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Pacific Leadership Program

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INDEPENDENT PROGRESS REPORT

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Aid Activity Summary

Aid Activity Name			
AidWorks initiative number	INH 528		
Commencement date	In country commencement May 2008	Completion date	June 2013
Total Australian \$	36.3 million		
Delivery organisation(s)	Cardno Emerging Markets Pty Ltd		
Implementing Partner(s)	Various regional organisations, and national leadership and peak bodies		
Country/Region	Pacific Regional, with country programming in Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu		
Primary Sector	Governance		

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Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	1
1. INTRODUCTION.....	2
2. EVALUATION FINDINGS.....	6
3. EVALUATION CRITERIA RATINGS.....	28
4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	29
APPENDIX 1: LIST OF PERSONS CONSULTED.....	33
APPENDIX 2: SUMMARY OF ORGANISATIONS SUPPORTED BY THE PROGRAM	36
APPENDIX 3: TERMS OF REFERENCE	37

Executive Summary

1. The Pacific Leadership Program (PLP) is a five-year program to support established and emerging leaders and leadership practice across a range of stakeholders in Pacific Island countries. It was conceived as a major regional initiative arising from the 2005 White Paper on the Australian aid program to strengthen political governance in the Pacific. Two main objectives have been consistent through its implementation to date:

- Helping to build the capacity of individuals, organisations and coalitions to exercise leadership for developmental change in the Pacific;
- Promoting learning on leadership and governance in the Pacific to influence practice in the broader Australian aid program and international community.

2. The Program began in 2008 and the current phase is scheduled to end in June 2013. It works both at a regional level and in four target countries: Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu. Estimated Program expenditure up to May 2012 is A\$25 million.

3. The Program is unusual in a number of respects: organisationally, it is delivered jointly by AusAID and Cardno staff through a co-located team in Suva and advised by a panel made up of eminent Pacific leaders; the funding modality used is a facility mechanism, which allows the Program significant flexibility to respond to requests and pursue opportunities. However, unlike other small grants programs, the Program has a high degree of engagement with key actors in the region and is involved in close partnerships with selected organisations.

4. The Program espouses a strong commitment to the concept of local ownership and partnership, based on the belief that Pacific leaders themselves need to design and implement solutions to their own problems, while the Program can only assist them in those efforts. This commitment underpins the Program's approach in very practical ways but does not imply a 'blank cheque' approach to the provision of support; the Program has generally aligned its support with demonstrable progress.

5. Since its inception, the Program has worked with nearly 40 different organisations and more than 450 individuals engaged in leadership roles at both a regional and national level. To date, the Program's support to the leadership of reform coalitions has contributed to notable success in three areas:

- strengthening credible representation of private sector influence in regional economic policy-making fora;
- securing the highest level of commitment regionally to addressing youth employment issues; and
- initiating and supporting an authentic dialogue within Tonga about the meaning of good leadership against the backdrop of the recent political reforms.

6. The Program also appears to have been instrumental in improving the capacity of its partner organisations. Of the eleven partners examined during the course of the evaluation, we found Program support had improved capacity in nine of them: with clear evidence of increased implementation capacity in seven and of enhanced leadership capabilities specifically in six.

7. These successes have been underpinned by an unusually effective approach to partnership and capacity building, based on mutual respect and local ownership of the changes being pursued. In assessing the Program's ways of working, partners were almost universally positive. While we acknowledge the risk of selection bias in this finding, the strength and consistency with which respondents expressed the view and drew contrasts with experiences on other donor-supported programs suggests the finding is both real and compelling. It goes without saying that a Program like PLP cannot 'create' successful leadership for development, but its ways of working do appear to increase significantly its ability to enable and augment existing potential.
8. While high quality partnerships have been the cornerstone of effectiveness to date, they are demanding and in turn pose capacity challenges for the Program as it seeks to explore new opportunities to extend its influence. With this in mind, the Program needs to develop its strategy for existing partnerships to create the necessary space – whether this be retain, exit or transition to arms length engagements in the case of more 'mature' relationships. Using existing partners to mentor others, as is now the case with some National Chambers of Commerce, could form part of this strategy.
9. Notwithstanding this broadly positive assessment, there are a number of areas where the Program should seek to strengthen its approach. In spite of genuine effort, the Program has not established adequate M&E systems. Consequently, the Program has not developed the formal mechanisms to monitor the strategic development of its portfolio, actively manage the risk (real or perceived) of elite capture and irrelevance to poverty reduction, track change consistently within partners to determine whether progress is in line with expectations or capture developmental outcomes, as they occur. To be sure, a necessarily flexible and opportunistic program directed at leadership strengthening poses difficulties for M&E but the Program is not unique in facing these challenges. We identify a number of ways in which the Program might strengthen its approach in explaining the rationale for selection of partners, tracking change over time and in communicating its strategy and achievements.
10. The Program's approach to gender equality, as opposed to Women's Leadership, requires further strengthening. The Program is starting to engage effectively on issues of women's leadership at a strategic level, after a slow start. However it has not yet effectively embedded gender equality into its core program or its M&E systems. As part of its approach to gender equality there is scope to build on recent discussions with other agencies to develop an appropriate niche on Women's Leadership in the Pacific, including the possibility of playing a coordinating or hub role.
11. Finally, the Program has been less successful in meeting the second of its main objectives – in particular in applying its experience to influence practice in the wider Australian aid program. A number of factors explain this. As a regional initiative, the Program is not unique in facing challenges achieving linkages and complementarities with bilateral programs. The Program has also struggled, as a result of M&E weaknesses, to assess and communicate the significance of improvements in leadership capacity, stronger networks and the like.
12. But we also found that the Program needs to give greater priority to this objective if it is to be realised. To date, the Program has distanced itself from the wider aid program – in part, to build the trust and credibility underpinning its partnerships and to manage the risk of any perception of 'pushing an AusAID agenda'. While these concerns are real, an important question remains: whether the experience and learning of the Program can indeed be adapted and applied to improve wider aid effectiveness. The Program should continue its 'action-research' focus but engage more consciously with the rest of the aid program to identify where its experience may have wider applicability. We also recognise that successfully influencing practice in a large Agency also requires the right organisational signals and incentives to be in place. So while the Program needs to elaborate its 'offer' more clearly to the Agency, leveraging the potential value of the Program will also require the interest and support of the wider Agency.

13. The experience of the Program to date emphasises the need for realistic expectations regarding the types of results achieved, at least early on. Leadership and the related concepts of agency, motivation and incentives are important foundational issues in international development, but strengthening leadership is no ‘silver bullet’. Capacity constraints, cultural norms, entrenched opposition, and so on, impose limits on the exercise of leadership to varying degrees in different contexts. The mixed success of the Program with different partners and on different issues is, therefore, no surprise.

14. It is also no surprise that attributable results to date relate more to improvements in process and ‘enabling’ factors than changes in social or economic welfare (or poverty impact). Furthermore, these gains are vulnerable to set-backs, and positive impacts on broader development outcomes are by no means an inevitable outcome. The Program is trying to enhance the potential of leaders and their networks and coalitions to promote and seize opportunities for developmental change, if and when they occur. While opportunities may arise to expedite progress, helping to develop the leadership of reform-minded coalitions to deliver lasting impact on poverty is likely to be an uncertain and potentially slow process.

15. Nevertheless, if one accepts that the institutional arrangements conditioning how development occurs are important – and certainly the aid effectiveness literature does – then one has to accept a degree of ‘messiness’ and uncertainty in the linkages between a leadership program and development impact.

Evaluation Criteria Ratings

Evaluation Criteria	Rating (1-6)	Explanation
Relevance	6	The Program’s approach appears highly relevant – at both an implementation level and a policy level (given the importance of leadership, governance and civil society in Australia’s new aid policy and the emphasis on ownership and partnership in Busan).
Effectiveness	4	In terms of the Program’s two main objectives, we would score the contribution to enhancing leadership capacity as 5, while the success of the Program in informing practice in the Australian aid program as 3.
Efficiency	(5)	We did not look specifically at efficiency issues during the evaluation. Instead, we took assurance from the latest QAI report (scored 5) and the Grey Advantage cost-effectiveness study (2011).
Sustainability	5	The approach is tailored to partners’ needs, fosters high levels of ownership, supports more systemic change and promotes a number of ‘low maintenance’ improvements. This rating relates to the benefits enabled by the Program, rather than the sustainability of particular Program partners, which concluded that although PLP is more expensive than a traditional grants-style program (by some 70%), the program ‘delivers benefits and services considered to be very important by partners and valued by AusAID and unlikely to be achievable under other delivery models’ (p.3). Furthermore the study found that the use of AusAID staff in a management capacity was ‘financially comparable to using contractors in these roles and brought additional benefits to AusAID’ (p.3).
Gender Equality	3	The program has sought to engage with women and male leaders as a core element. However the program does not seem to overtly address how men’s leadership contributes to gender inequality (apart from funding provided for GEPG gender sensitised training).
Monitoring & Evaluation	3	The Program’s monitoring has been adequate for assessing relationships and adjusting the program in Phase 1, but inadequate for establishing the processes to capture longer-term change and outcomes. This in turn makes the set up for evaluation largely inadequate.
Analysis & Learning	5	The Program has made great efforts to foster continual learning and reflection. On this basis, it is awarded a 5; however, our findings indicate the need to improve dissemination.

Rating scale: 6 = very high quality; 1 = very low quality. Below 4 is less than satisfactory.

1. Introduction

1.1 Activity Background

1.1.1 The Pacific Leadership Program (PLP) is a five-year program to strengthen established and emerging leaders and leadership practice across a range of stakeholders in Pacific Island countries. It was conceived as a major regional initiative arising from the 2005 White Paper on the Australian aid program to strengthen political governance in the Pacific.

1.1.2 Based in Suva, the Program was scheduled to begin operations in July 2007 but the December 2006 coup in Fiji delayed the setup of the office until April 2008, when the Regional Program Manager took up post in country. Support has been provided in two Phases. Phase 1 was a pilot to refine the Program design concept through implementation and develop the key partnerships on which a longer-term program of support could be based. Phase 2 began in July 2009 and is scheduled to run until June 2013.

			(A\$ million)
	<i>Budget</i>	<i>Revised</i>	<i>Expenditure</i>
Phase 1: Sep 2007 – Jun 2009	6.5	8.2 ¹	7.3
Phase 2: Jul 2009 – Jun 2013	12.0	29.0 ²	17.7 ³
Total		36.3	25.0 ³

Notes: 1 - Revised to reflect delayed start and additional funding for UN Women's Gender Equality for Political Governance Program (GEPG)

2 – Revised in Apr 2011 for expanded program during 2011-13

3 - Phase 2 and Total expenditure up to May 2012

Source: Pacific Leadership Program

1.1.3 The Program's core purpose is to support influential Pacific leaders to shape and lead developmental change. Its specific objectives have been revised at various time during the course of implementation but two consistent themes are evident:

- Helping to build the capacity of individuals, organisations and coalitions to exercise leadership for developmental change in the Pacific;
- Promoting learning on leadership and governance in the Pacific to influence practice in the broader Australian aid program and international community.

1.1.4 Organisationally, the Program is unusual: a co-located team, comprising staff from AusAID and Cardno Emerging Markets Australia, implements it jointly. The funding modality used is a facility mechanism, which allows the Program significant flexibility to respond to requests and pursue opportunities. However, the level of engagement with key actors in the region and involvement in partnerships with selected organisations distinguishes the Program from other small grants programs. The Program is advised by a panel of eminent Pacific leaders and also draws on (and contributes to) the Development Leadership Program, an international research and policy program predominantly funded by AusAID but also supported by German International Cooperation (GIZ), Transparency International, Asia Foundation, Oxfam Australia and Leadership PNG.

1.1.5 The Program espouses a strong commitment to the concept of local ownership, based on the belief that Pacific leaders themselves need to design and implement solutions to their own problems and the Program can only assist them in those efforts. However, this does not imply a 'blank cheque' approach to financial support. Program support is provided where a need: is expressed by a local leader or leadership organisation; addresses a

development challenge; is supported by a clear strategy (or commitment to develop one); and will generate learning opportunities for the Program and its network. Partner organisations have to commit time regularly to meet with Program staff to discuss progress with the agreed work-plan, achievements, failures and the Program's contribution. Partner organisations must also agree to a review of their financial management systems at the outset and to implement any remedial actions deemed necessary, to ensure that weaknesses in this regard do not undermine the rest of the relationship.

1.1.6 In addition to financial support, the Program offers partners technical advice (e.g. strategy development, program and project management), logistical and communications support and access to a network of leaders and leadership organisations in the region across a range of sectors. As well as formal partnerships, the Program provides grant support to organisations whose mission and objectives accord with those of the Program and can demonstrate an acceptable level of organisational effectiveness. The Program also funds a number of programs with a leadership dimension but which are not core to the Program's work (e.g. the Greg Urwin Awards and Emerging Pacific Leaders Dialogue) – which account for around a quarter of total expenditure.

1.1.7 The Program operates regionally and in four target countries: Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu.

Estimated activity spend by geographical area: Apr 08 – May 12 (A\$ million)					
Regional	Solomon Islands	Vanuatu	Tonga	Samoa	Total
14.3	2.0	0.5	1.3	0.7	18.8

Source: Pacific Leadership Program data

1.2 Evaluation Objectives and Questions

1.2.1 The Australian aid program's Performance Assessment and Evaluation Policy requires aid activities that have been running for four or more years to be independently evaluated during implementation. The purpose of these on-going evaluations is threefold:

- assess progress against objectives;
- improve implementation quality; and/or
- inform the design of any follow-on phases or new activities

1.2.2 The current phase of the Pacific Leadership Program is due to complete in June 2013. Initial work for the design of Phase 3 coincided with the evaluation exercise. This Independent Progress Report is expected to inform the next phase of Australia's support to leadership in the Pacific.

1.2.3 The terms of reference (see appendix 3) directed the evaluation team to focus on six main issues:

- i. the extent to which the Program has helped strengthen individual leaders' capacity;
- ii. the extent to which the Program has helped to strengthen leading organisations in target sectors;
- iii. the extent to which the Program has supported coalitions of leaders to exercise leadership and enable change;
- iv. the adequacy of the Program's monitoring and evaluation and learning processes;
- v. how well the Program has learned from evidence and experience to evolve to meet the leadership challenges facing the Pacific; and

- vi. how well the Program has communicated with and complemented AusAID bilateral, regional and international programs.

In addition, the terms of reference asked for a cursory assessment of the Program against the DAC criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability, and the AusAID criteria of monitoring and evaluation, gender equality and analysis and learning. Some of these criteria are implicitly or explicitly addressed by the main issues raised in the TOR, with perhaps the exception of gender equality, which we considered specifically.

1.3 Evaluation Scope and Methods

Scope

1.3.1 This evaluation covers the period from the Program's inception in 2008 to March 2012 (the start of the evaluation). As a progress evaluation, we have not attempted to assess Program impact formally; in considering Program effectiveness, however, we do provide insights on the effects of the Program, based on the use of informal techniques. Nor have we examined Program efficiency in any detail but instead have taken assurance from the latest QAI report and a review of Program cost-effectiveness conducted in 2011 by Grey Advantage. This decision reflects both the direction to the review provided by the TOR and the time available.

1.3.2 We have explicitly excluded a number of activities from the evaluation that the Program funds but which have not been core to its work. These include: the Greg Urwin Awards, Emerging Pacific Leaders Dialogue, Emerging Pacific Women's Leadership Program, support for the Centre for Democratic Institutions and the Gender Equality in Political Governance (GEPG) Program implemented by UN Women. The latter was subject to a separate evaluation at the time of our assessment. Collectively, these elements comprise around 23% of total Program expenditure to date.

1.3.3 We made field visits to Fiji (5 days) with regional partners and stakeholders and in two of the Program's four target countries: Vanuatu (3 days) and Tonga (5 days). The Program selected these countries, on the grounds that they provide good coverage of the range of activities and experiences of the Program to date.

1.3.4 Our only concern with this selection was the omission of Solomon Islands, which is the largest of the Program's target countries in expenditure terms. As a result, we supplemented the design with telephone interviews with the largest partners in Solomon Islands (by expenditure): the Solomon Islands Development Trust, the Solomon Islands Women in Business Association and YWCA.

Method

1.3.5 A relatively rapid evaluation of a program aimed at strengthening leadership for developmental change poses a number of methodological challenges. Historically, much evaluation has focused on finding better ways to measure the change caused by interventions, but has paid relatively little attention to understanding the agents of that change. No simple, widely-held definition of "leadership for developmental change" exists and the measures to assess improvement are not well established. And while most acknowledge the importance of leadership, the (multiple) causal channels through which 'better' leadership is developed, and how it results in positive development change are poorly understood.

1.3.6 As a first step, we developed an evaluation framework – a combination of process and outcome measures – to guide our approach to the questions in the terms of reference. In developing this, we drew on the analytical frameworks applied in recent research on leadership by a number of organisations: namely, the Development Leadership Program, the Africa Power and Politics Programme, the Global Leadership Initiative (World Bank Institute),

and work by Manchester Business School on the Public Leadership Challenge. Our framework distinguishes between three levels of Program effect: individual, organisational and network/coalition level. In addition, it considers how well the Program has adapted its approach on the basis of ongoing analysis and learning, and how effectively it has leveraged this experience through dissemination, and influencing AusAID and other actors.

1.3.7 Next, and in discussion with Program staff in Fiji, we selected the areas for focus in the evaluation and agreed any scope limitations. During this discussion, we clarified our understanding of the Program's theory of change.

1.3.8 The main methods of data collection during the evaluation were secondary documentation and data review and interviews with key respondents. Respondents were selected largely by the Program from the organisations and individuals who have participated in the Program. But as far as possible, we attempted to meet key informants who had not been involved in the Program, to test and validate the information provided by Program participants.

1.3.9 To guide the interviews, we developed a semi-structured questionnaire covering: respondents' definition of 'leadership for developmental change'; before and after comparison of any changes experienced at a personal, organisational and network/coalition level; respondents' explanation of the changes identified; and their views on the Program's contribution (to date and in the future).

1.3.10 To assist analysis we developed an 'evidence matrix' as a tool to help marshal the data collected during fieldwork against each of the respective questions posed in the terms of reference. The matrix distinguished between evidence of positive Program effects, areas of weakness and suggestions for improvement. In doing this, we weighed the relative strength of the different pieces of evidence we had obtained.

1.3.11 Finally, in order to test our preliminary conclusions, we held a feedback session with Program staff in Tonga at the end of fieldwork.

1.4 Evaluation Team

1.4.1 Simon Henderson, team leader, is a Director in IOD PARC, a UK-based consulting company specialising in evaluation and organisational development. From 2009-11, Simon was Head of Performance in the UK's National Audit Office and from 2006-09 Principal Adviser in AusAID's Office of Development Effectiveness

1.4.2 Chris Roche – is Director of Development Effectiveness at Oxfam Australia. He was a member of the independent evaluation team of AusAID's support to Health in the Pacific in 2008, and is author of Impact Assessment for Development Agencies: Learning to Value Change.

1.4.3 Allan Mua Illingworth is the Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist with the Pacific Leadership Program. He has been working with the Program since September 2008 managing regional and country programs. Previously he worked with the UNFPA Pacific office.

2. Evaluation Findings

2.1 How effectively has the Program helped to strengthen individual leaders' capacity?

2.1.1 The Program has formally engaged with more than 450 individual leaders in the region – both established and 'emerging' – through a variety of channels and events (Table 1). There are up- and down-side risks associated with working with either established or emerging leaders and this mixed approach seems sensible. However, while the Program undertakes risk assessment before engaging with particular individuals, it does not examine formally the overall balance between established or emerging leaders, or between high-level policy and grass-roots actors. While the Program can articulate the rationale for engaging particular leaders, the individual analyses are not reviewed as a whole, as part for example of an explicit portfolio strategy. To manage the risk of elite capture, this gap should be addressed as part of the Program's strategy development and improvements to monitoring and evaluation (see paragraphs 2.4.15-18).

Table 1: Summary of Program engagements/events¹

Channel/events	Numbers	Comments
Program Advisory Panel	8 currently	Made up of eminent Pacific Islanders, who meet annually to provide strategic oversight and advice on Program activities
Program partners (organisations)	266	Lead individuals (both established and emerging) who have engaged with the Program on leadership issues as part of Program support to organisational development.
Convention	2010 - 37 2010 - 42	Attendees selected from existing and potential Program (organisational) partners
Symposia	2012 - 39	High profile participants, more than half of which are not formal Program partners
Leadership facility (Mentoring)	Since 2011 - 15	Supporting 9 senior staff at the SPC ² and 6 executive staff at PIFS ² ; wider uptake limited to date to one Program partner
Greg Urwin Awards	2009 - 5 2010 - 5 2011 - 5 2012 - 6	Funded by AusAID and co-administered by the Program and the PIF Secretariat; enables individuals with high leadership potential to undertake a three to six month placement with a Pacific regional organisation in their field of expertise.
Emerging Pacific Women's Leadership Program (EPWLP)	2011 - 48	Training in proposal writing, budget and program management to 48 participants. Workshop managed as part of NZ Aid program contribution to the EPWLP.
Study Tours including Emerging Pacific Leaders Dialogue (EPLD) ³	PLP – 3 EPLD (2010) -120	Four-yearly event that brings together proven leaders or those with high potential for a series of leadership development activities. The Program funds EPLD on behalf of AusAID and has a seat on EPLD Board.

Notes: 1 - This table does not include finance and management personnel from partner organisations trained with Program support (60), or those who they themselves have since trained (over 150). Nor does it cover training provided across 15 Pacific Island countries by UN Women with Program support.

2 - Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC); Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS)

2.1.2 Program monitoring and review reports suggest high levels of satisfaction among individuals with the support and events sponsored by the Program (see Box 1). In addition, events organised by the Program have been well-attended by at times very eminent people from across the region. The fact that the Program has been able to secure this level of buy-in arguably indicates a high degree of credibility and relevance.

Box 1: Previous Program reviews

A cost-effectiveness study of the Program was conducted by Grey Advantage for AusAID in 2011. The study surveyed all 13 Program partners (22 responses – 65% response rate) and asked respondents to rate both satisfaction with and importance of different types of support provided by the Program. No element of Program support was rated lower than “important”, while across the board, respondents were on average (mode) “highly satisfied” with the Program.

External monitoring from 2009 until 2010 included regular assessment of feedback from regional and (latterly) national partners. Responses appear to have been consistently positive. Reporting feedback to the first Leadership Convention, the M&E adviser noted in June 2009 that the event “was clearly significant for many partners ...The challenges and focus [were] relevant to people... [and] the long term process of building trust and openness among partners provided the right basis for its relevance to participants”

2.1.3 Alongside these positive results, we note however the general lack of evaluative material relating to Program-sponsored activities, such as conventions or study tours. Baseline assessments have not been undertaken. The Program has at times used questionnaires and other tools to gauge satisfaction with the events themselves but has not systematically followed up attendees to assess the application of any learnings or the value derived from specific events. To date, the Program has relied more on informal feedback to identify particular impacts.

2.1.4 To test the information provided in monitoring reports we first examined the match between participants’ own definitions of ‘leadership for development change’ and the Program’s approach, on the assumption that a good fit is a necessary (though not sufficient) condition for the Program to have positive effects on leaders’ capacity.

2.1.5 We found that respondents consistently framed their definition of leadership in terms of specific challenges in their local context (Box 2). For example, ‘accountability’ as a key facet of leadership for developmental change was more frequently mentioned in Fiji; we speculate that this may reflect the lack of democratic space in that country. In Vanuatu, the importance of setting a vision to galvanise people and build consensus was more evident; perhaps reflecting the divisions typically viewed as significant in Melanesian society. In Tonga, the importance of leading by example and fulfilling responsibilities to others were key themes; again we speculate this may reflect the very hierarchical nature of Tongan society. Organisations also tended to define effective leadership in ways consistent with their values, norms or worldview. So, for example, a number of women’s organisations referred to the willingness of individuals and organisations to ‘stand up’ against discriminatory practices as key feature of leadership for development change.

2.1.6 The results suggest that the Program’s approach is generally well matched, at least for the leaders we interviewed. Although shaped by certain principles and beliefs, the Program does not impose any particular model of leadership; rather it encourages partners to reach their own locally appropriate understanding.

2.1.7 Responses from Vanuatu, however, suggested a possible area for further consideration by the Program as it continues to develop its activities there. Views expressed in Fiji and Tonga generally aligned well with current thinking – including the Program’s – on leadership for developmental change, with common references to more distributed, democratic forms of leadership, and a role for all. Respondents in Vanuatu, in contrast, were much more likely to talk about the attributes and traits of individual leaders. Whether this apparent difference is actually significant is difficult to say, though we note that the Program has made less progress to date in Vanuatu than in the other two countries.

Box 2: Selected quotes on the meaning of 'leadership for developmental change'

Fiji

"I've changed my views about leadership – before I thought of top people in large, well-resourced organisations, but [now] it's about how you build and run an organisation from scratch;...establishing credible governance that is transparent, accountable, with the right people in the right job is essential to maintain support."

"[It's]...about proper financial management...and about legitimacy – how leaders are selected is important."

Vanuatu

"People who can lead and direct others to sustainable development, who can attract people to different ways of development that hadn't thought of before. [People] who can empower people with a vision that makes them want to go with the leader."

"It's like the head of a body, orchestrating muscles to move in the same direction and helping the body adapt changes in the outside environment – leaders in an organisation need to make it work like that".

Tonga

"Somebody who is out there with the people, who has integrity, is honest, inclusive, transparent and can enable the communities they work with, empower them, so at the end they can say they did it themselves."

"Leadership is about how you influence people; it's fundamentally based on relationships, the fabric of what holds up together; it's about behaviours, a way of being, guided by values – connectedness, responsibility and respect are all important."

2.1.8 To test further the responses and try to understand better the mechanisms at work behind satisfaction, we asked all respondents to explain the value of Program support, to themselves as individuals. We found:

- the overwhelming majority of respondents, who had participated in one or more leadership 'event' supported by the Program, were positive about the quality and relevance of the engagement with the Program. They frequently referred to events as 'interesting' and 'challenging' in terms of their previously held beliefs about leadership and their own roles;
- a number of respondents who are also Program partners, (and therefore exposed to greater interaction with the Program), referred to the personal 'insight' and 'empowerment' they have gained; previously, they had not even considered themselves as leaders. Some of the effects on these individuals are reflected in the organisational changes that have also occurred (see section 2.2), though we acknowledge not all;
- more generally, the effectiveness of Program leadership events such as conventions, the symposium and study tours, as a means to promote behavioural change seems less clear. Only a few respondents were able to identify specific ways in which they had made direct use of the learning, for example in handling specific personal challenges differently or applying insights from practice elsewhere to inform their own approach;
- instead, many respondents described the value more as opportunities to make contacts and establish relationships with other leaders from around the region – expanding the network of resources that they can draw on now, or in the future. So, for example, the head of the Tongan National Youth Congress has built links with the Pacific Islands Private Sector Organisation (PIPSO) after one such event, securing assistance for a range of youth and women business initiatives. In the margins of another such event, representatives from national Chambers of Commerce set up their own regional mentoring program to support less advanced Chambers.

2.1.9 The importance of connecting leaders was in some cases framed in terms of the loneliness and isolation that leaders can experience. The Program has recently started offering its own mentoring support. This is a key feature of the support to secondary school principals in Tonga but elsewhere it is still at a relatively small scale. However, the extent of the Program's ambitions regarding mentoring is not yet clear. It is also not yet clear whether

a shortfall in demand or supply (of mentors) may yet limit planned scope, though the latter constraint is already being felt in the Tongan Secondary School Leadership Program.

2.1.10 Program-sponsored events on leadership have also been valuable in enabling the Program to establish important connections of its own. The Program has used these to build its credibility in the region, to the point where many view it as a 'leader' in regional and national debates on leadership, with convening power to bring together influential stakeholders. The Program's relationships with individual leaders have also been instrumental in achieving results: the ability to draw on its own network of influential contacts appears to have been an important factor in successfully securing commitment to the issue of youth employment at the 2011 Forum Leaders Meeting.

2.1.11 Forming a view on the sustainability of benefits to individual leaders is somewhat speculative, given benefits are largely intangible and in many ways more akin to option values in social cost-benefit analysis. But our impression is that for those experiencing personal changes, the effects are lasting, while for those valuing the 'network' effects, the benefit stream is relatively low maintenance and not dependent on Program inputs.

2.1.12 We identified two areas where the Program could strengthen its approach to engaging with individual leaders (outside of Program partnering arrangements).

- we were not aware of an explicit strategy guiding the Program's approach in this area.¹ This is not a critical failing, *per se*, but in our view it limits the scope for more systematic learning. Being clear about expectations – for example, “to create new linkages between leaders that help advance existing reform initiatives” – would direct subsequent enquiry and testing to see if, in reality, the expectation held or if the Program's 'theory' needs refining;
- the Program should consider initiating regular get-togethers among partners in target countries. The Program has supported such events at the regional level, and given the value placed by respondents on interacting with and building their network of leaders, there seems merit to us in replicating this process in target countries.

2.2 How effectively has the Program worked with leading organisations in target sectors?

2.2.1 The Program has supported nearly 40 organisations and programs (see appendix 2). Building the capacity of organisations to exercise leadership has been a key element of the Program's strategy. This approach was prompted less by theory, and more by the constraints imposed on leadership by organisational weaknesses. That said, it is in line with thinking on leadership, which acknowledges that organisations matter – as means of mobilising resources in support of objectives – and that the nature of organisations matters – with culture, structures and processes shaping the opportunities and constraints on the exercise of leadership².

2.2.2 In addressing this question, we examined four related aspects:

- selection of target sectors and partner organisations;
- the Program's approach;
- effectiveness of the Program in enhancing leadership capacity among partner organisations; and
- sustainability of the gains achieved.

¹ For example, the thinking behind switching from an annual convention for partner organisations to an annual symposium comprising a majority of non-partners has not been clearly set out.

² As most business schools are fond of pointing out: “culture eats strategy for breakfast”.

Selection of target sectors and partner organisations

2.2.3 The Program has focused its effort to date in the youth, church, civil society and private sectors – all important actors in promoting pro-poor developmental change. These are therefore important sectors in their own right, though the choice initially also reflected the desire to avoid working in areas where AusAID's bilateral program was already heavily involved. More recently, the Program has engaged in other sectors (education in Tonga) and in cross-sectoral work (national leadership fora). In addition, in the countries that we visited, we found evidence of improving co-operation with the bilateral programs in both Vanuatu and Tonga (albeit in different ways).

2.2.4 It is worth noting at this point the omission of Papua New Guinea from the Program's target countries. While the original Program Design Document anticipated its inclusion, the Program arrived at the view fairly early on that it did not have the resources to be effective there, given issues of scale and the complexity of conditions. This seems a reasonable position to take, especially given the somewhat experimental nature of the Program. Nevertheless, with the design process for Phase 3 underway, it is pertinent to consider if and how the Program could apply its experience and knowledge on a larger scale. We return to this question in sections 2.6 and 4.

2.2.5 Within target sectors, we found that regionally the Program has worked with leading organisations, though we note that the Program does not employ any formal selection criteria or appraisal process to guide choice of partners. Nor are the mechanisms through which the organisations may impact positively on poverty elaborated explicitly. A notable partnership where progress has been more limited is with the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat. This was identified in the original Program Design Document as an important and strategic engagement. More recently, the launch of a mentoring program for nine senior staff from the Forum Secretariat and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community is a positive development in this regard.

2.2.6 Choice of sectors and regional partners have to a large extent conditioned the choice of national partners in target countries; for example, the national member bodies of the Pacific Youth Council, the Pacific Islands Private Sector Organisation and the Pacific NGO Community (PIANGO) provided the main entry points for the Program in Tonga and Vanuatu. Overall, this approach appears to have worked well; it has enabled the Program to utilise relationships established at a regional level and provided a line of sight from national to regional levels on important issues. But it has not prevented the Program from pursuing opportunities outside of regional relationships, e.g. leadership development in Tonga's secondary education sector.

2.2.7 In addition, the Program has supported a number of regional organisations and programs through more arms-length, grant relationships – notably an initiative to strengthen local government run by the Commonwealth Local Government Fund³, UN Women's Gender Equality in Political Governance (GEGP), the Pacific Regional Rights Resource Team (RRRT), and the Emerging Pacific Women's Leadership Program (EPWLP). The relevance of these engagements is more mixed. In some cases, such as RRRT, they are established entities and there is a high degree of goal congruence with the Program and an arms-length funding arrangement appears appropriate. In other cases, the role of the Program is much less clear; certainly the activities have had limited substantive relevance for the Program's work to date.

2.2.8 More generally, in supporting a large and diverse range of organisations the Program can appear, from outside at least, rather ad hoc. A number of respondents posed the question "what doesn't PLP do?" and saw risks in it being perceived as 'all things'. For AusAID regional and bilateral, the Program's flexibility is recognised and largely appreciated

³ This relationship has continued to evolve – more recently to include support for the issue of local economic development but the initiative is still relatively new.

but it appears to lack coherence, given the range of its engagements and its opportunistic approach to exploiting new openings.

2.2.9 To a large extent, this reflects the nature of the Program – outcomes are unpredictable and engagements are therefore spread to exploit a range of potential opportunities. But the views expressed suggest that the Program could do more to articulate its rationale, and relate this to relevant regional and bilateral development priorities. To be clear, we do not think that selection of Program partners should be simply driven by the regional and/or bilateral programs; such an approach would almost certainly reduce the impact of the Program. But the value to the Program in more explicit ‘cross-referencing’ to broader development priorities would be three-fold: more explicit consideration and dialogue would increase opportunities for synergy with other parts of the aid program; having a clearer rationale for different partnerships and their potential impact on poverty could help in developing a strategic perspective of the Program’s overall portfolio; all of which has value for external communication and accountability purposes. We do not advocate a cosmetic ‘mapping’ exercise. Development of a clearer rationale is not a simple exercise, given the lack of tried and tested theories in this arena, but we would argue one worth pursuing.

Program approach

2.2.10 Support to partners has varied according to circumstances and need but in general has involved:

- Coaching for Boards, Senior Executives and/or Management Teams;
- Technical assistance and advice in areas such as strategy development and strategic planning, governance and financial management;
- Advice and training on financial management and systems tailored to the Pacific context;
- Funding for staff positions (primarily finance officer positions);
- Core funding to support implementation of an agreed strategic plan.

2.2.11 The Program has also provided responsive, short-term assistance for partners facing specific leadership challenges. For example, advisory support was provided to the Pacific Youth Council to help develop its advocacy strategy for the 2011 Forum Leaders Meeting. Arbitration-type support was provided to the Pacific Council of Churches during a critical rift between the then General Secretary and Board. The Program appears to have been instrumental in helping the Council both navigate the crisis and start to address the inherent weaknesses in management and governance that contributed to it. Program support has also been key in assisting a few partners to re-establish themselves regionally and nationally after periods of inactivity (Pacific Youth Council and Tonga National Youth Council).

2.2.12 The Program’s approach to partnership development appears highly relevant and has been a notable success. Program partners were almost universally positive and highly consistent in their views (box 3). In virtually every case, partners identified the high degree of ownership fostered and high levels of trust and mutual respect underpinning the relationship. The positive experience with the Program was consistently contrasted with the more contractual relationships and lower organisational impact of other donor programs. Even where other donors had provided core funding, respondents highlighted time-consuming and bespoke reporting

Box 3: View on the Program’s approach to partnership working

“It is very different to other donor programs. How they approach funding is not to tell them what to do, but to ask them what they are capable of doing. It is a relationship & partnership approach. Not just about getting a report. The way they work is motivating. The continuous monitoring motivates people to do their work. It really suits Pacific people, they give time and are flexible about timeframes. They understand the challenges and take this into account.”

Key informant, Solomon Islands.

and accounting requirements, which did little to leave the organisation stronger.⁴

2.2.13 The quality of Program relationships has enabled quite challenging conversations to be held which have not, however, led to disengagement or withdrawal by partners. The Program's experience in this regard is relevant to the Australian aid program more generally, though to date it appears the potential value is not being fully realised. We return to this issue in section 2.6 and in our conclusions.

Leadership capacity development

2.2.14 In assessing the effectiveness of the Program in building the leadership capabilities of partners, we faced two main challenges: identifying the changes in partner organisations that can reasonably be attributed to the Program and developing a practical definition of 'leadership capability'.

2.2.15 We asked respondents to describe the changes that have occurred in their organisation over the last 3 - 4 years, and to provide their views on the role of the Program in that process. We compared responses with the detail of Program support to test for consistency and validated responses with third parties where possible. To determine the 'leadership' significance of changes, we analysed responses and distinguished between changes affecting 'implementation capacity' i.e. the ability of the organisation to do more of what it already does, and those affecting 'leadership capabilities'. In defining the latter, we drew on the analytical framework used by Andrews et al (2010) in World Bank study for the Global Leadership Initiative.⁵ Based on this, we looked for evidence of substantive development in one or more of the following three capabilities in each organisation:

- Building Acceptance: clarifying the nature of the challenges to be tackled and securing buy-in and commitment across the organisation for implementation of agreed actions;
- Distributing Authority: empowering staff to work together to solve problems, across silos, delegating responsibilities and accountabilities and creating learning organisations; and
- Enhancing Ability: accessing new resources (human, financial, informational) and building new productive relationships with other partners.

2.2.16 Our assessment is based on eleven organisations reviewed during the course of fieldwork. The results (summarised in Figure 1 overleaf) suggest that in all but two of the organisations the Program has helped build capacity. In six of the eleven organisations reviewed, we found evidence to suggest that the Program has contributed to enhanced leadership capability: for both PIPSO and the Pacific Youth Council, the effects were most significant, with substantive improvements evident in all three leadership capabilities.

2.2.17 For both the Tongan National Youth Congress (TNYC) and the Civil Society Forum of Tonga (CSFT), Program support has enhanced implementation capacity but the evidence also suggests a partial strengthening of leadership capabilities. Core funding by the Program has enabled TNYC to expand a number of its existing activities, including employment creation and skills development training for young people. But it has also helped TNYC enhance its 'ability' through strengthening its network of youth organisations nationally, raising and maintaining the profile of youth issues in the media and forging stronger links with the private and education sectors. For CSFT, there is evidence of the early stages of stronger capability in 'building acceptance' – among its members, as CSFT tries to move to a more

⁴ Respondents were not, however, averse to the notion of accountability in general. Indeed a number expressed the view that they would like the Program's assistance in conducting their own impact assessments.

⁵ Andrews M, J McConnell, A Wescott, 2010, Development as Leadership-led Change, A report for the Global Leadership Initiative, World Bank, Washington D.C.

strategic role in the sector; and with government, as CSFT tries to promote better understanding and acknowledgement of the role of civil society, (as distinct from 'NGOs').

2.2.18 In the Pacific Council of Churches (PCC) and the Free Wesleyan Church (FWC) of Tonga, Program support appears to have contributed to enhancing the 'authority' capability, with more distributed models of leadership evident in both these organisations. Program support for improved financial management has contributed to a significant, albeit initial, shift in thinking within the FWC, empowering lay staff and challenging conventional notions of impunity among traditional church leaders. Within PCC, we found compelling evidence that the Program's support has enabled the leadership to introduce a flatter, more integrated management structure and break down work silos, but the findings suggest more work is needed to build support for these changes at senior levels within the church hierarchy ('acceptance') and strengthen PCC's leadership role across the church network ('ability'). In both FWC and PCC, however, improvements in implementation capacity arising from Program support have been relatively limited to date, notwithstanding the strengthening of leadership capabilities evident.

2.2.19 In Youth Challenge Vanuatu (YCV), the Tongan Chamber of Commerce and the Vanuatu Bible Society, we found substantive improvements in implementation capacity but no clear evidence of the Program's influence on leadership capabilities. In the case of YCV, this may reflect the relatively early stage of the partnership. For both, we found Program support was extending the operations of these organisations but discussions did not suggest the engagement to date has affected leadership capabilities.

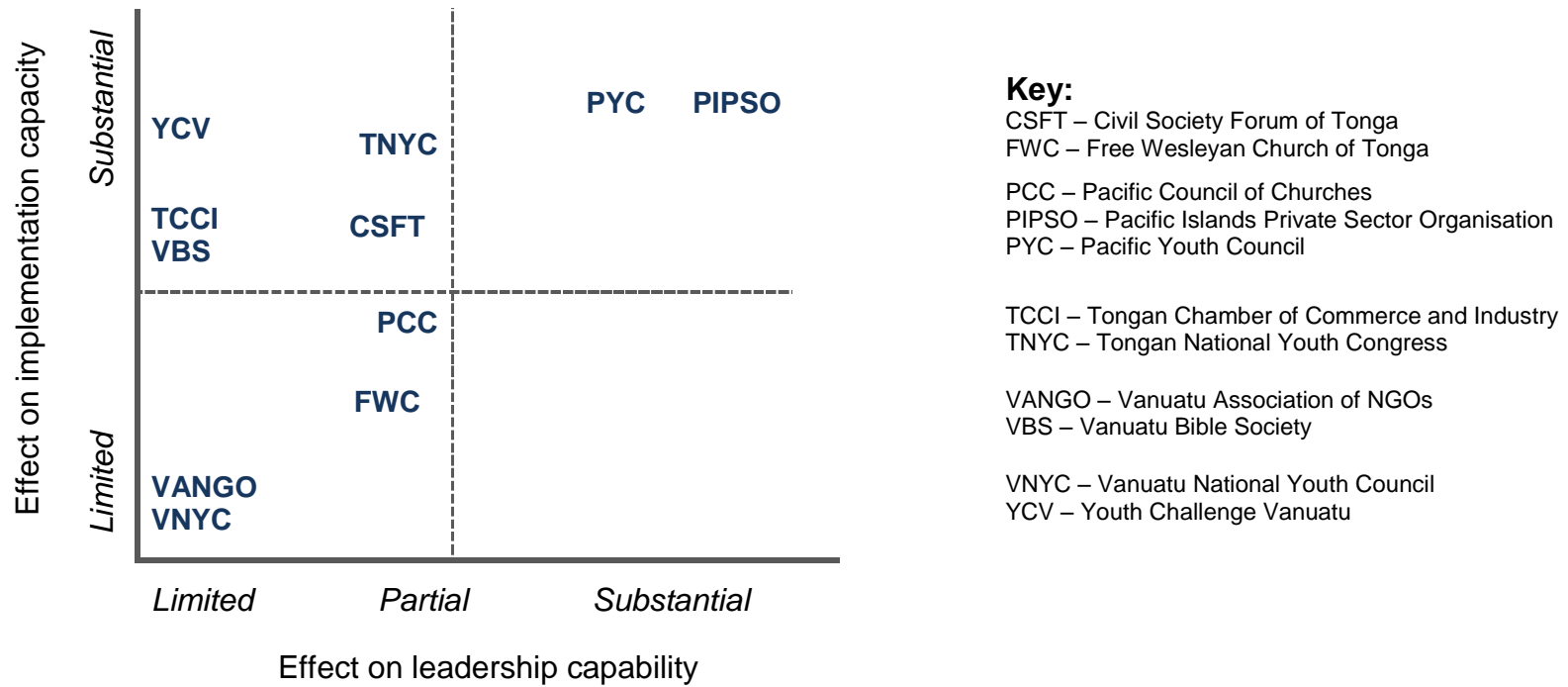
2.2.20 Finally, we found limited evidence of enhanced capability in both the Vanuatu National Youth Council (VYNC) and the Vanuatu Association of NGOs (VANGO). The Program was instrumental in reviving VNYC but both organisations appear constrained by the lack of coordination in their respective sectors and expectations of their established partners. More generally, the Program appears to have made less progress in Vanuatu, compared with Tonga and regionally. Contextual factors are likely to be significant in explaining this, though it was beyond our scope to examine these factors in detail. Certainly, similarly high levels of satisfaction with the Program's approach were expressed by partners in Vanuatu, suggesting that experiences there are not simply the result of implementation failure by the Program

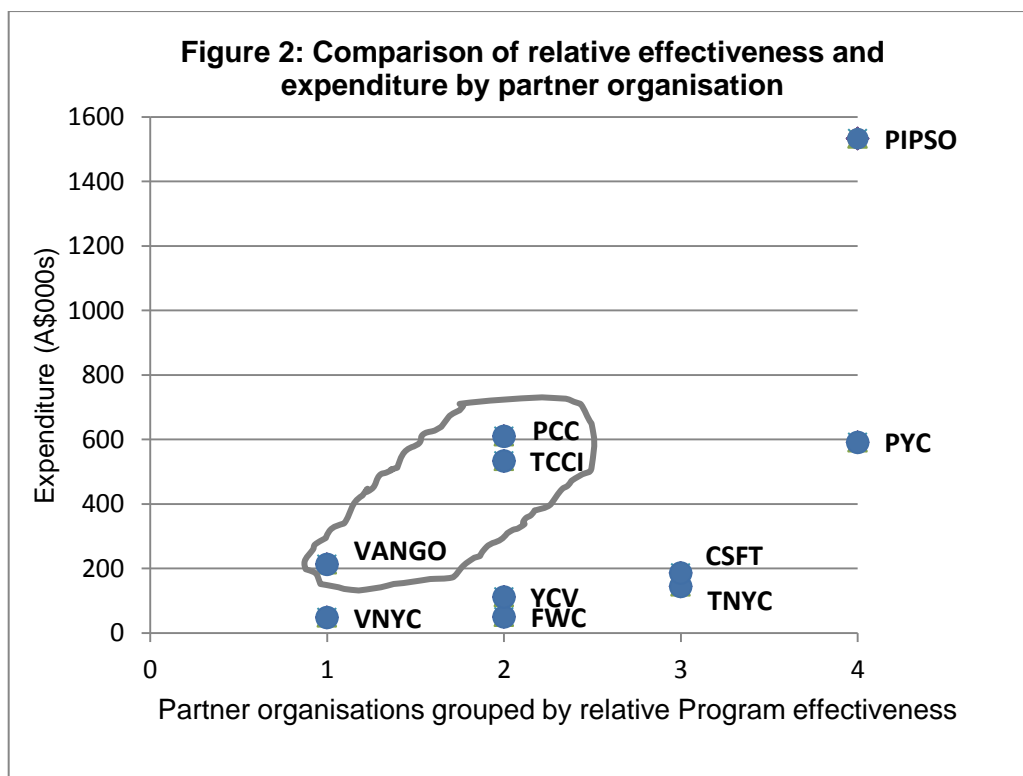
2.2.21 Based on our assessment of effectiveness, we also examined the relationship between (relative) Program effectiveness and expenditure for each partner. We ordered partners into four groups according to the Program's relative effectiveness and mapped each against expenditure estimates (see Figure 2). We recognise the approximate nature of the analysis, but the results do suggest two possible findings: Program expenditure does appear generally to be positively related with effectiveness, suggesting the Program has flexed support well in response to circumstances and opportunities; second, PCC, TCCI and VANGO could be seen as outliers in terms of 'bang for buck' achieved to date. We caution against drawing any crude, general conclusions from this analysis; opportunities for developmental change are inherently unpredictable and the Program's partnerships may be better viewed as a range of 'bets', any one of which may provide small returns, but a few of which may generate significant pay-offs.⁶ But the analysis suggests potential value for the Program in developing more of a 'portfolio perspective' on its partnerships.

2.2.22 A couple of important points must be made about our assessment of Program effectiveness more generally. While the focus of this evaluation is on leadership effects, the Program's contribution to 'substantial' gains in implementation capacity still represents an important achievement in effectiveness terms. Indeed, the Program's success rate in capacity building more generally is all the more impressive, given the mixed experience of capacity building programs in the region.

⁶ For a discussion about 'spread-betting' in this context, see Teles, S., and Schmitt, M, (2011) "The elusive craft of evaluating advocacy" Stanford Social Innovation Review : http://www.ssireview.org/articles/entry/the_elusive_craft_of_evaluating_advocacy/

Figure 1: Summary of Program effectiveness in enhancing the capacity of leading organisations





Note: 1-4 scale on x-axis is categorical, indicating relative Program effectiveness

2.2.23 Second, ‘enhanced leadership’ is not synonymous with ‘greater development impact’, as conventionally defined. For example, with Program assistance, Youth Challenge Vanuatu is expanding its youth training program, which has achieved notable success in finding employment for trainees. Potential returns on the Program’s support for enhanced leadership in the Pacific Council of Churches, in contrast, is likely to be far more long-term, given the Council is still in the process of securing support for the changes introduced from its own Board, the variable strength of its links to Pacific Island Countries and the generally conservative nature of church institutions in the region.

2.2.24 In practice, there are a number of dimensions of potential interest to the Program when assessing progress and effectiveness, and it is clear that different partners are at different stages of ‘maturity’ for each one. While the Program has a good grasp of progress among different partners, more systematic ‘maturity’ assessments are not a part of the Program’s monitoring and evaluation approach. We can see value in more explicit use of such assessments, supported by clearer articulation of the expectations for particular partnerships, incorporating anticipated timelines, and so on. A consistent assessment process would help the Program develop a portfolio perspective on the partnerships, which of course would be revised in the light of actual experience, but which could help inform future choices regarding existing and new partnerships. This could also help avoid elite capture, and increase the probability that the ‘mix’ of partners was most likely to promote developmental change and poverty therefore poverty reduction.

Sustainability

2.2.25 Almost half of the partner organisations that we interviewed indicated that financial management support provided by the Program had enabled them to manage better and attract additional external funding. Nevertheless, many of them continue to face the same challenges as all small organisations operating on limited funds: high staff turnover, a tendency to be driven by funding sources, difficulties in attracting core funding, etc.

2.2.26 A number of features of the Program’s approach are likely to increase sustainability of the benefits achieved to date. The high degree of ownership felt by partners should enhance sustainability, all else being equal. Second, because the Program helps organisations define and implement their own mission – supported with core funding – many of the changes introduced with Program support appear genuinely systemic. This is particularly the case in those organisations where support appears to have enhanced leadership capabilities. Third, a lot of the support provided by the Program does not entail high maintenance costs. Funding an expansion of existing programs is naturally scalable for organisations, supporting meetings and consultation processes, while important activities, do not impose longer-term costs, and in some cases can be sustained through cost-effective communication channels. Moreover, the Program has where possible connected its network of partners in mutually supporting ways, such as using the Civil Society Forum of Tonga to deliver financial training to the Free Wesleyan Church of Tonga.

2.2.27 That said, we do not underestimate the importance of Program support – particularly core funding – for a number of the partners. We note that the Program has not yet developed an explicit exit or transition strategy for existing partners. We return to this issue in section 4 (conclusions and recommendations).

2.3 How effectively has the Program supported coalitions of leaders to exercise leadership and enable change?

2.3.1 Over the last ten years, the role of partnerships, networks and coalitions (box 4) has been increasingly investigated in leadership research, particularly in the sphere of public policy; in part, because of widespread acknowledgement that so called “wicked” issues – such as poverty reduction - cannot be solved by individual organisations working alone. As a result, attention has turned to more shared and distributed leadership models that span institutional boundaries and align with new forms of governance, such as multi-agency partnerships. This is consistent with the view that different, and context specific, configurations of informal and formal institutions are needed to promote the kind of developmental change required to reduce poverty.

2.3.2 The value of reform coalitions⁷ as a vehicle to promote this type of developmental change, the role of leadership within them and the role of a donor-funded program in supporting them have become areas of increasing attention for the Program over the last 18 months. In part, this evolution in thinking has been informed by findings from research, such as that from the Development Leadership Program and Asia Foundation. In part, it is a response to the question the Program has been posing itself during Phase 2: “Partnership for what?” But it also reflects the implementation experience of the Program to date.

Box 4: Defining a coalition

In simple terms, a ‘coalition’ is a grouping of individuals and/or organisations focused on the pursuit of a particular issue or issues, the attainment of which provides the ‘return’ to its members. Levels of structure and organisation vary but in general responsibilities and resources will be consciously allocated within members to facilitate the pursuit of the issue(s). In comparison, a ‘network’ may have a broader, more open, membership base that covers a range of interests of varying importance to individual members. Its value may be in the contacts it provides, the exchange of information it enables among members, and the opportunity it affords to establish relationships that may be useful in the future.

⁷ We use the term ‘reform coalition’ here simply as shorthand to differentiate with coalitions whose objectives run counter to the creation of public value and positive, developmental change. The Development Leadership Program defines the term more specifically.

2.3.3 While the exact role played by the Program has varied with circumstances, we found that Program support has been instrumental in supporting coalition-driven, reform processes in three significant areas:

- strengthening the credible representation of private sector influence in regional economic policy-making fora;
- securing the highest level of commitment regionally at the Pacific Forum Leaders meeting to addressing youth employment issues; and
- initiating and supporting an authentic dialogue within Tonga about the meaning of good leadership against the backdrop of the recent political reforms.

2.3.4 Program support to the Pacific Islands Private Sector Organisation (PIPSO) has been critical in enhancing its leadership capability, and enabling PIPSO's leadership to build regional credibility, strengthen and mobilise its own network of members and commission research and communicate with influence. This support appears to have underpinned to a substantive degree PIPSO's own convening and coalition-building capacity.

2.3.5 With this support, PIPSO has secured observer status at the annual Forum Economic Ministers' Meeting (FEMM) and Forum Trade Ministers' Meeting (FTMM) – in the past, meetings essentially among governments and donors, with no private sector representation. PIPSO played a leading role in the inaugural Private Sector Dialogue with FEMM in late 2010, helping shape substantive discussion on the issue of access to finance. Similarly, PIPSO led private sector representation to the Second Non State Actor Dialogue on the Pacer Plus trade arrangements (March 2012).

2.3.6 Program support to youth employment advocacy shares a number of similarities with the PIPSO experience, in that it was enabled through a regional partner – the Pacific Youth Council – who has an existing network of national member bodies and whose leadership capabilities had been substantively enhanced with support from the Program. But it differs in that the Program played a more active role in helping the network agree the 'issue' to take on (youth employment), and in helping the Council develop its advocacy and influencing strategy for the Forum Leaders' Meeting. The Program was also able to draw on its own relationships with influential figures to help the Council navigate the channels of access to the Forum Leaders. A further difference lies in the composition of the youth employment coalition, which comprised a wider range of actors outside of the Council's network – notably ILO, Commonwealth Youth Program and UNICEF.

2.3.7 Securing high-level political commitment on the issue can be viewed as the 'flagship' achievement to which the Program has contributed. But the experience also cautions against overly simplistic interpretations of the reform process. Establishing a coalition for action on the issue is still work-in-progress. Interviews with key regional respondents indicated differing views about the degree to which a coherence and commonality of purpose among key players had been developed. In addition, country visits highlighted variations in the strength of links and the level of shared understanding between organisations active on youth employment issues, as well as general lack of clarity about next steps.

2.3.8 In Tonga, the Program has played an active role in convening and supporting a coalition of influential and high profile individuals (National Leadership Development Forum) to develop a national leadership code – at a crucial and opportune moment in Tonga's history. The process has involved workshops in all ten constituencies of Tongatapu, and eight on other islands, involving up to 40 people per workshop, primarily with Town and District officers and some community leaders. Sectoral workshops have also been held with Youth, Civil Society, Church Leaders, Women's organisations and the Media. Local officials who have been engaged are now seeking support to conduct similar exercises with each community.

2.3.9 How the initiative will develop and influence political change in Tonga is unclear. It is potentially very significant if it succeeds in stimulating a shift in deep-set beliefs about (traditional) leadership in Tonga, where democracy is still in its infancy. Furthermore, it may deliver this at significantly less cost than most 'good governance' initiatives. But at this stage,

the initiative is not universally known or understood in Tonga, though among those engaged it does have significant momentum. Leadership Codes have been developed and adopted for the islands of Eua, Ha'apai and Vava'u and some Councillors and MPs have indicated they should be held accountable to these codes at election time. During interviews, local officials suggested that the discussions about their leadership role provided means to help improve their effectiveness. Members of the Leadership Development Forum felt that the process was likely to be more significant in terms of results than the leadership code itself. Perhaps indicative of the gradual shift in social attitudes the Forum is both mirroring and supporting, the Forum has recently received a request from some traditional leaders to provide leadership development support for young nobles.

2.3.10 The Program is looking to build on these successes and existing partnerships and is actively seeking opportunities to support potential or existing reform coalitions. In addition to its on-going engagement in the areas identified above, it has recently begun to work with the Commonwealth Local Government Forum and some Local Governments around the issue of local economic development, with Vanuatu Department of Women's Affairs on decision-making, and with the International Union for Conservation and Nature (IUCN) on the issue of Green Economy.

2.3.11 Of course, the Program recognises that supporting the formation of effective reform coalitions is necessarily an uncertain endeavour; the successes achieved to date cannot be viewed as an inevitable outcome of Program support. As recent research concludes, donors cannot create effective reform coalitions; they are the result of endogenous political and policy processes:

there is not a single list of factors that will guarantee that a reform coalition will form...or that it will have a meaningful role to play in ensuring that ...reforms are adopted and implemented.⁸

2.3.12 But this conclusion raises the question as to whether a donor program like PLP can consciously improve the odds that effective reform coalitions will form and operate? The same research suggests a number of ways in which donor programs can play an important though supplementary role in this regard. Based on these suggestions, we have assessed the Program's 'fit' with the behaviours recommended by the research. Our findings are summarised in Table 3.

⁸ Peiffer, C. (2012), "Reform Coalitions: Patterns and hypotheses from a survey of the literature", Developmental Leadership Program, Concept Note 03, May.

Table 3: Promoting reform coalitions - promising ways of working for donors

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informed by in-depth analysis of context, and a detailed understanding of the players and their relationships 	<p>It is clear from the Program’s experience that context matters: success of the Leadership Development Forum in Tonga contrasts with the limited uptake of the concept in Vanuatu and Samoa.</p> <p>The Program has good understanding of context – in no small part because of the high quality team Program staff employed from around the region, the emphasis internally on reflection and learning and an approach that readily adapts to context. Similarly, Program staff appear generally to have a good understanding of players and relationships, though choice of participants for the Forum in Vanuatu appears to have been one of the factors explaining the limited uptake.</p> <p>One area where there is scope to strengthen the Program’s approach is around more systematic appraisal and analysis of relationships, networks and coalitions.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexible, to respond to critical junctures. 	<p>It is clear also that opportunities matter. We heard on a number of occasions that the ‘time was right’ in Tonga for a serious debate on leadership, given the political reforms and the return of a number of prominent Tongans from overseas.</p> <p>The Program undoubtedly operates flexibly and responsively – indeed a few respondents saw risks in an approach that lacked definite boundaries. But the Program’s effectiveness also appears heavily underpinned by relationships of trust. What sort of ‘pre-investment’ is required to position the Program so that it can support coalitions to promote and seize opportunities, is a live issue for the Program (and for other agencies seeking to do this).</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for stakeholders meetings. 	<p>This has been a strong aspect of the Program; in the context of its work on coalitions, the Program has supported a range of action-orientated consultations that have been important in advancing the agenda.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on the most influential leaders 	<p>The Program’s focus on leadership enables it to do this perhaps more easily than other donor programs. There are risks associated with ‘elite capture’ but in the main the Program appears to manage this well. It does this by a) supporting the emergence of young leaders, who have the potential to challenge the status quo (e.g. through support to Youth organisations and b) promoting the understanding that citizens more generally have a key role in holding leaders to account (e.g. through the leadership code in Tonga). Given the lack of women in formal political leadership roles it is also critical that the program better integrates gender analysis throughout the program (see section 2.8).</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with actors that are part of established networks and coalitions. 	<p>As already noted, effective partnerships with organisations that have their own networks has been a prominent feature of the Program’s success with coalitions to date. And this model is continuing, for example, through work with civil society umbrella bodies in Tonga and Solomon Islands to strengthen leadership of the civil society network, as a vital element in building a meaningful compact between the sector and government.</p> <p>But experience also highlights the limits on the transferability of this strategy. Work with the civil society umbrella body in Vanuatu has seen limited progress, in part because of the fragmented and intra-competitive nature of the sector. In practice, the ‘network’ of youth organisations in Vanuatu, accessed through links with the National Youth Council and Youth Challenge Vanuatu, is very weak. As a result, the Program is exploring alternative ways to strengthen the network.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build capacity in organisations’ professional and political skills. 	<p>The findings in section 2.2 highlight the Program’s effectiveness in building organisational and leadership capacity among partner organisations. In coalition terms, this appears to have paid dividends in the cases of PIPSO and PYC. In both cases, in addition to supporting their professional/technical capability, the Program worked to enhance their political skills by assisting in the formulation of strategies to influence the most senior regional bodies.</p>

2.3.13 The first conclusion from the above analysis is that the Program appears a good fit with the pattern of desirable behaviours indicated by research. Among many donor programs, it appears to be a-typical in this regard.

2.3.14 Second, to foreshadow the discussion in sections 2.4 and 2.5, there is scope to strengthen the Program's approach to appraisal and analysis of relationships, networks and coalitions. We found sufficient variation in the strength of different networks and coalitions observed to suggest there is merit in trialling the (proportionate) use of tools such as social network analysis, appropriately adapted for this program.

2.3.15 Finally, we add a note of caution regarding expectations of the pace at which any engagement on coalitions may yield poverty related results. Opportunities do arise to fast-track progress, and the Program appears well-placed to seize those. But more generally, working away to build reform coalitions for action on youth employment, local economic development, the green economy, will involve considerable grind. The 'issues' themselves are broad and much work will be required to refine and focus at a level that coalition can operate.

2.4 How adequate have the Program's monitoring and evaluation and learning processes been?

2.4.1 Program monitoring has been adequate for assessing relationships and adjusting the approach in Phase 1, but has been inadequate for establishing the processes to capture longer-term outcomes, including changes in individual leadership and in the capacity of the organizations, networks and coalitions it has supported. This in turn makes the set up for evaluation largely inadequate. Despite various attempts to put an effective M&E framework and process into place, the program has struggled to come up with something that they feel is satisfactory. This is not overly surprising given the experimental nature of the program in its first years and the need to work in 'real-time' (see box 5).

Box 5: Working in 'real time'

[T]echnical and political action requires responding and working in "real time." The challenges of preparing technical analysis, maneuvering in the political arena, building coalitions in "real-time" are enormous. Most development professionals are comfortable with and stay within the technical dimension. Armed with defined terms of references with clear timetables and outputs, their world is predictable and rational. In contrast, the world of reform and politics is murky and uncertain. Relationship-building, networking, and coalition-building are primary ingredients for success. Some will join, others will drop out and still others will betray the reform to work for the opponents of reform. It requires constant and astute understanding of individuals and dynamics.

Faustino J. (2012), Development Entrepreneurship, Asian Foundation.
<http://asiafoundation.org/resources/pdfs/OccasionalPaperNo12.pdf>

Phase 1

2.4.2 During Phase 1, monitoring processes rightly focused on the partnerships being established, the activities undertaken, and the challenges as well as learning arising. This included an important process of seeking regular and ongoing feedback from partners.

2.4.3 Templates were developed covering these areas and completed by Program staff every six months following training and support provided by the Program's external M&E advisor. They formed, along with country visit reports and partner reports, the basic building blocks for the Program's overall six monthly reporting and reflection processes⁹. This report was compiled by the external M&E advisor, who also in the lead up to finalising the report met with, or talked to, Program partners independently to cross check their assessment of the partnerships.

2.4.4 These reports also formed the basis of the QAI report submitted by the program to AusAID on an annual basis. The monitoring process was adequate for assessing partnerships and relationships but not for capturing organisational development outcomes or the evolution of networks and coalitions that were supported as and when they emerged.

Phase 2

⁹ 3 Monitoring Reports were done for April 2009, Nov 2009, June 2010, and four reflection and Refocus summaries produced in June 2010, Jan 2011, June 2011, and Jan 2012

2.4.5 During Phase 2, the Program made two attempts to refresh its M&E approach (in November 2010¹⁰ and February 2011¹¹). This included a greater focus on developmental and organisational change enabled by the Program, in line with the design of Phase 2 and the Program's own questioning of 'partnerships for what?'

2.4.6 This process has not been finalised for a variety of reasons including: changed contractual arrangements with the revised Advisor Remuneration Framework; continuing uncertainty from the Program about the practicability and suitability of the proposed approach; and the imminent nature of this evaluation which was to include a stock-take of the Program's M&E.

2.4.7 Alongside this process, the Program initiated a number of case studies of key partnerships to capture the evolution of the partnership and organisational change.¹² These however remain as drafts and have not been finalised. They seem to have been quietly dropped owing to concerns about their adequacy.

2.4.8 The Program has also recently established a contact management database using 'Salesforce'. This is seen as a key means to collect and share data on the program's partners, contacts and relationships in real time, and therefore as a key element in a revised approach to M&E. If well integrated with a revised M&E approach (see below) this does have the potential to provide some of the data the program need to capture, if the discipline of regular updating happens (often the Achilles' heel of these systems).

2.4.9 In 2011, Grey Advantage consultants analysed the cost effectiveness of the Program's delivery model, in comparison to other modalities - a conventional managing contractor model, and a grants program.¹³ The co-located nature of the program is considered innovative within AusAID, and there was interest in its potential for replication elsewhere.

2.4.10 This exercise, although not without limitations, represented an innovative attempt to begin to gauge the relative benefits of the program compared to other ways of working. The satisfaction and importance ratings generated through survey undertaken by the consultants also provide a useful complement to existing M&E data and potentially provide a clearer baseline than the program has. As part of developing a revised M&E approach it would be worth considering how this information might be used in this way or for other purposes. It would seem that the data in this report has not been used for other purposes.

2.4.11 Since the middle of 2011, there has been no-one coordinating the Program's M&E work. A decision was therefore made to deploy a full time M&E coordinator who has been in place for 3 weeks at the outset of this review, and who was part of the evaluation team. In addition the Program recognises that the recruitment of research and communication officers will require M&E to be integrated into these areas of work as well. These posts are expected to provide a much stronger unit that can better integrate research, evaluation and communication work to demonstrate and disseminate the results of program learning and performance more effectively. A draft 'Theory of Change' and associated M&E framework have been prepared, and is under discussion.

M&E of the Tonga Secondary School Leadership Program (TSSLP)

2.4.12 This initiative provides a unique opportunity for the Program to assess the impact of leadership development, not least because it covers all secondary schools in Tonga. The initial TSSLP M&E plan¹⁴ proposed to focus first on the definitions of leadership and needs assessment in a two-year pilot phase, before shifting "to assessing the outcomes of the mentoring and coaching approach" during the second phase. While we recognise the importance of establishing a locally owned and relevant performance framework, we are concerned that the M&E approach proposed may represent a missed opportunity.

¹⁰ PLP Further Development of the Monitoring and Evaluation Approach, Nov 2010

¹¹ PLP Revised Monitoring and Evaluation Approach, Feb 2011

¹² See draft case studies prepared of PIPSO, PYC, PCC, etc

¹³ PLP Cost Effectiveness Analysis, 2011

¹⁴ Tonga Secondary School's Leadership Program, Phase 1 Monitoring and Evaluation Plan, Draft 26 April 2012

2.4.13 If the Program wishes to be able to make credible claims about what difference leadership makes to educational outcomes, it arguably cannot wait until the second half of the initiative to be collecting relevant data or developing the approach to impact evaluation. This requires a clear M&E/research design based on an agreed theory of change and arrangements in place for the collection and analysis of contextual data (for example on school attendance, financing, test outcomes, socio-economic characteristics of the pupils). TSSLP may need to engage external research and evaluation expertise to provide support with this work.

2.4.14 The latest draft of the M&E plan¹⁵ addresses some of these concerns (for example on baseline data collection), but the steering committee will need to ensure that the above issues are addressed in the establishment of the M&E process, at the same ensuring that:

- The establishment of basic data collection and analysis does not have to be contradictory to a more iterative learning process which involves the principals. Indeed we would hope that the principals would be involved in helping to make sense of broader performance data, as well as increasingly being consumers of it, and also helping to shape what is collected and why,
- The principals could also be key stakeholders in establishing more quasi-experimental testing of innovative ideas i.e. in trialling different methods of community or student involvement and feedback mechanisms in tracking school performance,
- Principals themselves, as well as community members, could be a key source of data and information providing real-time feedback. The potential for example of using mobile smart phones to enable easier, simpler processes of data collection is something that is being explored elsewhere¹⁶,
- The engagement of an individual or organization/university to undertake much of the data collection and analysis will be essential to avoid overburdening existing TSSLP staff and the principals, and allow them to concentrate on the priorities of the pilot phase.

Overall view on the M&E Approach

2.4.15 Whilst the main effort in the past few years has been to adjust monitoring processes, the emphasis to date on evaluation has been weaker. This includes failing to put in place solid processes for ongoing basic data collection at the outset (for example on the characteristics of the leaders the program is supporting) which would allow for effective evaluation of the Program at a later date. Baseline studies of civil society and leadership initiatives have been carried out in Tonga, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands and at a regional level. These have been 'fit for purpose' to start dialogue and initiate action, but do not seem to be used for either monitoring or evaluation purposes. These studies were all done slightly differently and are not in formats that would allow for straightforward updating, or analysis of trends.

2.4.16 The M&E focus to date has largely been on those elements of the Program that are more dynamic, complex and changing i.e. the relationships with partners. These are vital to the success of the program and provide critical feedback into the iterative, action-learning cycle, which has been established by the Program and advocated elsewhere.¹⁷ This approach however, has tended to downplay tracking the more 'stable' elements of the Program for which routine data can be collected i.e. the numbers of leaders or partnerships, or changes in organisational capacity.

2.4.17 We recognise the importance to the program of building relationships and monitoring their effectiveness, and understand the need for an ongoing focus in this area. We also recognise that outcomes are not easily predictable. However, we do believe that in some areas more formal attempts to measure change, for example in the evolution of the networks and coalitions supported, would not only provide the Program with further insights into its

¹⁵ Draft TSSLP M&E plan 25 May 2012

¹⁶ See for example <http://twaweza.org/go/evaluation>

¹⁷ See for example, Faustino, J (2012) Development Entrepreneurship, Asia Foundation <http://asiafoundation.org/resources/pdfs/OccasionalPaperNo12.pdf>

performance, but also contribute to a better understanding of how leadership leads to developmental change, and therefore poverty reduction. We also believe that the Program could potentially learn from the burgeoning literature and experience on the evaluation of advocacy,¹⁸ as well as recent work on policy research and influencing,¹⁹ and 'social entrepreneurship' as practised by agencies like Ashoka and the Ford Foundation²⁰.

2.4.18 The Program should develop a simpler overall M&E framework - building on the draft framework and theory of change, and this evaluation. This framework should:

- make explicit the rationale for selecting particular individuals, organisations or coalitions to work with;
- clarify program expectations regarding how proposed activities are expected to contribute to developmental change (and ultimately poverty reduction), over what timelines, the anticipated changes that will be led by partners, and so on;
- establish appropriate baselines and processes to track over time the relatively 'predictable' measures of change in individuals, organisations and coalitions attributable to the Program's support, e.g. through surveys tools, organisational capacity assessments, partnership maturity assessments, or social network analysis;
- put in place approaches to capture less 'predictable', developmental outcomes – in practice this means having the 'feedback loops' in place across networks or partners that will signal change as it occurs and the evaluative capacity to examine those outcomes in more detail to understand the what, how and why, and what can be learnt by the Program for the future; and
- develop a more explicit portfolio approach to the monitoring and strategic development of the program – that recognises the uncertain nature of the enterprise, but consciously poses the question as to whether the configuration of actors is most likely to promote development change and minimise the risks of elite capture;

¹⁸ See for example The Elusive Craft of Evaluating Advocacy By Steven Teles & Mark Schmitt www.hewlett.org/uploads/documents/Elusive_Craft.pdf,

¹⁹ See for example Jones (2011) <http://www.odi.org.uk/resources/docs/6453.pdf>

²⁰ See for example [Leviner et al \(2007\)](#)

2.5 How well has the Program learned from evidence and experience and evolved to meet the leadership challenges facing the Pacific?

2.5.1 The Program has made great efforts to foster continual learning and reflection. It has undertaken regular six monthly learning and reflection reviews that have led to ongoing adaptation and documented changes in Program direction and strategy. The ability to spot new opportunities such as support to the National Leadership Development fora, and the recognition of the importance of strengthening financial management for leadership capacity exemplify this.

2.5.2 The Program has made use of case study analyses from its own work (the Youth Employment Advocacy process, and comparative analysis of experiences with National Leadership Development Fora in Tonga and Vanuatu), as well as external research such as that of the Developmental Leadership Program. This has strengthened the Program's understanding of the importance of networks and coalitions and 'critical junctures' as opportunities for change. Furthermore, we found evidence of the Program identifying weaknesses and adjusting its approach accordingly. For example, recognition that organisational support may need complementary support to individual leaders to be effective has underpinned the Program's development of mentoring support for individual leaders, for example with SPC and PIFS.

2.5.3 Strong personal contacts, relationships and networks have also enabled regular adaptation to context and feedback. The staff's experience, skills, contacts, and knowledge of context has allowed them to be 'canny manoeuvrers', adjusting and responding to opportunities as they arise. However, there is evidence to suggest that the 'preferred learning style of the program with an understandable emphasis on personal knowledge and contacts may have hampered more systematic and collective learning. This is compounded by the greater use of reflective rather than diagnostic learning (i.e. processes of learning based more on exchange of stakeholders' views and opinions compared with more 'evidence-informed' discussions based on ongoing research and evaluation).

2.5.4 Arguably this also makes it difficult for the team – which is growing – to build on lessons and experience (e.g. on approaches to partnership, the finance training, and organisational development work) for the benefit of the Program and for others. It also has implications for continuity and sustainability if and when key personnel move on. This is not to diminish the importance of effective personal relationships and networks – these are crucial, particularly in the Pacific. Rather it is to suggest that if these personal relationships are to contribute to more systemic change then understanding their importance, and sharing this with others, is important. The recent investment in research and communication staff is seen as a key means to "create a platform for learning and sharing information between stakeholders".

2.6 How well has the Program communicated with and complemented AusAID bilateral, regional and international programs including the Developmental Leadership Program?

2.6.1 Promoting learning on leadership to inform practice in the broader Australian aid program and international community in the Pacific has been a consistent objective throughout both phases of the Program. In terms of effectiveness, this has been the weakest area of the Program to date.

2.6.2 There have been exchanges of ideas between the Program and the Developmental Leadership Program (DLP) – mostly through face to face workshops, participation by DLP staff at Program reflections, and through reading DLP publications. Current plans to bring the work of DLP and the Program closer together presents an opportunity to further strengthen these links, and enhance the Program's ability to share its learning and experience in more formal ways.

2.6.3 More generally, however, discussions suggest that the Program could communicate more effectively, both within AusAID and outside it, about what it does and how it does it. Several partners felt that the Program could be doing more to share learning, particularly on

the adaptation of 'western' leadership models to the Pacific contexts. Somewhat paradoxically, all the AusAID staff that we spoke to were convinced of the Program's importance and relevance to wider AusAID understanding, even though most admitted to only a patchy understanding of what the Program actually does. The Program has sought to produce written material on its learning, but this has often not adequately captured the richness of the process, or how the Program really functions – in part because of the tendency to sub-contract this work out to consultants.

2.6.4 In terms of complementarity, discussions with AusAID staff in Tonga and Vanuatu suggest that the relationship with the bilateral programs in those countries has evolved positively. Whereas initially it could be characterised as avoiding overlap and confusion, more latterly, in Vanuatu, there are examples of cooperative 'gap-filling' and hand-overs of relevant work while in the education sector in Tonga, there is the potential to develop a relationship more akin to a value-chain arrangement.

2.6.5 But in terms of influencing thinking and practice, we found little evidence of Program effectiveness in either the bilateral or regional programs. A few reasons appear to have contributed to this:

- As a regional initiative, the Program is not unique in the Pacific in facing challenges achieving linkages and complementarities with the (larger) bilateral programs;
- the Program itself is learning and evolving and, as such, has implicitly prioritised its own informal learning and reflection processes over the production of formal lessons for general application externally;
- operating at arms length from the main bilateral and regional programs has, in the Program's view, been an important factor explaining the high levels of trust established with partners; but this has at times limited the Program's engagement with other related AusAID activities; and
- the concept of leadership is ubiquitous and intangible, the Program is non sector-specific, operates at both regional and country levels, and its *modus operandi* is more manoeuvring in response to opportunities than implementing plans; in many respects its frame of reference is quite different from other aid activities, making complementarity less straightforward.

2.6.6 It is also apparent that these reasons are closely related to the Program's strengths. As such, we do not underestimate the skill required to balance a greater contribution to the implementation of the aid program in the region with, for example, the need to maintain the trust of partners; and certainly any crude attempt to 'push' a particular AusAID agenda would seriously damage the Program's credibility. But at the same time, we believe that the value of the Program could be leveraged across the aid program by striking a better balance.

2.6.7 The Program could be more influential in promoting ways of working based on its experience (adapted as necessary), particularly around its approach to partnership and the creation of genuine dialogue, and in its understanding of the relationship between 'traditional', 'modern' or hybrid forms of leadership, adapted to different contexts. To do this, however, would require greater prioritisation of this objective. It would also require more concerted effort to codify what the Program knows, an investment in evaluative research and a better framing of how its work is explained to others.

2.6.8 To be clear, in suggesting this we are not referring simply to the production of more written material such as 'best practice' guidance notes or the like (useful as they may be). Influencing the agenda of a large bilateral agency needs a more strategic approach to engagement and the same mix of opportunism, savvy-thinking and humility that has proved so successful with program partners to date. At the same, we recognise that successfully influencing practice also requires the right organisational signals and incentives to be in place. So while the Program needs to elaborate its 'offer' more clearly to the Agency, uptake will require the support of the Agency. This dependency is reflected in our conclusions and recommendations in section 4.

2.7 Has effectively has the Program addressed Gender Equality?

2.7.1 The Pacific has seen little positive movement in the last few years on key gender issues e.g. violence against women, maternal mortality and political participation. Yet many observers still see the women's movement as providing important leadership in civil society (along with environment and accountability groups). Moreover, some informants pointed to the emergence of younger activists who are actively seeking to play a watchdog role in holding leaders to account, even if they cannot easily access political leadership themselves.

Equality of Women's Participation

2.7.2 The Program has engaged with women leaders as a core part of its work, attempting to ensure equal participation and access to the Program. This has included younger women leaders e.g. YWCA and Women in Business in the Solomon Islands, and the National Youth Councils, as well as more prominent leaders such as Shamima Ali (Fiji Women's Crisis Centre) and Andy Fong Toy (Deputy Secretary General of the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat). Many of the Program's partners also headed by women. These individuals have also figured prominently in the Program's conventions and symposium.

2.7.3 However the Program does not overtly address how men's leadership contributes to inequality of access and participation of women more broadly (apart from the training and support offered through the GEPG program). There is little M&E data on the topic of women's participation and access to benefits and it does not seem to be gender disaggregated.

Equality of Decision-making and Promotion of Women's Rights?

2.7.4 Some programs such as the Tonga Leadership Code process have been careful to engage women and youth groups sensitively e.g. through separate meetings, before bringing group views together with other stakeholders. Support to RRRT has been critical at a time when its funding from other donors has been cut. This has enabled RRRT to continue to support successful work on the Domestic Violence Bill in Tonga, and on Community Paralegal and Legal Rights Training in conjunction with the University of the South Pacific.

2.7.5 It is interesting to note that RRRT and other more feminist organizations see leadership on gender equality being as much about standing up and holding others to account, 'pursuing test cases', or passing 'unpopular' laws, often at great 'personal risk', as gaining access to formal power through the political process. Indeed they see these things as the 'hall-mark' of leadership.

2.7.6 Support to UN Women's Gender Equality in Political Governance (GEPG) project was subject to another evaluation at the time of our review. A draft evaluation report²¹ made available to the evaluators seems to confirm the view of Program staff who suggested that the work on Temporary Special Measures and elections is spread too thinly (\$6.2m over 5 years spread over 15 countries), limited in its outreach, and requires targeted investment over time to bring about behavioural change. It recommends that GEPG be expanded and "deepen its engagement with relevant stakeholders ... beyond raising awareness and building stakeholder ownership of the programme".

Did the initiative help to develop capacity to understand and promote Gender Equality?

2.7.7 Some partners believe the Program could do more to document who is doing what on women's leadership in the Pacific, how the concept of Pacific leadership could more squarely address gender concerns, and run more 'think-tank' type debates on these issues. For International Women's Day in 2011, the Program hosted a dialogue between the Australian Ambassador for Women and Girls and a number of Pacific Women Leaders. It also recently hosted a meeting on Women's Leadership in the Pacific attended by a range of UN organisations, regional bodies and donor agencies. This is a positive step towards a more coordinated agenda in this area, and provides a 'map' of key regional initiatives. The Program now plans to do scoping work at a national level with the International Women's

²¹ Draft GEPG evaluation report 28 May 2012

Development Agency, which will inform their programming and that of other agencies, including AusAID.

2.7.8 UN Women would like to see more co-strategising and sharing of intelligence with the Program on how to move further on gender related policies and issues at governmental levels. They feel that the Program's access to, and knowledge of, decision makers could be shared and utilised better, and the Program could also learn from their experience on women and governance issues. Informants from the Solomon Islands also believed the Program could do more in helping to build links between civil society or women's organisations, and government departments such as the Ministry of Youth Women and Children, on issues such as Gender Based Violence.

2.7.9 The big question for the Program is the degree to which it ensures gender is integral to all its work compared with supporting others who address gender issues. The very low levels of formal political participation of women, and the high levels of domestic violence in the Pacific suggest the Program should ensure these issues are a core part of its agenda. For example should the Program, as some suggested, be doing much more with its relationships with key regional bodies to support the small and under-resourced gender units to play more impactful roles? Clearly this would need to be done in ways consistent with the Program's approach to partnership, and which do not create a 'backlash'. However the Program's ability to have difficult or 'courageous' conversations, because of the mature relationships it has created, should mean that this is something that is increasingly possible.

2.7.10 It is however also important to note that some agencies such as RRRT have seen the need to engage in NGO organisational strengthening as having detracted from their mission & strategic agenda. This may therefore mean that the role PLP has played in organizational development in some cases might in fact make an indirect but strategic contribution, if aligned with the work of others, in that it could allow other agencies that are more specialized in gender to work to fulfil their role more completely.

3. Evaluation Criteria Ratings

Evaluation Criteria	Rating (1-6)	Explanation
Relevance	6	The Program's approach appears highly relevant – at both an implementation level (e.g. the value of the partnership approach and relationship management), and a policy level (given the importance of leadership, governance and civil society in Australia's new aid policy and the emphasis on ownership and partnership in Busan).
Effectiveness	4	Arriving at an overall score is difficult, given that a) a Program of this sort must expect (and learn from) a degree of 'failure'; and b) the expected level of success has not been specified. In terms of the Program's two main objectives, we would score the contribution to enhancing leadership capacity as 5, while the success of the Program in informing practice in the Australian aid program as 3.
Efficiency	(5)	We did not look specifically at efficiency issues during the evaluation. Instead, we have taken assurance from the latest QAI report score (5) and the Grey Advantage analysis (2011) which concluded that although PLP is more expensive than a traditional grants-style program (by some 70%), the program 'delivers benefits and services considered to be very important by partners and valued by AusAID and unlikely to be achievable under other delivery models' (p.3). Furthermore the study found that the use of AusAID staff in a management capacity was 'financially comparable to using contractors in these roles and brought additional benefits to AusAID' (p.3).
Sustainability	5	The approach is tailored to partners' needs, fosters high levels of ownership, supports more systemic change and promotes a number of developments with low maintenance. This rating relates to the longevity of the benefits enabled by the Program, rather than the sustainability of particular Program partners.
Gender Equality	3	The program has sought to engage with women leaders as a core part of its program. However the program does not seem to overtly address how men's leadership contributes to gender inequality (apart from program funding provided for GEPG gender sensitised training).
Monitoring & Evaluation	3	The Program's monitoring has been adequate for assessing relationships and adjusting the program in Phase 1, but has been inadequate for establishing the processes to capture longer term change and outcomes. This in turn makes the set up for evaluation largely inadequate. This, however is not overly surprising given the experimental nature of the program in its first years.
Analysis & Learning	5	The Program has made great efforts to foster continual learning and reflection. On this basis, it is awarded a 5; however, we our findings indicate the need to improve dissemination.

Rating scale:

Satisfactory		Less than satisfactory	
6	Very high quality	3	Less than adequate quality
5	Good quality	2	Poor quality
4	Adequate quality	1	Very poor quality

4. Conclusion and Recommendations

4.1 For the Program

4.1.1 Strengthening leadership is important but challenging, as is demonstrating the effectiveness of efforts. A Program of this sort could be quickly consigned to the margins of relevance if it failed to establish credibility with stakeholders. This has clearly not been the case. More generally, leadership development is often treated as a long-term investment,, leaving questions of effectiveness in the shorter term unanswered. But the evidence indicates that the Program has to date contributed to some important developments nationally and regionally. Moreover, our findings suggest that the methods being deployed to engage, strengthen and challenge current and emerging leaders and leading organisations are highly relevant and achieving a good level of effectiveness.

4.1.2 Preliminary work on the design of the phase 3 of the Program coincided with our evaluation. During the course of our fieldwork, we identified a number of areas where we believe there is scope to strengthen the Program. We offer the following conclusions and recommendations to inform the deliberations about the next phase.

4.1.3 **The Program should develop a simpler overall M&E framework - building on the draft framework and theory of change, and this evaluation.** The potential value of clarifying Program expectations and strategy and tracking change more systematically has been a consistent message through our evaluation. We have also suggested a number of tools that the Program could adapt and apply – e.g. organisational capacity assessments, partnership maturity assessments, social network analysis. We see three main benefits of this: intelligent monitoring against explicit expectations supports learning and the refinement of ‘theory’; application of consistent methods can guide decision-making and provide insights not provided by reflective learning processes alone; and use of more formal assessment tools can help the Program communicate progress more effectively to external stakeholders.

4.1.4 In recommending this, however, we want to clarify two possible misunderstandings. The view was expressed to us that more explicit strategy and more systematic assessment techniques risked imposing a rigid, prescriptive implementation approach on the Program. We do not believe the two are synonymous. Greater rigour in the way the Program approaches its own learning does not require a blueprint approach to programming and can support the logic of what some have called development entrepreneurship.²²

4.1.5 Second, any M&E framework needs to be proportionate. We accept that in a Program of this sort there will be areas that are more ‘complex’ – either because of their inherent unpredictability or because too little is known about the change mechanisms to enable effective monitoring based on predetermined indicators. In such cases, deeper, evaluative processes will be required. However, there are also those more ‘stable’ or straightforward areas, which are amenable to the routine collection of data. Distinguishing between the two types is the first step in developing a simpler, more effective framework.

4.1.6 To guide the detailed design of the framework, the Program should further define its theory of change. This will help clarify core assumptions underpinning Program activities, which in turn will help frame the key questions for M&E and provide the necessary focus. Paragraph 2.4.18 above elaborates a basic structure to assist with framework design.

4.1.7 In line with the above, **we also recommend specifically that the current M&E framework for the Tonga Secondary Schools Leadership Program (TSSLP) include the explicit objective and means to allow longer-term impact to be assessed.** We recognise that this will need to be done sensitively, requiring creative approaches to involve key stakeholders, and may require some compromise in terms of ‘purist’ rigour; but TSSLP offers an important opportunity to provide more concrete evidence of the contribution of leadership

²² ‘Contrary to the perception that entrepreneurs “make it up as they go along,” there is logic to their behavior. Entrepreneurs use effectual logic, defined as “a process that allows goals to emerge contingently over time from the varied imagination and diverse aspirations of leaders and the people they interact with.” TAF p.11 <http://asiafoundation.org/publications/pdf/1062>

to developmental change, which should not be missed. It may also contribute to current efforts within AusAID to assess the impact of education sector support more rigorously. The Program may require specialist research support to implement this recommendation.

4.1.8 The Program should give greater priority to the objective of informing practice in the broader Australian aid program. It is well placed to do this, by building on its strong processes of reflection and learning, and the investment it has recently made in research and communication staff, to better document and share experience. Its evolving approach to Partnership, and what is being learnt about leadership in the Pacific are two obvious initial areas of focus. We also see value in this for the Program team, in terms of enabling them to communicate lessons and experience (e.g. on partnership, finance training, and organisational development) for the benefit of program and for others. It also a means to mitigate risks associated with breaks in continuity if and when key personnel move on.

4.1.9 This would require a more concerted effort to codify what the Program knows, an investment in evaluative research and a better framing of the Program's 'offer' to the other parts of the aid program. But fundamentally, the Program should give greater priority to the objective of dialogue and cooperation with other parts of the Agency. Potential channels would include other, related programs (such as support to leadership in the public sector regionally), design of major new initiatives in either the regional or bilateral programs, or input into reviews undertaken by the Agency. In doing this, the Program must necessarily be selective and should apply the same thinking and strategies used to engage and influence its program partners. At the same, we recognise that success in this is a 'two-way street' and will require the support of the Agency (see below).

4.1.10 Any shift in Program strategy away from the Partnership model should be handled cautiously and treated as an experiment to be tested for effectiveness. The Program's increasing interest in networks and reform coalitions is viewed by some as signalling a shift from partnerships with particular individuals, or organisations for leadership development. Even if the distinction is in practice not so stark, there is a real debate in the Program about the most effective routes to support development change.

4.1.11 It is clear to the evaluation that the successes achieved to date have been based on relationships of trust, without which it is unlikely the Program could have made the most of its opportunities. To date, these have been developed through individual channels and through the (more resource intensive) organisational partnership model. Partnerships have also been a critical means for the Program to develop its understanding of context that has informed its approach and has built its credibility. We also suggest that the coalitions currently of interest to the Program are unlikely to offer quick results, given the work still required to define specific issues and actions. As such, any wholesale shift in strategy would be risky. Instead, careful exploration of strategies to engage coalitions, underpinned by guidance for staff, should be attempted alongside (or as part of) individual and organisational partnerships.

4.1.12 But the Program needs to develop an explicit transition/exit strategy with existing partnerships to assist it move forward. The partnership model is a more intensive approach to working with partners than typically employed in most aid programs. It is also heavily dependent on quality of relations and the skill-set of the Program staff employed to date. While these skills can be learnt, given the right attitudes, we cannot assume they are readily available. It is clear, therefore, that the Program cannot keep adding partners each year as a means of scaling up its success; it will reach a point where the addition of each new partner reduces the average quality of all partnerships. At the same time, we think it unlikely that there are less intensive partnership approaches that would be as effective for new partnerships. The Program, therefore, should develop its options either to exit existing partnerships or transition them to more arms length engagements, in the case of more established, 'mature' organisations. Using existing partners to mentor others, as is now the case with some National Chambers of Commerce, might form part of this strategy.

4.1.13 The Program should consider initiating regular get-togethers among partners in target countries, as it has among regional partners. This specific recommendation reflects the value placed by leaders on the connections that the Program facilitates. It could also be part of the Program's strategy to managing existing, mature partnerships.

4.1.14 **Finally the Program should review its approach to gender equality, as opposed to Women's Leadership, in order to ensure that it is central to its core work with male and female Pacific Leaders, and its M&E system.** Overall we found that the Program is starting to engage effectively on issues of women's leadership at a strategic level, after a slow start. However it has not yet effectively embedded gender equality into its core program or its M&E systems. As part of its approach to gender equality, there is scope to build on recent discussions with other agencies to develop an appropriate niche on Women's Leadership in the Pacific, including the possibility of playing a coordinating or hub role.

4.2 For AusAID

4.2.1 Concern was expressed during the evaluation that a Program of this sort does not sit easily with AusAID's new results agenda. Of course, care is always required to ensure that important but harder-to-measure or process-orientated outcomes are not undervalued, but against that concern, we consider the Program highly relevant to the Australian aid program. Engagement on issues of leadership, civil society and governance aligns squarely with a key strategic objective established by the new policy for Australian aid,²³ while the Program's experience in building partnerships and fostering ownership is directly relevant to Australia's commitments to the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation.²⁴

4.2.2 Support for the secondary education sector in Tonga demonstrates that strengthening leadership is not an esoteric pursuit and can have a strong, service delivery focus. However, leveraging the potential value of the Program for the aid program more broadly will not occur by itself. This depends on the Program giving greater priority to this issue (as suggested above), but also requires the support and cooperation of other parts of AusAID. With that in mind, we suggest the following actions are considered:

- **AusAID Pacific Division – perhaps in consultation with Policy and Sector Division and Corporate enabling – should work with the Program to identify a) what aspects of the Program's experience have wider relevance to AusAID's ways of working in the region; and b) what adaptations may be necessary to ensure practicability concerns are addressed.**
- **AusAID Pacific Division should work with the Program to identify the scope to apply the Program's experience to the design and development of a major new program of support to civil society strengthening, gender equality, governance or service delivery.**

4.2.3 A number of informants suggested to us that there was merit in the Program becoming more separate from AusAID in some way. It is evident from our recommendations that we do not share this view. We feel the loss in potential value to the wider aid program would outweigh any perceived benefits that greater 'independence' might bring.

4.2.4 However, underlying the suggestion is a valid concern about the vulnerability of the Program to major changes in either policy or personnel with the transition to Phase 3. The knowledge, skills and attitudes of the current team have been a critical part of the success to date and, while there is genuine value in refreshing the composition of teams over time, it would be misguided to assume that any member of staff is interchangeable. The fact that the Program is different is what makes it interesting and potentially valuable to the Agency; realising that value, therefore, may need the Agency to handle transition issues thoughtfully. With respect to the transition to the next phase, we suggest that:

- **Phase 3 design team should undertake at the earliest possible stage a) an explicit risk assessment – with particular consideration of staff turnover risks; and b) engage AusAID Pacific Division in the development of effective controls to manage those risks.**

²³ "Supporting security, improving the quality of governance and strengthening civil society" is one of five strategic objectives set for the Australian aid program under the new policy (*An Effective Aid Program for Australia: Making a real difference-Delivering real results, 2011*).

²⁴ Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, Busan, Republic of Korea, 29 November-1December 2011.

4.2.5 Our review has identified a number of areas where the Program should work to strengthen its approach – in particular in terms of M&E. Recent reorganisations within the Program offer the prospect for this aspect of the work to receive more consistent attention. However, this has proved a tough nut to crack for the Program and addressing it may require more specialist input:

- **Phase 3 design team should explicitly review progress over the next 6 months in addressing M&E requirements and factor in additional support as necessary in the design of the new phase.**

Appendix 1: List of Persons Consulted

Name	Position	Organisation
Fiji		
Allan Mua Illingworth	Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist	Pacific Leadership Program
Cameron Bowles	Regional Program Director	Pacific Leadership Program
Emily Hazelman	Resource Hub Officer	Pacific Leadership Program
Lionel Gibson	Deputy Program Director	Pacific Leadership Program
Mere Nailatikau	Communications Officer	Pacific Leadership Program
Mereani Rokotuibau	Senior Program Officer	Pacific Leadership Program
Naeemah Khan	Research and Learning Officer	Pacific Leadership Program
Sandra Kraushaar	Regional Program Manager	Pacific Leadership Program
Shradha Sharma	Finance Specialist	Pacific Leadership Program
Asif Chida	Regional Millennium Development Goals Specialist	United Nations Development Programme – Pacific Centre
David Lamotte	Director	International Labour Organisation – Fiji Office
Edward Bernard	Senior Programme Assistant	International Labour Organisation – Fiji Office
Francois Pihaatae	Acting General Secretary	Pacific Conference of Churches
Aisake Casimira	Ecumenical Animator	Pacific Conference of Churches
Judith Robinson	Acting Australian High Commissioner	Australian High Commission- Fiji
John Davidson	AusAID Minister Councillor	AusAID – Fiji
Rita Taphorn	Regional Programme Manager – Gender Equality and Political Governance	UN Women – Fiji
Sandra Bernklau	Programme Manager	Regional Rights Resource Team
Mereia Volavola	Chief Executive Officer	Pacific Islands Private Sector Organisation
Fe'iloakitau Tevi	Consultant	International Union for the Conservation of Nature - Fiji
Suliana Siwatibau	Advisory Panel Member	Pacific Leadership Program
Mereia Carling	Social Policy Officer	United Nations Children's Fund – Fiji Office
Karibaiti Taoaba	Regional Director	Commonwealth Local Government Forum - Pacific
Andy Fong Toy	Deputy Secretary General	Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat
Rebecca Mclean	Second Secretary Development Cooperation	AusAID – Fiji
Melinia Nawadra	Senior Program Manager	AusAID - Fiji

Name	Position	Organisation
William Parkinson	Managing Director	Communications Fiji Limited
Kalpesh Solanki	Director	Ranjit Garments
Peter Emberson	Program Animator	Pacific Conference of Churches
Murray Isimeli	Program Animator	Pacific Conference of Churches
Lelei Lelau'ulu	Board Chair	Foundation for the Peoples of the South Pacific
		Pacific Youth Council
Vanuatu		
Hilda Lini	Country Representative	Pacific Leadership Program
Viviane Obed	Secretary General	Vanuatu Association of Non-Governmental Associations
Leina Simon	Chair	Vanuatu National Youth Council
Joe Kalo	Administration and Finance Officer	Vanuatu National Youth Council
Rebecca Solomon	Finance Assistant - Temp	Vanuatu National Youth Council
David Momcilovic	First Secretary	AusAID - Vanuatu
Anna Naupa	Senior Program Manager	AusAID - Vanuatu
Obed Timakata	Program Manager	AusAID - Vanuatu
Jack Reuben	Coordinator	Transformational Leadership Program - Vanuatu Bible Society
Shem Tema	Secretary General	Vanuatu Christian Council
John Liu	Consultant	Transformational Leadership Program - Vanuatu Bible Society
Alex Mathieson	Country Director	Oxfam Vanuatu
Nelly Willy	Coordinator	Oxfam Vanuatu
Anthea Toka	Consultant	Leadership Vanuatu
Michael Taurakoto	Chief Executive Officer	Wan Smol Bag
Jennifer Kalpokas	Program Officer	Governance For Growth - AusAID
Dorosday Kenneth	Director	Department of Women's Affairs
Alick Berry	Acting General Manager	Vanuatu Chamber of Commerce and Industry
Tess Newton Cain	Director of Operations	Pacific Institute for Public Policy
Nikenike Vurobaravu	Advisory Panel Member	Pacific Leadership Program
Morrisen Timatua	Country Director	Youth Challenge Vanuatu
Shirley Abrahams	Program Coordinator	Youth Challenge Vanuatu
Katherine Ruiz - Avila	Councillor	AusAID - Vanuatu
Tony Liston	Former Director – Leadership Policy Section	AusAID- Canberra

Name	Position	Organisation
Tonga		
Emeline Siale Ilolahia	Director	Civil Society Forum of Tonga
Mele Taumoepeau	Program Coordinator	Tonga Secondary Schools Leadership Program
Meleani Tonga	Mentor	Tonga Secondary Schools Leadership Program
Kris Needham	Consultant	Tonga Secondary Schools Leadership Program
Aloma Johansson	President	Tonga Chamber of Commerce
Trisha Emberson	Secretary	Tonga Chamber of Commerce
Tevita Havea	General Secretary	Free Wesleyan Church of Tonga
Sione Faka'osi	Executive Director	Tonga Community Development Trust
Emily Esau	Project Coordinator	Tonga Community Development Trust
Seu'ula Fua	Acting Director	Institute of Education – University of the South Pacific
Robina Nakao	President	Women in Sustainable Enterprise - Tonga
Vanessa Lolohea	Director	Tonga National Youth Congress
Ofa Guttenbeil	Director	Tonga Women and Children's Crisis Centre
Sam Fonua	Dean Academic Support	Tupou Tertiary Institute of Tonga
Ungatea Kata	Dean of Academics	Tupou Tertiary Institute of Tonga
Paul Fonua	President	Tonga Principals Association
Greta Cranston	First Secretary	AusAID - Tonga
Telusa Fotu	Program Manager	AusAID - Tonga
Solomon Islands		
Alice Iwebu Kale	Head	Solomon Islands Women in Business
Jenta Tau	Head	YWCA Solomon Islands
Jennifer Waite	Head	Solomon Islands Development Trust
Other		
Yeshe Smith		AusAID
Skye Milchman	Program Manager	Pacific Regional Organisations, AusAID

Appendix 2: Summary of organisations supported by the Program

Organisations		Expenditure Jun 08–Jun 12¹ (A\$ 000s)
Private sector	Pacific Islands Private Sector Organisation (PIPSO) † ►	1,533
	Tonga Chamber of Commerce ►	533
	Samoa Chamber of Commerce	339
	Women In Business, Solomon Islands ▷	82
	Solomon Islands Chamber of Commerce	17
Church	Pacific Council of Churches (PCC) † ►	610
	Anglican Church of Melanesia, Solomon Islands	194
	Vanuatu Christian Council/ Bible Society of Vanuatu ►	150
	Free Wesleyan Church of Tonga (FWC) ►	50
Youth	Pacific Youth Council (PYC) † ►	591
	Solomon Islands YWCA ▷	199
	Samoa National Youth Council	170
	Tonga National Youth Congress ►	144
	Youth Challenge Vanuatu ►	112
	Vanuatu National Youth Council ►	48
	Department of Youth and Sports, Vanuatu	39
	Ministry of Women, Youth, Children and Family Affairs, S.I.	35
Civil Society	Pacific NGO Community (PIANGO) †	- ²
	Solomon Islands Development Trust (SIDT) ▷	946
	Vanuatu Association of NGOs (VANGO) ►	213
	Civil Society Forum of Tonga ►	186
	Foundation of the Peoples of the South Pacific Int. (FSPI) †	90
L/ship Org's	National Leadership Development Forum Tonga ►	337
	National Leadership Development Forum Vanuatu ►	21
	National Leadership Development Forum Samoa	-
	Leadership Samoa	184
	Leadership Solomon Islands	89
	Leadership Vanuatu ►	20
Other	Commonwealth Local Government Fund (CLGF) ² † ‡ ►	1,286
	Emerging Pacific Leaders' Dialogue † ‡	830
	Pacific Regional Rights Resource Team (RRRT) † ‡ ►	351
	Tonga Secondary Schools Leadership Program ‡ ►	184
	Emerging Pacific Women's Leadership Program † ‡	300
	Secretariat of Pacific Community/Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat † ►	135
	Pacific Disability Forum †	109
	Civicus †	100
	UN Women Gender Equality in Political Governance (GEPG) † ‡	62
	IUCN † ►	59

Notes: 1 – Estimates based on actual expenditure to Jun 11 and budgeted expenditure Jul 11–Jun 12

2 – Partnership agreement established but funding not provided due to financial irregularities in PIANGO

† - Regional organisation; ‡ Funded through grants program; ► Interviewed during the evaluation; ▷ Interviewed by telephone during the evaluation

Appendix 3: Terms of Reference

Pacific Leadership Program - Independent Progress Report - 2012

1. PURPOSE

These Terms of Reference (ToR) are to conduct an evaluation of the achievements and implementation of Pacific Leadership Program (PLP) 2008-2013 and to prepare an Independent Progress Report (IPR). The evaluation will review and analyse what the program has achieved, what has worked, what did not and why.

This analysis will provide important lessons to inform the next phase of Australia's support to the leadership in the Pacific. The evaluation will assess the partnership against the five OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) evaluation criteria and the three AusAID evaluation criteria.

2. BACKGROUND

The Pacific Leadership Program commenced on 1 July 2007 and current completion date is 30 June 2013. The total value of the program is AUD 36, 295, 540. PLP initially started with a 5 year design plan, but evolved to its current management model as a facility. It has an iterative learning model based on 6 monthly review and reflection to inform programming priorities as they evolve. This enables the program to be flexible and opportunistic, and manage risk as it arises.

The Pacific Leadership Program (PLP) is a regional initiative of the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID). Recognising the pivotal role leadership plays at all levels in a nation's path to development, PLP aims to strengthen leaders, emerging leaders and leadership practice in Pacific Island countries. The purpose of PLP is to support influential Pacific leaders to shape and lead developmental change.

PLP derives from the priorities of the interim Pacific strategy for 2011-2015, which identifies support for "regional programs that promote regional integration, regional cooperation and regional provision of goods and services." PLP promotes intra-Pacific learning on leadership issues, sharing knowledge between individual leaders/leadership organisations, and providing resources to leaders across the region to address particular developmental challenges. It also complements the regional strategy of the Pacific Islands Forum – The Pacific Plan.

PLP identifies influential leaders in key areas including public, private and civil society sectors in the Pacific. PLP works on a regional basis and in has country programming in Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu. PLP works in other pacific countries but only with one or two small activities in each country, through regional partners work.

The PLP is guided by a throey of change as follows.

PLP understands that:

- Developmental change is a complex, political and often messy process where interventions can only partially influence outcomes.
- Whilst regional and international arenas are important, most tangible change takes place at national or local levels.
- Developmental change occurs when it is owned and driven by credible leaders working strategically together on specific issues that respond to community context and priorities.
- Leadership structures have an impact on the ability of leaders to effect change. Relations between board and management, administrative and financial systems and strategic focus are all critical to the leadership of change.
- Critical junctures, such as crises, offer important opportunities and threats for leadership of developmental change.
- Exercising developmental leadership is difficult and risky. It therefore requires flexible interventions that are based on respectful, robust relationships that recognise context and enable joint action.

PLP provides enabling or catalytic support to willing, influential Pacific Leaders to shape and lead developmental change by:

- Working within respectful, robust relationships which:
 - Enables the joint design of appropriate interventions suitable to the context
 - Allows leaders a tailored, conducive environment to be challenged and supported in courageously pursuing their developmental aspirations
 - Ensures that ownership of change rests with Pacific leaders rather than PLP
- Supporting leaders as individuals, coalitions and organisations to:
 - Create space for determining purpose and strategy and to identity their key developmental changes
 - Strengthen skills to manage strategies and relationships to enable change
 - Fashion the appropriate leadership structures to effect change
 - Increase credibility and capacity to exercise effective leadership
- Acquiring knowledge of leaders' and developmental change contexts that allows PLP to bring together leadership groups to:
 - Provide learning opportunities relevant to exercising leadership in their context
 - Concentrate and act on specific issues
 - Develop action focussed networks of influence

- Building evidence, piloting initiatives, learning and applying knowledge relevant to leadership practitioners.

PLP is in its second phase; the first phase (1 May 2008 to 30 June 2009) was a start up phase with programming focussed on the agreement and development of partners with leadership organisations. The second phase (1 July 2009 to 30 June 2013) changed the management model from project to a facility. This phase is focussed on supporting partners to build capacity and skills as leaders for development change and supporting leaders and leadership organisations and coalitions to identify development issues and effect the necessary changes to address them. Throughout the program the phases are not so distinct but each builds on the next phase.

3. SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

Independent evaluations of aid program activities provide information for AusAID's assessment of aid program effectiveness, provide lessons to AusAID and implementation partners on aid program management, inform design of new activities and inform management of existing activities.

The objectives of this evaluation are based on the objectives of effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability. The Independent Progress Review will:

- 1) evaluate the extent to which PLP achieved its objectives;
 - Has PLP support led to improved leadership practice shown through process and achievements towards development change?
- 2) assess Australia's impact on local leadership led development;
 - Has PLP supported leadership capacity for developmental change?
- 3) provide lessons learned that will inform and shape the leadership work in the Pacific.
 - Has PLP enhanced learning on Pacific Leadership approaches, theory, practice and models?

The evaluation mission will include time in Canberra (?), Suva, Tonga and Vanuatu.

The **key questions** that the evaluation team shall focus on examining are:

- (i) To what extent has PLP met its overall objective: supporting influential Pacific leaders to shape and lead developmental change?
- (ii) To what extent has PLP contributed to strengthening leaders' capacity to identify and achieve their developmental change priorities?
- (iii) To what extent has PLP succeeded in working with leading organisations in target sectors, to build credibility, focus on objectives and achieve them?
- (iv) To what extent has PLP support enabled coalitions of leaders to exercise leadership and enable change?
- (v) Have PLP's monitoring and evaluation processes been adequate for learning, monitoring and evaluation?

- (vi) To what extent has PLP learned from evidence and experience to evolve the program to meet the leadership challenges facing the Pacific?
- (vii) How effective has PLP been in complementing and communicating with the AusAID bilateral, regional and international program including the Developmental Leadership Program?

In addition, the evaluation should provide a cursory assessment of implementation of the agreement against the remaining DAC criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability, and the additional AusAID criteria of monitoring and evaluation, gender equality and analysis and learning. Ratings against all criteria (excluding impact) will be provided using a rating scale of 1 to 6, with 6 indicating very high quality and 1 indicating very poor quality. A rating below 4 indicates that an activity has been less than satisfactory against a criterion. Further guidance is at [Annex A](#).

4. EVALUATION METHOD

The evaluation team leader will be responsible for the development of a draft evaluation plan, to be submitted to AusAID for approval at least one week prior to the in-country mission. The evaluation plan will include the main evaluation questions, the evaluation design and the report structure. The evaluation will be undertaken according to the approved evaluation plan.

The evaluation approach will include a document review, field visits and stakeholder consultations. A non-exhaustive list of reference documents is provided at [Annex B](#).

5. COMPOSITION OF THE INDEPENDENT REVIEW TEAM

The evaluation team will consist of:

- a. Team Leader (responsible for finalising the written report) with strong expertise in monitoring and evaluation, extensive experience in the Pacific and a thorough understanding of Australia's aid program;
- b. A Monitoring and Evaluation specialist;
- c. AusAID Performance Policy and Systems representative; and
- d. AusAID PLP representative (the 'Evaluation manager').

Skill Sets Required by the Team:

- a. extensive monitoring and evaluation experience;
- b. experience in leadership and across all sectors;
- c. innovative development design and implementation experience;
- d. extensive knowledge of development in Pacific;

- e. thorough understanding of the Australian aid program and experience in aid program development, planning, monitoring and evaluation;
- f. excellent interpersonal and communication skills, including a proven ability to liaise and communicate effectively with Pacific Islanders; and
- g. ability to provide timely delivery of high-quality written reports.

6. REPORTING ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE TEAM

The team leader and will:

- a. plan, guide and develop the overall approach and methodology for the evaluation in consultation with other team members, and in particular with the Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist;
- b. be responsible for managing and directing the evaluation's activities, representing the evaluation team and leading consultations with government officials and other donor agencies;
- c. be responsible for managing, compiling and editing inputs from other team members to ensure the quality of reporting outputs;
- d. be responsible for producing an aide memoire, synthesising evaluation material into a clear draft evaluation report and a final evaluation report; and
- e. represent the team in peer reviews, if required.

The M&E specialist will:

- a. assist to plan, guide and develop the overall approach and methodology for the evaluation in consultation with the team leader and other team members;
- b. assess whether the monitoring and evaluation framework effectively measures progress towards meeting objectives, and how effective is the adjustment of it over the life of program to take account of changes to objectives and directions;
- c. assess whether the M&E system meets AusAID's requirements and whether the evidence exists to show that objectives have been achieved;
- d. advise the team of monitoring and evaluation frameworks for similar facility models;
- e. oversight of the evaluation from monitoring and evaluation perspective.

Other team members will:

- a. work under the overall direction of the Team Leader;
- b. provide advice, relevant documentation from the AusAID, and an understanding of Regional partners and AusAID Performance Policy Support systems and PLP processes;
- c. contribute to the required dialogue, analysis and writing of the report, as directed by the team leader;

In addition to the above, the Performance Policy Support team member will liaise with the Team Leader and Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist to:

- finalise an appropriate evaluation plan, according to AusAID expectations
- support the Review Team where directed, this may include data collection and analysis, or managing a particular component of the ToR
- participate in the Review in order to clarify lessons learnt relevant for other sections of AusAID, including strengthening AusAID's evaluation practice

PLP will provide administrative and logistical support.

7. TIMING & DURATION

The independent evaluation will commence by 13 March 2012 and be completed by 30 June 2012. The timing and duration for the scope of services is up to 38 input days as follows (final dates will be negotiated with the Team Leader and stated in contracts):

TASK	LOCATION	INPUT (days)			
		TEAM LEADER	M&E SPECIALIST	AusAID Program and Quality	PLP M&E Specialist/ Support
Document review	Home Office	4	2	4	1
Draft Methodology / Evaluation Plan	Home Office	1	0.5	4	
AusAID/PLP briefings and presentation / discussion of methodology	Canberra / Suva/ Teleconference	1	1	1	1
Evaluation mission	Tongatapu, Suva , and Port Vila	15	15?	15	15
Preparation and presentation of aide memoire (during mission)	Suva	1	0.5	1	1

Draft Evaluation Report	Home Office	7	2	4	4
Peer Review	Home Office / Canberra	1	-	1	1
Redrafting after feedback from AusAID and other stakeholders	Home Office	2	0.5	2	
Travel Days		8	6?	6	6
TOTAL		40	27.5 (To be confirmed)	38	As require

8. OUTPUTS

The following reports are to be provided:

- a. *Evaluation Plan / Draft Methodology* – for agreement with AusAID prior to mission.
- b. *Evaluation Mission Aide Memoire* - to be presented to AusAID PLP and Regional Program in Suva and Canberra, at the completion of the final in-country mission. The format for the Aide Memoire will follow AusAID's template (to be provided).
- c. *Draft Independent Evaluation Report* – to be provided to the evaluation manager, AusAID Canberra, within 15 working days of completion of the field study to Suva. Feedback from AusAID and other stakeholders will be provided within two weeks of receiving the draft report, followed by a peer review.
- d. *Independent Evaluation Report* - final document within 30 working days of receiving the feedback, incorporating advice from evaluation peer review. The report will be no more than 20 pages (plus annexes). Lessons, recommendations and ratings should be clearly documented in the report.

9. PEER REVIEW OF DRAFT EVALUATION PLAN

A peer review examines and contests the findings of the evaluation report to ensure the evaluation results are relevant and applicable to AusAID's operating environment. The peer review also considers a draft Learning and Dissemination Plan (prepared by AusAID) to ensure the best value is obtained from the evaluation. The peer review will be organised by the evaluation manager and may be conducted by email or through a review meeting.