

Mid-Term Evaluation of the Pacific Women's Parliamentary Partnerships (PWPP) Project

MANAGEMENT RESPONSE

Investment Summary

Investment Name	Pacific Women's Parliamentary Partnerships (PWPP) Project		
AidWorks identifier	INK496-12A926-43761/5		
Commencement date	10 January 2013	Completion date	30 December 2017
Total Australian \$	AUD2,850,037.00		
Delivery organisation(s)	Parliamentary Skills Centre (PSC), Department of the House of Representatives (DHoR)		
Implementing partner(s)	Pacific Island governments		
Country/Region	Pacific Regional		
Primary sector	Gender		
Initiative description	<p>The Pacific Women's Parliamentary Partnerships (PWPP) project is a five-year project that aims to build the capacity of women parliamentarians in the Pacific, the institutions in which they work, and the staff who support them, so that gender equality issues are better addressed by parliament.</p> <p>The end-of-program objectives of the project (as outlined in the revised design document dated April 2013) are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pacific women parliamentarians are supported in their parliamentary and representational work and are better able to use parliamentary mechanisms to raise gender equality issues; 2. Pacific parliaments have improved mechanisms to raise and effectively consider gender equality issues and engage their communities on those issues; and 3. Parliamentary staff have improved capacity to support the gender equality work of parliaments. 		

Evaluation Objective:

The mid-term evaluation of PWPP was commissioned by DFAT through the Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development (*Pacific Women*) Support Unit. The purpose was to undertake an independent assessment of PWPP at the three-year point of its implementation to review progress and the effectiveness of strategies employed. The evaluation considered the questions of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency with a focus on the following broad questions:

1. How relevant was the program design, including the activities delivered?
2. What has been the impact of the PWPP program so far?
3. How efficiently has the program been implemented so far?
4. What improvements could be made to the program in the future?

Evaluation Team:

Natalie Moxham (Lead Evaluator), Vanessa Hood (Evaluator) and Neil Penman (IT consultant).

Evaluation Completion Date:

28 March 2017

Evaluation Summary**Overall Assessment**

The mid-term evaluation found that the performance of PWPP is less than optimal. However, it was noted that PWPP is an important project that has merit. The flagship activity, the Annual PWPP Forum, has evolved into a high level, high profile, face-to-face networking event that is highly valued by its participants. The most significant outcome achieved by PWPP is the establishment of this network which has produced a range of positive outcomes. The evaluation found that the design and project management of PWPP has not reflected best practice. The project's lack of a clear design and rationale, theory of change and monitoring and evaluation framework are of concern given the complexity of the problem being targeted and the high-profile nature of this work. However, the evaluation acknowledged that there is potential to recalibrate the project to capitalize on the limited but significant outcomes that have been achieved to date.

Program effectiveness

The evaluation found that although PWPP has clearly contributed to achievement of a number of outcomes, programming is not based on an understanding of need or targeted and focused to attainment of intended outcomes. It could have been expected that after four years of investment there would have been better attainment of medium and longer term outcomes.

The most significant outcomes were achieved in relation to support for Pacific women parliamentarians (PWPs) through establishment of a PWP Network (via the PWPP annual forum). There is evidence that some women have made specific changes to their behaviour (e.g. after attending the Forum or an Exchange). However, PWPs have not been supported directly to act.

PWPP has invested in a number of activities that target Pacific parliaments and their staff. The short-term result of engagement with Parliamentary staff has been achieved. PWPP has successfully engaged Parliamentary Clerks, Educators and Researchers. As a result of the eight research scholarships undertaken there is some evidence that, for a small amount of investment, the activity has resulted in gender champions having increased access to research skills and hence gender equality research. However, the evaluation found that strategies could have been better planned and implemented and therefore led to better attainment of outcomes.

Program Relevance

While PWPP's mandate is relatively clear, there is a significant degree of uncertainty regarding the rationale or basis and processes for the project's strategies. This is largely due to the absence of a project design that is grounded in a robust program logic and theory of change. The project has evolved beyond the intent reflected in the original 2013 project proposal. Although some of the changes made have appropriately responded to PWPs and parliamentary staff requests for face-to-face interactions, the reasons for doing so have not been adequately justified or grounded in a robust needs-assessment. The strategies employed by PWPP have merit, but are insufficient to respond to PWP needs and what is required for structural and cultural change within the 15 different Pacific parliaments. Whilst the project modality of 'partnering' with Department of House of Representatives (DHoR) has some advantages, these are outweighed by the constraints of DHoR's organisational culture (of service, rather than development) and mismatched expertise (restricted to drawing on Australian parliamentarians and parliamentary personnel rather than international development expertise residing outside the Australian parliament).

Program efficiency

Overall, the evaluation found that PWPP delivered a range of value-for-money outcomes, from adequate to poor (as calculated using a rubric designed for *Pacific Women*). However, the cost of delivering the strategies in PWPP is in line with that expected by other organisations.

The standards of the project's governance, management and accountability delivered fall well short of DFAT standards. DHoR has natural advantages in that it has expertise in parliamentary processes. However, it does not appear to have a sufficiently well-developed set of requisite skills, management expertise and international development experience to deliver the Project in a manner that meets DFAT standards.

DFAT's response to the evaluation report

PWPP finished on 31 December 2017. A design process is now underway to define a new program of support for increasing Pacific women's voice and participation in political processes. This design is guided by the *Pacific Women* Roadmap (released May 2017) and will also be informed by the PWPP evaluation findings and recommendations.

DFAT would like to specifically acknowledge the pro-bono support that the DHoR has provided to help implement the project; the parliament-to-parliament relationships they have been able to form with counterparts in the Pacific; and the unique access DHoR has to the Australian parliamentary system which it has been able to draw on in support of the project.

The final report submitted by the PWPP evaluation team meets DFAT's quality criteria for an evaluation report. It addresses the terms of reference and incorporates feedback on the draft. The report reflects an understanding of most of the key issues, the rationale for the recommendations is provided and there is an executive summary for decision-makers.

DFAT agrees that the evaluation recommendations need to be considered in light of the following:

- The high profile nature of this work and its central role in *Pacific Women*
- The importance of efforts in this space to be coordinated and aligned with other agency efforts in the Pacific
- The need to sustain the outcomes achieved to date
- The principle of 'do no harm'
- The principle of collaboration and joined up effort leading to greater impact.

DFAT also agrees that in terms of future programming, the evaluation recommendations need to be considered in terms of two separate objectives: support for Pacific women parliamentarians (a women's leadership mechanism); and for Pacific parliaments that are more gender conscious, including having male gender equality advocates (a gender mainstreaming mechanism).

Although the evaluation findings have been shared with the implementing partner, the DHoR, this Management Response only represents the views of DFAT.

Recommendation	Response	Actions	Responsibility
1. Alignment with <i>Pacific Women</i>			
If the resources allocated to this Project are the only resources that <i>Pacific Women</i> commits at this highly visible political level then these resources need to be strongly considered in relation to the <i>Pacific Women</i>	Agreed	This recommendation will be taken forward as part of the new design for increasing Pacific women's participation and	DFAT/ <i>Pacific Women</i> Support Unit

Recommendation	Response	Actions	Responsibility
<p>roadmap (currently under development) and diplomacy.</p> <p>Consider the investment's inputs and strategies in relation to other diplomatic and programmatic efforts that are part of <i>Pacific Women</i> and DFAT in the region.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider this in light of how PWPP high profile strategies effect and contribute to other interventions The objectives and potential outcomes for Australian Parliamentarians, Australian Parliaments and DFAT. Is aligned and nested within the <i>Pacific Women</i> Roadmap Also consider alignment with efforts of the New Zealand Government. 		voice in political processes.	
2. Coordination and Collaboration			
<p>The work needs to consider the investment in relation to other agencies efforts in the Pacific. This includes how to better support or streamline efforts in overlapping spaces such as the space of getting women elected as opposed to supporting them once elected and then bringing about gender sensitive parliaments. Similarly, how national level parliamentarians can be involved and support women being elected at local and provincial levels. The investment should be aligned and calibrated to value add to the efforts of other Agencies working in this space in the Pacific.</p> <p>Establish a collaborative group of stakeholders to guide /advise / govern this work as the key mechanism to coordinate and align efforts in the Pacific. Membership to include strategic stakeholders in the Pacific.</p> <p>Such as including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pacific Women Support Unit UN Women and UNDP Pacific women parliamentarians Australian women parliamentarians (current and retired) DFAT The delivery development organisation DHoR A CWP representative 	Agreed	The recommendation to establish a collaborative group of stakeholders to guide /advise / govern this work as the key mechanism to coordinate and align efforts in the Pacific will be considered as part of the new design for increasing Pacific women's participation and voice in political processes.	DFAT/ <i>Pacific Women</i> Support Unit

Recommendation	Response	Actions	Responsibility
3. Modality			
<p>Given what has been achieved, the progression of the network of Pacific women parliamentarians being on the brink of 'coalition action' and the essential need for collaboration and alignment, the resources need to be invested / situated in a regionally based development organisation (or one that has significant competencies in the Pacific). The agency / NGO needs to have appropriate expertise to deliver the Project and not be compromised by the political nature of the work.</p> <p>Determining the modality of the investment needs to be considered as part of deliberations at Recommendation 1 and 2. Remove the modality of delivery of this Project from DHoR. The investment may be broken into parts and placed with various agencies to deliver including DHoR.</p> <p>Considerations include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moving the coordination and delivery of the Forum / Network to a development organisation (or professional conference organizer) that has the relevant competencies and is able to deliver an ongoing support program Other programmatic inputs/strategies could be placed with other development organisations or the <i>Pacific Women Support Unit</i> DHoR to maintain involvement as a secondary partner in the Forum and hosting the research scholarships. 	Agreed	<p>The new design for increasing Pacific women's participation and voice in political processes will include the following considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The most appropriate 'home'/delivery mechanism for future coordination and delivery of the Forum / Network. The most appropriate 'home'/delivery mechanism for the other programmatic inputs/strategies which are recommended to continue, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> research scholarships gender sensitisation of parliaments support for mentoring /coaching The most appropriate role for DHoR to undertake as a possible future delivery partner. 	DFAT/ <i>Pacific Women Support Unit</i>
4. Design			
<p>Re calibrate the investment and ground it in good program design practice.</p> <p>By undertaking:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a thorough needs assessment a detailed understanding of individual PWPs needs a detailed understanding of the needs related to any collective action or desire for collective action at a country level, including civil society and election support 	Agreed	<p>This recommendation will be taken forward as part of the new design for increasing Pacific women's participation and voice in political processes.</p>	DFAT/ <i>Pacific Women Support Unit</i>

Recommendation	Response	Actions	Responsibility
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a comprehensive survey / mapping of efforts by other agencies operating in the Pacific a theory of change / action that aligns with best-practice in women's leadership within the Pacific a robust monitoring and evaluation framework. 			
5. PWP Network / Forum			
<p>Maintain and significantly refine the PWPP Forum event so that it supports a network function, is needs based and grounded in a clear purpose and with strategic intent.</p> <p>Such a redesign should incorporate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A focus on delivering three <u>purposes</u> being: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a supportive network for PWPs supporting them to be effective women parliamentarians a high-profile gender equality event that builds and supports Pacific gender champions and their agenda establishment of working groups to pursue Pacific-led agendas against purpose one and two An understanding of the high-profile nature of the Forum and its contribution to multiple gender equity outcomes across a number of agency's interventions. Establish a new selection mechanism for Australian participants. This should establish two categories of participation, namely (1) that which is of benefit to Australia and (2) that which is of benefit to the Pacific. The determination of agenda and format by the collaborative group (Recommendation 2). Consider size and cost of the Forum relative to outcomes so that as the number of elected Pacific women grows the Forum shifts its scale and purpose appropriately. Shift the 'identity' of the 'PWPP Forum' away from the PWPP Project to being associated with Pacific Women parliamentarians networking. Consider shifting the Forum (<u>purpose 2</u>) to be a biannual event to enable 	Agreed	<p>This recommendation will be considered as part of the new design for increasing Pacific women's participation and voice in political processes, taking into account the feedback from Pacific women parliamentarians. The sub-recommendations will be discussed with Pacific women parliamentarians during the 2017 PWPP Forum.</p>	DFAT/ <i>Pacific Women</i> Support Unit

Recommendation	Response	Actions	Responsibility
<p>resources to be focused on support for collective efforts (Recommendation 7).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain a lower profile annual gathering of PWPs. In the alternate year this would be a smaller gathering focused on <u>purpose 1</u>. <p>The PWPP Forum / Network needs to clearly understand its purposes in response to need and strategic intent and then be undertaken in a focused way to achieve the three purposes. The annual or biannual event of the Forum needs to be situated in a programmatic plan underpinned by a sound theory of change.</p>			
6. Individual support (mentoring and coaching)			
<p>In the redesign consider if a form of mentoring or ongoing individual support is needed and wanted by PWPs or if only collective support is more palatable.</p> <p>Considerations here include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tailored support that assists in building understanding of parliamentary functions, developing a personal strategy and implementing it, engagement with their constituency, running an office, media training etc. Establishment of a mentoring / coaching program that recruits retired Pacific women parliamentarians and retired Australian women parliamentarians with appropriate skills and commitment. The Program would train and support them to mentor. The program would facilitate a matching process. Support with Exchanges that meet need. Exchanges to other Pacific countries should be considered first before Australia. 	Agreed	<p>This recommendation will be considered as part of the new design for increasing Pacific women's participation and voice in political processes, taking into account the feedback from Pacific women parliamentarians. The identified considerations will be discussed with Pacific women parliamentarians during the 2017 PWPP Forum.</p>	DFAT/ <i>Pacific Women</i> Support Unit
7. Support collective effort as a priority			
<p>Focus and target resources to support for collective efforts of parliamentarian gender champions in whatever form they take (coalition, alliance, caucus) to pursue gender equality issue or interest.</p>	Agreed	<p>This recommendation will be considered as part of the new design for increasing Pacific women's participation and voice in political processes, taking into account the feedback</p>	DFAT/ <i>Pacific Women</i> Support Unit

Recommendation	Response	Actions	Responsibility
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop this as the key strategy of the work as led by Pacific women parliamentarians Directly support this by providing access to political acumen, campaign, advocacy and lobbying competencies. In re calibrating the work and articulating the theory of change 'collective effort' needs to be a central outcome and mechanism building on achieved intermediate outcomes. The central participants in this are gender champions (parliamentarians) which includes relevant male gender champions More consideration of building and strategically including male gender champions Include civil society and the public service where appropriate 		<p>from Pacific women parliamentarians. The sub-recommendations will be discussed with Pacific women parliamentarians during the 2017 PWPP Forum.</p>	
8. Engaging Parliamentary Staff			
<p>Consider if effort in this space is worth the investment as there may be more pressing places to place scarce resources (such as recommendation 6 and 7). The small amount of effort here may prove to not be enough to bring about change and in fact end up being add hock.</p> <p>Completely reconsider the current strategies and activities that are addressing Objective 3: Parliaments to be more gender sensitive.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This would be considered as part of Recommendation 1 & 2, the needs analysis and recalibration of investment. Design the inputs to be strategic and targeted and potentially just focused on the small island states Try to maintain the research scholarships Allow Outrigger to be implemented and undertake a small evaluation of its effectiveness and then consider supporting the continuation of Outrigger or not in light of the overall redesign. 	Agreed	<p>This recommendation will be considered as part of the new design for increasing Pacific women's participation and voice in political processes, as per Recommendation 3.</p> <p>Specific considerations will be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is gender sensitisation of Parliaments a part of <i>Pacific Women's</i> efforts moving forward, considering best use of limited resources? Noting the positive findings from the evaluation, should research scholarships by maintained as part of <i>Pacific Women's</i> ongoing support? Noting the investment in development, and ownership by Pacific parliamentary staff, undertake a small evaluation of 	DFAT/ <i>Pacific Women</i> Support Unit

Recommendation	Response	Actions	Responsibility
		Outrigger's effectiveness and then consider supporting the continuation of Outrigger or not in light of the overall redesign.	

Communication and Dissemination of Findings:

- DFAT will share and discuss the final evaluation report, along with DFAT's management response, with the DHoR.
- The final evaluation report, along with the Management Response, will be uploaded onto DFAT's website.
- The final evaluation report, along with the Management Response, will be uploaded onto the *Pacific Women* website.