developed and implemented by Oceania Rugby, Fiji Rugby, UN Women and ChildFund and the Australian Government initiative, Team Up. It provides 'lifelong learning with rugby union to promote positive behaviour, gender equality, and prevent violence against women, girls', and boys' (Team Up, n.d. a). To learn more visit: <https://www.teamup.gov.au/programs/get-rugby-plus-fiji#:~:text=Get%20into%20Rugby%20PLUS%20supports,development%20program%2C%20Pass%20t%20Back>

For example, Mr Golea stated that after his return from award he was more aware of the need to make rugby more inclusive for people with disability. He took the NRL program to special schools and engaged people with disabilities in rural villages. He stated that he was able to use a variety of techniques learnt on award to facilitate disability inclusion through modified sporting activities and roles for disabled people as sporting officials to help promote sport for all.

I used these tools, the tools that I've learnt from here [Australia] and I took it to every places in disabled schools... to islands, to open areas, into schools, they said that the program I run was very exciting for them to learn from, that [is what] I learnt from this fellowship program.

Mr Josaia (Joe) Tuinamata is a Community Development Officer at the Fiji National Sports Commission (FNSC), stated that since his award he has incorporated skills and knowledge of rights-based disability inclusion into his program design and community outreach work. He runs a wide range of programs including 'Train the Trainer' (coaches & sporting officials), 'Educate the Educators' (grassroots support for primary school teachers), 'Inclusive Program' (disability awareness), 'Kids in the community' (sports in schools) and a community 'Wellness Program' (promoting physical activity) and has been able to integrate disability inclusion into all his outreach programs and is helping to change community attitudes towards people with disabilities.

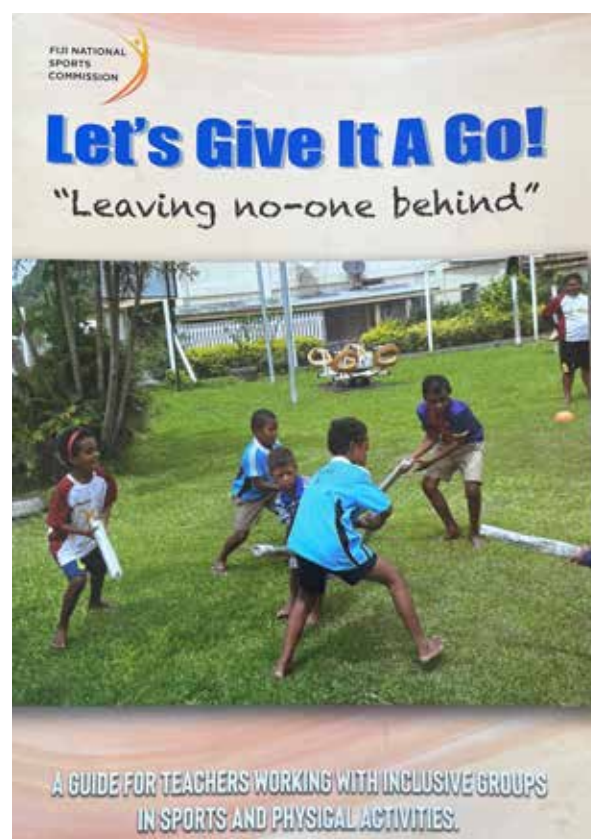
I champion the Inclusive program and go around into the country to do awareness on disability, people with disability on how we can stop the stereotype, labelling..., and how can we help them get them to be part of the sporting communities, whether they can be scorers, they can be judge, they can be coaches because they might be on wheelchair, but their thinking is OK, their hands are OK, so they can handle different roles in sports.

According to the Executive Chairman of the FNSC, Mr Peter Mazey, the insights into inclusive programming Mr Tuinamata shared on his return from award helped the unit to identify gaps in disability inclusive programming and implement change across the organisation. Mr Mazey noted:

After he got back here we then went ahead and got a grant from the UN; we found that one of our big gaps was the education of people with disabilities, so we got a grant from the UN based on his program that he came back with and we brought over Chris Nunn from Australia and we ran huge workshops around the country for all the school teachers that teach in special schools, and we've got about 27 of them. We then produced a manual for the schools.'

In 2019, the FNSC collaborated with a team of Australian and Fijian experts to produce the 'Let's Give it A Go! Leaving no-one behind' handbook. Mr Tuinamata was one of the key contributors. The handbook contains useful information for teachers on inclusive policy and the integration of inclusive teaching practices into the Fijian Quality Physical Education Curriculum. It provides advice on planning for inclusion and has easy to follow lesson plans for sport and physical activities across a range of age groups and abilities.

Mr Mazey noted that an outcome of the workshops and handbook was that all the staff working on development programs undertook 'training on the importance of people with special needs and disabilities' and the FNSC began to be more involved in helping disabled athletes compete at the local, regional, and international level. Mr Mazey noted, 'a lot came out of that programme, so I can't speak more highly of what he got out of his time in Australia. Even now, we don't do anything without making it inclusive'.



Let's give it a go! "Leaving no-one behind": A guide for teachers working with inclusive groups in sports and physical activities by The Fijian Sports Commission, 2019

Inclusion for diversity, equality, and social cohesion

The Burnet Institute fellowship provided alumni with specific development programming skills and knowledge around inclusion of marginalised and vulnerable groups such as youth at risk, LGBTQIA+ individuals, and people living with HIV. The program focused on using sport as a vehicle for social change to tackle discrimination through promoting inclusivity and diversity in sport. Alumni from this fellowship have been actively using inclusive sport programs to tackle social issues such as mental health, addiction, juvenile crime, HIV, and homelessness in the community.

Post award, Mr Tuinamata from the FNSC and Ms Rochelle Naulunimagiti from the Rainbow Pride Foundation collaborated on several LGBTQIA+ inclusive events. Ms Naulunimagiti recalled that Mr Tuinamata was 'happy to come up with programs and projects that were really focusing on being inclusive towards LGBTQIA+ people'. For example, as part of the 2015 International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia the FNSC supported the Rainbow Pride Foundation to run the inclusive 'Pride challenge,' a mixed volleyball and mixed netball competition to raise awareness of LGBTQIA+ inclusion in sport. Each team had to have a least one LGBTQIA+ player. Ms Naulunimagiti noted that increased LGBTQIA+ visibility through sporting events and mixed teams has helped build positive awareness towards her diverse community and she has been able to leverage her expanded network to attract further funding for her grassroots advocacy work.

I would have not come this far if I hadn't attended or been part of the fellowship program ... through this program I really got to meet one of the colleagues which is now funding most of the programs or initiatives.

Mr Tuinamata noted that promoting mixed netball and volleyball teams not only promoted inclusion of LGBTQIA+ community but has helped to slowly change perceptions around gender stereotypes of traditionally male and female sports. He noted that over the last 'four to five years' there has been a significant change in attitude around inclusion across all sports and the growth of mixed teams.

We included the LGBTQIA+ group because of Rainbow Pride Foundation's Rochelle. So, we had a big tournament in Nadi, organised by the Airports Fiji Ltd. Peter [Mazey] went down as a chief guest. This is the first time that they have also played men into netball and vice versa, mixing the teams. As we know there are more girls going into rugby in Fiji, and they are doing well in the international arena.... Likewise with our netball there are more men that have gone into netball to play for their clubs and communities. Before, it's a no-no for Fiji. Rugby was seen only to be played by men and netball to be played by women.

Working with marginalised youth, Mr Benjamin Christopher Lutukivuya, who also attended the Burnet Institute-hosted fellowship, has found inclusion in sport activities as an effective tool to engage youth at risk at the grassroots level. In his current role as a social worker at the Rainbow Pride Foundation, he uses informal volleyball games to break down gender barriers, stereotypes and build social cohesion as part of health-related programming. Mr Lutukivuya reflected:

LGBTQIA+ individuals or generally non-conforming youth, they partake more on volleyball because they can be themselves..., it does not really discriminate... Most of those whom are openly flamboyant in the community, they come out to the court in their make-up. This is something which has been changing in the dynamic of... the patriarchal system in Fiji, you can also see it in the netball arena. You can see straight boys and men, partaking in mixed netball.

3.3 Governance

Alumni in this case study identified that their fellowships provided them with coaching certification and training which has allowed them to act as change makers and strengthen governance and professionalism within their sporting organisations or agencies through leading improvements in decision making and training, and updating policies, procedures, and practices. They have also been able to build organisational capacity through sustainable locally based sponsorship.

Coaching certification and training

The NRL's 'League for Life and Volleyball Australia's 'Increasing physical activity levels of women aged 13 – 40' fellowships provided participants with coaching certification and training which has helped to strengthening governance and professionalism within the FNRL, FVF, Suva Volleyball Association (SVA) post award through improved training, policies, procedures, and practices.

Mr Wilson, from the NRL, noted that coaching and governance training provided the participants of the fellowship with a deeper understanding of the 'standards' and 'values' associated with the Rugby League and helped build capacity of the sport in the country. Mr Golea and Mr Cakautabu noted that the coaching certification they received on award has provided them with improved knowledge of the role of health and nutrition in player performance, building their confidence and opening a range of professional opportunities post award. Both men have moved to Australia to seek work over the last few years and are using their coaching skills to support local rugby clubs in Queensland and New South Wales.

We have come away from the old style of coaching that you can just pick anybody to be a coach. You have to make sure that everything that you teach in the place is according to the book and the rules you know, and because in the long run this will benefit [the club and players] ... I think me, for me it helps me a lot because I'm in Townsville also helping with a local club here. The Burdenkin Roosters, A grade and Reserves. – Mr Suliasi Cakautabu

Mr Golea noted that he is proud of the work he has done in transforming lives through rugby as part of his development work. He noted that he has been able to use his coaching skills to help engage disadvantaged youth in Fiji who have become successful local and international players.

I brought them in and engaged them in the program... the biggest thing that makes me proud is those kiddies, they grabbed with both hands the opportunity I shared with them, [and] they excelled in their life...

Ms Lagilagi also underwent formal coaching accreditation and governance training while on award. She has been able to use these skills to lead change and contribute to improving training, policies, procedures, and practices as part of the 'revamp' of the Suva Volleyball Association (SVA). Ms Lagilagi reflected that this has been one of her 'biggest achievements.' According to the association's President, Mr Kemueli Naigama, Ms Lagilagi has been 'involved since day one' in the revamp and has contributed to constitutional reform, transparency and accountability, the recruitment of a strong leadership team to restore credibility of the association after a loss of sponsorship due to governance issues.



Ms Semaima Lagilagi representing the Suva Volleyball Association at the FWCC sponsored Easter Volleyball Championship, April 2022. Photo: Fijivillage.com

Sponsorship and sustainable sports funding

Several alumni cited the development of skills such as sponsorship and sports marketing as extremely beneficial in mobilising their local communities to fund sporting activities and inclusive programming at a local and national level. This has allowed these organisations to grow and mature over the last seven years and be less reliant on external funding.

A notable example is Ms Lagilagi, who has used her pitching skills developed on award in her different development work and as the Vice President-Competition and High Performance at the Suva Volleyball Association (SVA) to secure sustainable funding. She has recruited local businesses 'that have never sponsored volleyball' before. 'Like cake shops, Digicel, and big names like Vodafone, Pure Fiji', and has built 'relationships with sponsors.' For example, through her voluntary role at SVA, Ms Lagilagi has partnered with the Fijian Women's Crisis Centre (FWCC) to fund sporting activities while also raising awareness of gender-based violence. FWCC currently sponsors volleyball tournaments and provides all the sporting officials with FWCC t-shirts to promote visibility around its campaign "Violence against women: not our game plan".

The Fijian Women's Crisis Centre (FWCC) was established in 1983 and is committed to raising awareness of violence against women as a human right violation. Fiji has one of the highest rates of violence against women and girls in the world. According to the FWCC's Coordinator, Ms Shamima Ali '64 per cent of women'⁴ in Fiji have reported experiencing physical and / or sexual violence in their intimate relationships, which is double the global average of 30 per cent.

The FWCC provides a range of frontline counselling and support services to women and children survivors of 'domestic violence, sexual assault, child abuse and sexual harassment'. As well as community education programs to 'raise awareness of violence against women' at the local, national, and regional level (FWCC, 2023). FWCC receives development funding from the Australian Government, UN Women, Asia Foundation, New Zealand's Aid Programme (NZAID) and the Fiji Government's Department for Women and Culture.

As part of its development work, FWCC has provided training and sponsorship to sporting bodies to advocate for gender equality and to raise awareness of the need to eliminate violence against Fijian women and girls. FWCC has a long history of providing tailored gender sensitivity and male advocacy training for coaches and sporting officials to build capacity of sporting bodies to tackle gender-based violence and discrimination at the grassroots community level.



Ms Shamima Ali, Coordinator of the Fijian Women's Crisis Centre (second on the right) with members of the Suva Volleyball Association as part of a FWCC sponsored sporting event for 16 Days of Activism in 2022. Photo: Suva Volleyball Association

4 Proportion of ever-partnered women aged 18-64 years experiencing intimate partner physical and/or sexual violence at least once in their lifetime. Source: Fiji Women's Crisis Centre, 2013. National Research on Women's Health and Life Experiences in Fiji (2010/11): A Survey Exploring the Prevalence, Incidence and Attitudes to Intimate Partner Violence in Fiji. Suva, Fiji.

4. Contributions to Cooperation

4.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the Australia Awards' long-term Program Outcome 2 – alumni contribute to cooperation between Australia and partner countries. The *MEF* (DFAT, 2022) describes cooperation as alumni undertaking actions that support the relationship between partner countries (i.e., Fiji) and Australia. These actions, which may be development-focused, can include participating in forums relevant to the bilateral relationship, joint community initiatives with Australian groups, or drawing on a personal or professional positive disposition towards Australia.

The *MEF* (DFAT, 2022) also identifies fellowships as a mode that 'particularly enables Australia to strengthen its bilateral and regional relationships on priority issues,' with links developed during the award with Australian colleagues and stakeholders 'likely to occur immediately after study and then fade away as the time passes by'. This chapter examines the extent to which alumni have contributed to cooperation in the seven years following their award and if these have sustained over time. It identifies the factors that have enabled or challenged alumni in these contributions, and together with the examples of impact, they are used to inform the recommendations outlined in Chapter 6 – Conclusion and Recommendations. Figure 3 shows the timeline tracing alumni cooperation outcomes using the *MEF* program logic (DFAT, 2022).

Figure 3: Alumni outcomes timeline based on the Australia Awards Monitoring and Evaluation Framework Program Logic



* As described in the *Australia Awards MELF Guidance Note 1: Global Australia Awards Program Logic* (DFAT, 2022, p.2)

4.2 Australia Awards fellowship impact on bilateral networks and partnerships

4.2.1 Ongoing alumni networks

This chapter explores the ongoing networks of alumni after completing a fellowship that was only two weeks to three weeks in length. While the *MEF* (DFAT, 2022) anticipates fellowship alumni networks to be most strongly evident at one-year post award, many alumni in this case study described ongoing networks with other alumni, Australian colleagues, and stakeholders. This is relatively remarkable given that the alumni featured here completed their fellowship more than seven years ago.

The discussion below categorises these networks into three network types:

- Informal networks with other fellowship alumni
- Professional networks with other fellowship alumni; and
- Professional networks with Australian colleagues and stakeholders.

Table 6 shows these ongoing alumni networks by fellowship program and identifies if the fellowship alumni in this case study are still working in the same sector in Fiji, and if the Australian host organisations are still engaged with their counterpart organisations in Fiji.

Table 6: Matrix of ongoing alumni networks, by Australian Host fellowship program and network type

Australia Awards Fellowship	Case study alumni and Australian host organisations current engagement		Ongoing alumni network types		
	Alumni still working in the same sector in Fiji?	Australian host organisations still engaged with Fijian organisations?	Informal networks with other fellowship alumni	Professional networks with other fellowship alumni	Professional networks with Australian colleagues and stakeholders
National Rugby League (NRL) Expanding League for Life in PNG and Fiji	No	Yes		✓	
Burnet Institute Promoting inclusivity, equality and diversity through sport in the Pacific	Yes	No	✓	✓	✓
Volleyball Australia Increasing physical activity levels of women aged 13–40 (Vanuatu & Fiji)	Yes	No		✓	

Impact of alumni networks on cooperation between Australia and Fiji

The strength of ongoing networks resulting from the fellowship is moderate, which, when examined seven years after a two to three-week course undertaken in Australia, is a positive outcome. The most significant impact of alumni networks on cooperation between Australia and Fiji is building collegiality in their work sectors. The following section gives examples of how these three types of ongoing networks have contributed to the collegiality between alumni, Australian organisations, and staff working in Fiji.

Informal networks with other fellowship alumni: one alum described ongoing but passive informal networks with other fellowship alumni, which through using social media, have been sustained. The prevalence of technology and social media likely influences the longevity of connections that has typically waned for alumni who completed their awards during times that predate these communication trends (as seen in GTF case studies conducted with alumni who completed their awards before 2005 and prior to social media platforms like Facebook).

We are just friends on Facebook. – Mr Benjamin Lutukivuva

Professional networks with other fellowship alumni: Several alumni stated they had an ongoing professional connection with other alums from their fellowship across the Pacific Island region. These connections are underpinned by their experiences in Australia and shared work in the sports sector in the region.

I went to Tonga in 2016 and 2017, and I met with [alumni], ... when we went there and ran courses ... she came to Fiji often too, and we normally talked about what we are doing. – Mr Josaia Tuinamata

One alum, Ms Lagilagi, also described using social media, like Mr Lutukivuva, as a way they remain connected with other alumni from Vanuatu. However, their connection was stronger when they were working in the same field of sports post-award and could share their experiences.

Our conversations were based on the challenges faced by our respective programs and how we can provide support to each other ... we stopped speaking because of my involvement in rugby. However, Fiji Volleyball follows our partners closely on social media to see development work done in both countries. – Ms Semaima Lagilagi

Professional networks with Australian colleagues and stakeholders:

one alum also described the ongoing professional networks formed with stakeholders in Australia. Ms Naulunimagiti described how the Burnet Institute-hosted fellowship connected her with members of the Australian trans community, whom she has remained in communication with and continues to explore potential opportunities to work together.

We hope to do something. – Ms Rochelle Naulunimagiti

Of note, the two alumni from Fiji National Rugby League (FNRL) in this case study also described professional networks with Australian staff working in the Pacific, which has since waned following their relocation to Australia. Following their fellowship, they continued working alongside NRL Australian staff, delivering sports for development programs in Fiji.

I had a very good relationship...there were two people that came and based themselves in Fiji for the last three years, from NRL, so we worked closely with them and doing the development work for kids, mostly for schools. – Mr Suliasi Cakautabu

5. Factors Influencing Long-term Outcomes

Several themes emerged in the experiences shared by the alumni and host organisations which have influenced the extent to which the Australia Awards long-term outcomes have occurred. These factors outlined in Table 8 (contributing factors) and Table 9 (challenging factors) primarily related to the Australian host organisations' fellowship design and engagement in Fiji.

5.1 Contributing factors

Table 7 summarises the factors which have positively influenced how alumni use their fellowship experience to contribute to sustainable development and cooperation between Australia and Fiji. It also identifies the fellowship that contributed to these factors.

Table 7: Factors positively influencing the Australia Awards long-term outcomes – contribution to development and cooperation.

Factors contributing to long-term outcomes	Involving which Australia Awards fellowship?	Outcome 1: Alumni use their skills, knowledge, and networks to contribute to sustainable development	Outcome 2: Alumni contribute to cooperation between Australia and partner countries
Fellowships consisted of cross-sectoral participants (e.g., government and community organisations)	Burnet Institute NRL Volleyball Australia	Contributed	Contributed
Hosts used a collaborative partnership approach	Burnet Institute NRL	Contributed	Contributed
Fellowship course design and content was relevant to participant needs and partnership objectives	Burnet Institute NRL Volleyball Australia	Contributed	
Participants examined their views on inclusion and equality, and built self-confidence	Burnet Institute NRL Volleyball Australia	Contributed	Contributed
Participants used social media and technology to remain connected	Burnet Institute NRL Volleyball Australia		Contributed

5.1.1 Fellowships consisted of cross-sectoral participants (e.g., government and community organisations)

Mr Hughes, the Burnet Institute Program Manager implementing the fellowship at the time, stated from their experience running Australia Awards fellowships, **participant composition** was essential to ensure the program is effective in contributing to change and required having participants from both civil society and government:

If you don't have the government partner, do you really have that buy-in? ... we learned the lesson that [if] you bring the people from the community groups or the civil society partners that you want to work with to Australia, and you send them back. It doesn't necessarily have an impact because they're just as powerless as they were before but informed and powerless.

This experience, according to Mr Hughes, has led to the Burnet Institute team requiring fellowship groups to include the necessary stakeholders that will influence change post award. As a result, Mr Hughes stated their approach to participant selection and composition 'changes the power dynamic' and 'the kind of change that you're looking for, or the platform for the ability for that change to occur, is created as a [result] of the mechanism itself [the fellowship].'

This approach has also contributed to the ongoing informal and professional connections between the Burnet Institute-hosted fellowship alumni in this case study, shown in Table 6. Lasting networks were an outcome that was especially important in this fellowship as they were aware of the limitation of the Burnet Institute's lack of presence in Fiji. As Mr Hughes noted, 'it was important that the primary relationships that were developed were between government and civil society so that when they returned, they had a strong link and a bond.'

This focus on participant composition and networks of influence contributes to the development of collective leadership, a key component of developmental leadership, which is 'the strategic, collective and political process of building political will to make change happen' (Developmental Leadership Program, 2018, p.1). The Australia Awards scholarships and fellowships are a form of support that develops an individual's skills, knowledge, and networks. However, the approach by the Burnet Institute to ensure that stakeholders who can influence change participate in the fellowship extends this training model to also building collective leadership. From individual to collective leadership, this network model 'supports the building and access to networks that can be crucial to future networks or coalitions for change' (Roche & Denney, 2019, p.9).

Participant selection proved to also be beneficial to the NRL in building their engagement in Fiji and supporting the uptake of rugby league in the country. Mr Wilson stated that identifying Mr Golea and Mr Cakautabu, who were working with Fiji National Rugby League (FNRL), to participate in the fellowship meant they became 'early enablers in the discussion' to develop rugby league programming in Fiji. The NRL's objective in supporting rugby league in Fiji was to include 'as many people – we want the game for all.' Mr Wilson stated the fellowship helped spread this message 'because they had a Fiji rugby league badge on, people started to, I guess, connect with them, because they were connected with us.'

5.1.2 Hosts used a collaborative partnership approach

The Australian host organisations in this case study used a collaborative approach in developing their fellowship course designs which have supported the growth of alumni's relevant and useful skills, knowledge, and networks. These collaborative approaches included consulting with stakeholders and being guided by their needs and interests for the capacity-building workshops.

The Burnet Institute and the NRL designed their fellowship programs in consultation with their stakeholders. Mr Hughes, the fellowship program manager for the Burnet Institute, described this approach as working with their community partners to identify their needs:

[It was] a pre-planning sort of thing. What are your learning needs, what do you expect, and what do you want?

For the NRL, the fellowship set an example of the intent of their engagement in Fiji by engaging in a series of consultations to be 'agile' in tailoring the fellowship program. Many factors have contributed to the growth of NRL's engagement in Fiji. One of which, Mr Wilson (NRL) stated, was the fellowship, which had an 'immediate impact' in demonstrating their engagement approach in supporting the development of NRL in Fiji:

[What the fellowship] did, it probably laid a foundation there for us to continually just drive that narrative that we are not there to run the game in Fiji. We are there to support and promote and develop in line with what the national government - or national governance model is.

5.1.3 Fellowship course design and content was relevant to participant needs and partnership objectives

The Australian host organisations designed the fellowship course content aligned with their partnership goals and training needs. The fellowships strengthened alumni's confidence and insight into inclusive development programming. Alumni and stakeholders interviewed as part of this case study identified the design and course content of the fellowships as critical in helping them to contribute to development. Examples of useful skills and knowledge gained were from courses and workshops in development theory and practice, inclusion and respectful relationships, sport event management and coaching certification and governance.

Illustrative of this is Ms Lagilagi, who Mr Finlay Batts, former Community Development Manager for Volleyball, stated they had identified as an individual within the Fiji Volleyball Federation (FVF) who could contribute significantly to delivering sports programs for development. Ms Lagilagi described the fellowship as providing her with tailored development practitioner training across participatory practices and principles in cross-cultural engagement and understanding intersectionality in gender equality. The fellowship also added to her practical skills by applying these principles in program design, monitoring and evaluation. In addition, the course also provided sponsorship and marketing training by Power Sponsorship which Ms Lagilagi believes 'complemented a lot of things that I was already doing, but into another level.' She has attributed these skills to helping her recruit and maintain a range of volleyball sponsors post award to develop the financial sustainability of the programs.

5.1.4 Participants examined their views on inclusion and equality, and built self-confidence

Alumni all mentioned a **change in mindset** around gender equality, disability, and social inclusion as the result of their courses and experiences in Australia, which they applied to improve the inclusivity of their sports for development programming. For example, Mr Golea stated his fellowship experience in Australia with the NRL-hosted fellowship expanded his mindset regarding gendered roles in Fiji and set him on a path to supporting girls and women playing rugby:

Women were not allowed in the rugby arena, like in our culture. When I came here [to Australia], it was really an eye-opener for me, to be honest. That's the biggest thing I learned through this program [fellowship], we are all equal.'

The alumni from the Burnet Institute-hosted fellowship describe changing views on disability and LGBTQIA+ rights and inclusion. Mr Tuinamata stated his fellowship experience led to a 'paradigm shift' and helped change his 'mindset' towards people with disabilities. As a result, he adapted his professional practice and incorporated a rights-based approach to development programs at the Sports Commission.

Mr Lutukivuya similarly observed changes in mindset on LGBTQIA+ through cross-sectoral engagement during his fellowship program. He recalled that one of the group members, from a conservative background, began 'looking at things through a very different lens' and engaging in the program 'sort of changed the way he saw LGBTQIA+ individuals'. Ms Naulunimagiti also found that the acceptance she felt during the award positively impacted her morale and what could be achieved for the trans community in Fiji.

For me personally, it really did build a lot of self-empowerment. And I see how the trans communities, LGBTQIA+ community, are organising back in Australia, and the solidarity within the community is so - it lifted my morale up.

Mr Hughes stated that these outcomes in changed mindsets were an intended outcome of the fellowship to foster a group that would work together to achieve change. In getting participants from government and civil society to come together, Mr Hughes explained:

Just that, in itself, is an achievement, to get them sitting at the same table for two weeks and working together on a plan. And you could see that barriers were broken down across two weeks in terms of perceptions around sexuality, or perceptions around gender, or perceptions around what a young woman can actually contribute to a discussion. Because the people from the community groups were quite - they weren't meek and mild, they were definitely there to say their piece. And perhaps when they're in Australia, they have a lot more comfortability to do that because they're out of their context.

In developing sporting codes in Fiji to expand grassroots uptake and participation, Ms Lagilagi reflected that her award hosted by Volleyball Australia taught her the importance of training in supporting culture change around gender equality and inclusion within sporting organisations:

You have to go in and change policies, but not only change policy; you have to do more, like doing awareness for governance. Making sure that not only changing governance, in terms of sports, but constitutions are also important, child protection, [with] continuous training, then you can just see the clubs changing.

In addition to the changing mindset in his personal growth, Mr Golea stated the **confidence** he gained from undertaking their Australia Awards fellowship encouraged him to be proactive in building his networks in rugby:

From what I've learnt from [Australia], it's opened a lot of doors and confidence [for] me to reach out to these big people in the clubs to connect me with the same program.

5.1.5 Participants used social media and technology to remain connected

The role of social media appears to influence fellowship participants' sense of connection. Hosts and alumni described ongoing, though passive, connections through following each other's social media accounts. Although links have waned, as expected in the Australia Awards Global Monitoring and Evaluation Framework, they have not ceased as they have for less recent alumni, where changing postal and email addresses and phone numbers meant that when a contact faded, it was more difficult to reconnect. The benefit of prevalent social media and technology is the ongoing sense of connection which could more easily reignite.

5.2 Challenging factors

Table 8 also summarises the factors which have challenged the extent to which alumni are able to use their fellowship experience to contribute to sustainable development and cooperation between Australia and Fiji.

Table 8: Factors challenging attainment of the Australia Awards long-term outcomes – contribution to development and cooperation.

Factors challenging long-term outcomes	Involving which Australia Awards fellowship?	Outcome 1: Alumni use their skills, knowledge, and networks to contribute to sustainable development	Outcome 2: Alumni contribute to cooperation between Australia and partner countries
Host's discontinued engagement or no presence in Fiji	Burnet Institute Volleyball Australia	Challenged	Challenged
Alumni mobility and changing jobs	NRL Volleyball Australia	Challenged	Challenged

5.2.1 Host's discontinued engagement or no presence in Fiji

A significant factor influencing the development and cooperation outcomes of two of the three Australia Awards fellowships in this case study was the ongoing role of the Australian host organisations in Fiji.

For example, the Volleyball Australia partnership with the Fiji Volleyball Federation (FVF) was described by the fellowship host manager, Mr Batts, as 'quite strong' at the time. However, Mr Batts reflected a need for 'intentional' network building for the longer term, which goes beyond the fellowship project lifecycle. In the case of the partnership between Volleyball Australia and FVF, the partnership ended with Volleyball Australia moving in a different direction with their strategic priorities, and FVF undergoing a period of change management with a new incoming board. The opportunities to continue building on the networks and engagement following the fellowship to grow volleyball to improve public health outcomes appear to have faded with the ending of the organisational-level partnership.

Of the Burnet Institute fellowship, approaches to minimise the challenges of not having a presence in Fiji were undertaken, which included designing the course in consultation with the participants and ensuring the participant composition will enable useful networking. However, Mr Hughes, fellowship program manager, stated that 'it works a lot better' if the host organisation has a presence in the country and an ongoing program as they do in other countries where they have a country office, such as Papua New Guinea and Myanmar and hosted successful fellowship programs:

In reflection with some ALA programs [run by the Burnet Institute] - other ones it works really well, particularly if you have a presence, and this is probably a reflection for your report if you have a presence in that country and you're there with an office, and you've got national staff, and, or, you've got people who are back and forth there, it works a lot better.

The Burnet Institute's lack of presence in Fiji particularly affected maintaining their engagement with alumni, an aspect noted by hosts and alumni. Fellowship alum, Mr Lutukivuya, stated that relationships could have been 'solidified' if there was Australian contact with whom they could have continued to communicate. Mr Hughes similarly said they were limited to emailing 'every now and then' which 'dropped off in a natural sort of way that it does' after two years. Without in-country staff to follow up with alumni face-to-face, the remaining networks are between the alumni themselves and miss the organisational-level partnership development advantage that the fellowship program offers. While fellowships are short, factors identified in this case study can support cooperation outcomes to be evident for a significant amount of time and maximises the investment in the initial exchange. The Burnet Institute fellowship here indicates the factors for success – participant composition, collaborative partnerships, and relevant course content – but also highlights the significance of ongoing presence in the partner country.

In contrast, the NRL, which has many contributing factors to the growth of its presence and relationship with rugby league in Fiji, is an example of the contribution in-country presence has in developing ongoing cooperation and development. Although both NRL-hosted fellowship alumni in this case study have since moved to Australia, Mr Wilson referred to the fellowships' contribution in demonstrating how the NRL intended to engage collaboratively with stakeholders in Fiji. And amongst other partnership opportunities, the NRL, with staff in Fiji, has developed an ongoing partnership with FNRL.

5.2.2 Alumni mobility and changing work

An acknowledged challenge of the fellowships in the *Australia Awards Monitoring and Evaluation Framework* (DFAT, 2022) is that short durations in Australia will not likely contribute to long-term networks, with an expected peak to be observable one-year post award. The alumni in this case study demonstrate that their experience has led to ongoing networks and contributions to sustainable development. However, for the alumni who have since moved to Australia or changed organisations to a different sports discipline, their networks have faded.

Mr Wilson reflecting on their choices for selecting participants for their NRL-hosted fellowship, stated that the alumni at the time were the right choices for the emerging programs they were implementing in Fiji. Although people's lives are variable to change, and two of the alumni have since moved to Australia, Mr Wilson reflected that with their experience now, compared to when they first applied to the fellowship in 2015, 'we'd be a lot more strategic with people that we choose because we know them, and I've got people on the ground choosing them and referencing for them.' Mr Wilson stated that this experience resulted from the 'maturity' of the NRL's engagement in Fiji.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

The insights generated in this case study demonstrate the effectiveness of short-term training modalities in supporting development and public diplomacy objectives. Overall, alumni across the three Australia Awards fellowships examined in this study are using their skills, knowledge, and networks gained from their award in 2015 to contribute to programs improving public health, gender equality, and social inclusion in Fiji. The fellowships have connected individuals and organisations working to these shared objectives and have contributed to collegiality in the sports for development sector in the Pacific region.

The strength of examples by the alumni of ongoing contributions to development and cooperation is moderate but significant considering the impact of a two-to-four-week fellowship program undertaken seven years prior, in 2015. Two key challenges influenced the long-term sustainability of these fellowship outcomes - the extent of the Australian host organisation's engagement in Fiji, and alumni mobility, including changing jobs. The factors influencing long-term outcomes identified in this case study inform the recommendations in Table 9, and focuses on approaches which can help limit the challenge of changing organisational priorities and alumni mobility.

6.1 Recommendations for Australia Awards fellowship programming

Table 9: Case study recommendations for future Australia Awards fellowships

Recommendation	Rationale	Who can influence
1. Fellowship participants should comprise a mix of individuals from different organisations to facilitate a coalition for change (e.g., made up of cross-sectoral representation from government, civil society)	<p>Where Australian host organisations are engaging with more than one partner organisation for a fellowship, cohorts should ideally include a mix of individuals from more than one sector to develop cross-sectoral networks that can work collaboratively post award to enact change.</p> <p>These networks extend the Australia Awards from a developmental leadership program enhancing individual capacity to one that builds collective leadership and effectively breaks down social barriers to addressing equality and inclusion.</p> <p>In addition, collective leadership amongst alumni can support longer-term fellowship outcomes where Australian host organisations' presence in-country is limited.</p>	DFAT – Fellowship selection policy
2. Australian host organisations develop fellowships in collaboration with participants/partner organisations	<p>Fellowship course content should be conducted in collaboration or consultation with intended participants and partner organisations to ensure relevancy to partnership goals and training needs.</p> <p>Demonstrating this activity may help indicate the intentions of the organisational partnership objectives and embed collaborative partnering practices that will support sustaining the long-term outcomes of the fellowships.</p>	DFAT – Fellowship selection policy

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8. Acronyms and Abbreviations

AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development (now DFAT)
ACER	Australian Council for Educational Research
ASC	Australian Sports Commission
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (Australia)
FNRL	Fiji National Rugby League
FNSC	Fiji National Sports Commission
FWCC	Fiji Women's Crisis Centre
FVF	Fiji Volleyball Federation
GEDSI	Gender equality, disability, and social inclusion
GTF	Australia Awards Global Tracer Facility
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
LFL	League for Life
LGBTQIA+	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer/questioning, asexual, plus – including all diverse gender and sexual identities
NCDs	Non-communicable diseases
NGO	Non-Government Organisations
NRL	National Rugby League (Australia)
PICs	Pacific Island Countries
PNG	Papua New Guinea
PSP	Pacific Sports Partnerships
PSP 2	Pacific Sports Partnerships Phase Two (2013–17)
PVP	Pacific Volleyball Partnership
SVA	Suva Volleyball Association

Annex 1: Interview Participants

Fiji Case Study alumni participants

Name	Fellowship Name	Year	Host Institution	Current employment and at time of fellowship
Ms Semaima Lagilagi	Increasing physical activity levels of women aged 13–40 (Vanuatu & Fiji – Pacific)	2015	Volleyball Australia	Independent Consultant & Gender Advocacy Advisor. Vice President-Competition and High-Performance for the Suva Volleyball Association Former Program Manager–Fiji Volleyball Partnership.
Mr Lagilagi Golea	Expanding League for Life in PNG and Fiji	2015	National Rugby League Limited	Cementation Operator, Tritton Copper Mine, Nyngan, New South Wales. Coach of the Nyngan Tigers under 12s and runner for the Nyngan Tigers Reserves. Former Development Officer – West, Fiji National Rugby League (2010–2019).
Mr Suliasi Cakautabu	Expanding League for Life in PNG and Fiji	2015	National Rugby League Limited	Farm Employee, Queensland. Team Pastor, Kaiviti Silktails and coach of the Burdekin Roosters (Townsville). Former Development Officer, Fiji National Rugby League.
Mr Benjamin Christopher Lutukivuya	Promoting inclusivity, equality and diversity through sport in the Pacific	2015	Burnet Institute	Support person – Rainbow Pride Foundation. Former Chair, Fiji Network Plus.
Mr Josaia Tuinamata	Promoting inclusivity, equality and diversity through sport in the Pacific	2015	Burnet Institute	Sports Development Officer – West, Fiji National Sport Commission.
Ms Rochelle Naulunimagiti	Promoting inclusivity, equality and diversity through sport in the Pacific	2015	Burnet Institute	Board Member – Daulomani Safe Home. Former Company Director, Rainbow Pride Foundation.

Stakeholder interviews and consultations

Name	Link to the Australia Awards fellowships	Stakeholder	Interview / Consultation	Position
Mr Ratu Epeli Ralomaola Tagivetaua	Expanding League for Life in PNG and Fiji – 2015	Employer / Colleague	Interview	Chief of Operations, Fiji National Rugby League
Rev Dr Immanuel Reuben	Expanding League for Life in PNG and Fiji – 2015	Employer / Colleague (former)	Interview	Former Chairman, Fiji National Rugby League
Mr Kemueli Naiqama	Increasing physical activity levels of women aged 13–40 (Vanuatu & Fiji – Pacific)	Employer / Colleague	Interview	President, Fiji Volleyball Federation
Mr Peter Mazey	Promoting inclusivity, equality and diversity through sport in the Pacific – 2015	Employer/ Colleague	Interview	Executive Chairman, Fiji National Sport Commission (FNCS)
Ms Edwina Biyau	Promoting inclusivity, equality and diversity through sport in the Pacific – 2015	Employer / Colleague	Interview	Founder and Director, Daulomani Safe Home, Lautoka City
Mr John Wilson	Expanding League for Life in PNG and Fiji – 2015	Host Organisation	Interview	General Manager, Participation and Programs, National Rugby League (NRL) (Australia) Former Pacific Program Manager, NRL (Australia)
Mr Finlay Batts	Increasing physical activity levels of women aged 13–40 (Vanuatu & Fiji - Pacific)	Host Organisation	Interview	Former Community Development Manager – Pacific Region, Volleyball Australia
Mr Chad Hughes	Promoting inclusivity, equality and diversity through sport in the Pacific – 2015	Host Organisation	Interview	Head of International Development Discipline, Regional Director – Mekong. Principal Fellow, Burnet Institute (Former Program Leader & Course Designer)
Ms Sangeeta Asre	Overview of Australia Awards in Fiji	Australia Awards, Fiji & Tuvalu	Consultation	Awards & Alumni Coordinator, Australia Awards Fiji & Tuvalu
Ms Nicole Watson	Overview of Australia Awards in Fiji	Australia Awards, Fiji & Tuvalu	Consultation	Team Leader (Outgoing), Australia Awards Fiji & Tuvalu
Mr Aaron Ballekom	Background on sport for development programs in Fiji	Team Up, Fiji	Consultation	Communications Specialist, Team Up, Fiji
Mr Ben Howard	Background on sport for development programs in Fiji	Team Up	Consultation	Program Manager, Team Up

Annex 2: Interview Guides

Alumni (fellowships)

Intro: *We are interested in learning how Australia Awards fellowships were used to improve health outcomes and social inclusion as part of the Australia Government's Development through Sport Strategy (2014 to 2017).*

1. Could you tell us a little about yourself – name, what do you currently do? (Job and organisation).
2. Who were you working for when you went to Australia? What was your job?
3. Can you tell us about your time in Australia?
 - a How did you get the opportunity to go to Australia?
 - b Where did you visit?
 - c Who did you meet?
4. Are you still in contact with anyone you met in Australia?
5. What did you learn in Australia that you took back and used in your work in Fiji?
6. Have you been able to share what you learned in Australia with people at your work or in your community? (Examples)
7. What effect did the fellowship have on you personally?
8. Could you tell us of an achievement that you are most proud of since completing the fellowship?
9. That covers our questions today, is there anything you would like to add?

Australian Host Organisation

1. Could you please confirm your name, your current position and organisation for the purpose of our recording?
2. How did your organisation become involved in the fellowship?
 - a Was there already an existing partnership with the organisation or organisations involved in the fellowships? If so, could you please tell us a little bit about the relationship/s?
3. Was the fellowship program designed in collaboration with a particular organisation/s or government ministry (ies)?
4. Could you please tell us about the fellowship program?
 - a What were the key objectives or aims of the program?
 - b Where was it hosted and what types of activities were included in the program? (Workshops, site visits, mentoring/ shadowing or work integrated learning)
 - c Who were the main participants and how were they chosen and why?
5. Were you able to facilitate networking opportunities for fellows with Australian organisations while on award?
 - a If yes, can you provide an example?
6. Did the fellowship program assist your organisation to build relationships with the participating fellows, their organisations or sporting bodies?
 - a If so, can you provide an example? And is this an ongoing relationship?
 - b If not, what are the reasons for this (if known)?
7. Do you think this fellowship achieved its aims?
 - a What do you think was its most useful achievement or outcome of the program?
 - b Were there any unexpected outcomes?
 - c Were there any challenges experienced?
8. Looking back, was there anything your organisation would do differently and why? (What could have been improved to make it a more effective program?)
9. Do you have anything you would like to add?

Fijian Partner Organisations

1. Could you please tell us your name and role in the organisation?
2. How did your organisation become involved in the 2015 fellowship program?
3. Did you work together with the Australian host organisation to design the program?
4. What were the key goals?
5. Did the fellowship help build relationships between your organisation, the participants, and the Australian host organisation? Are you still in touch? If not, why?
6. Do you think this fellowship achieved its goals?
7. What do you think was the most useful achievement or outcome of the program?
8. Were there any unexpected outcomes or challenges?
9. Looking back, was there anything your organisation would do differently and why? (What could have been improved to make it a more effective program?)