

Mid-Term EVALUATION of the Pacific Women Parliamentary Partnerships Project 2013-2018

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Thank you

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The Enabler

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Disclaimer

This report has been produced solely upon information supplied to Leanganook Yarn by PWPP Project, collected during interviews and a survey. While we make every effort to ensure the accuracy of this report, any judgments as to the suitability of information for the client's purposes are the client's responsibility. We extend no warranties and assume no responsibility as to the suitability of this information, nor for the consequences of its use.

Acronyms

APEC	Australasian Parliamentary Educators Conference
AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CPA	Commonwealth Parliamentary Association
CWP	Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians
DFAT	Australia Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
DLP	Development Leadership Program
DHoR	Department of the House of Representatives
WEE	Women's Economic Empowerment
ERG	Evaluation Reference Group
FSM	Federated States of Micronesia
ICRO	International and Community Relationship Office
IWDA	International Women's Development Agency
LDP	Leadership Development Programs
MP	Member of Parliament
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
ODE	Office of Development Effectiveness, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
PSC	Parliamentary Skills Centre
PIC	Pacific Island Countries
PNG	Papua New Guinea
PWPP	Pacific Women's Parliamentary Partnerships Project
PWPs	Pacific women parliamentarians
ROU	Record of Understanding
SPC	Secretariat of the Pacific Community
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UN Women	United Nations Women's Program
VAW	Violence Against Women
OECD DAC	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development - Development Assistance Committee

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Executive Summary

The mid-term evaluation of the Pacific Women Parliamentary Partnerships Project (PWPP), delivered by the Department of the House of Representatives (DHoR) has been commissioned by DFAT through the Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development (*Pacific Women*) Support Unit. The purpose of the evaluation is to undertake an independent assessment of the PWPP Project at the three-year point of its implementation to review progress and the effectiveness of strategies employed.

The Evaluation has considered the evaluation questions of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency undertaking a brief literature review, reviewed relevant program documents and engaged with 57 people either through interviews or a survey. This has included 17 Pacific parliamentarians¹, 7 Australian women parliamentarians and 12 Pacific parliamentary staff.

The evaluation demonstrated that the performance of PWPP is less than optimal. The design and project management has not reflected best practice. However, it is an important project that has merit. There is potential to recalibrate the project to capitalize on the limited but significant outcomes that have been achieved to date.

The flagship activity of PWPP is the Annual PWPP Forum. It 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 is the establishment of this network** which has produced a range of positive outcomes.

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. Embarking on gender-related reform in fragile Pacific democracies is an ambitious endeavor that must be handled with great sensitivity. Of itself, gender work within political institutions represents a challenge to deep-set structural and cultural biases. In a Pacific context – if carried out without adequate consideration or knowledge of unique cultural factors – such work could have significant negative consequences in terms of the personal safety of PWPs and the stability of Pacific parliamentary democracies. The wrong interventions could easily be counterproductive to the stated aim of improving gender equality within Pacific parliaments.

Relevance

The basis for the work

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 an overarching 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 Pacific Women Parliamentarians (PWPs) and parliamentary staff requests for face-to-face interactions, the reasons for doing so have not been adequately justified. The project has not been managed to DFAT standards, nor those commonly accepted as good-practice within international development. Of particular concern is the fact that the project does not appear to be grounded in a robust needs-assessment. For this reason, the project evolved with very little regard to whether strategies and activities were being properly targeted.

Contextual factors

¹ 16 Pacific Women Parliamentarians and one Pacific Male Parliamentarian

To be able to assess the relevance of strategies the evaluation considered pertinent contextual factors, including: the significant challenge of gender-related political reform in fragile democracies; programs and activities being conducted by other entities in the region being discombobulated; significant challenges faced by PWPs; the parliament to parliament twinning arrangements; and the fact that the Pacific is geographically vast and diverse in terms of distance, size of national and cultural and constitutional diversity.

Strategies employed and needed

PWPP's strategies had good merit in relation to its first objective – supporting PWPs. Primarily, this occurred through the establishment of a network through the Annual PWPP Forum and the mentoring and exchange program. As the project progressed, PWPP's resources became increasingly focused on the PWPP Annual Forum. This is reflected in the fact that, between 2013 and 2016, the Forum's budget rose from \$103,000 to \$284,000 and in 2017 the budget is \$345,000. On the one hand, this was an appropriate response to PWPs preference for face-to-face networking and collective modes of working. However, the absence of a programmatic approach meant program managers missed significant opportunities to better target the needs of PWPs – either through the Forum or other strategies.

The evaluation found that five strategies were needed that have not been delivered including: 1. a needs analysis upon which to base the project design; 2. targeted ongoing support to PWPs (mentoring and exchanges); 3. online tools; 4. collaboration, alignment and value-adding to regional efforts to increase influence; and 5. support for targeted strategic collective effort.

The interviews and surveys conducted for the evaluation reveal that the support needs (Objective 1.) of PWPs were only being partially targeted by the Forum and exchange activities. Primarily, interviewees and surveys of PWPs indicated a need for support to be provided throughout their political journey, unmet need for support relating to political strategy, collective action, media relations and constituent engagement – and for support to be cultural-situated.

Two strategies were implemented in relation to Objectives 2 and 3 of PWPP, which relate to promoting gender equality through improving mechanisms and the capacity of staff within Pacific parliaments. These strategies were the development of the *Outrigger* training package and the provision of scholarships for support staff to visit Australia and develop their research skills to increase gender-equality research capability of Pacific parliaments.

Each strategy has merit, but fall short of what is required to make a meaningful contribution to structural and cultural change within 15 different parliaments across the Pacific. This is not to say that project PWPP should or could have sole responsibility for addressing issues of this magnitude. However, in the absence of a robust design and monitoring and evaluation framework, there is very little assurance that PWPPs resources were targeted in the most efficient or effective manner. In fact, the evidence suggests otherwise.

The evaluation found that project management had been occurring with little cognisance of other initiatives occurring in the Pacific that were relevant to women's leadership or parliamentary reform. As a result, project managers were unaware of potential synergies and duplications that could have informed a more efficient and effective allocation of Project resources.

Modality

The modality is one of 'partnering' as the Project is situated as a partnership between Australian and the Pacific parliaments. The underlying assumption of this modality is that the project's objectives will be achieved through PWPs and Pacific parliaments accessing Australian, knowledge, skills and solutions, PWPs will become more effective and parliaments become more gender sensitive. This modality has some advantages – particularly for the first phase of this Project – but these are outweighed by the constraints of DHoR's organisational culture and mismatched expertise.

DHoR has a culture of service, rather than development and leadership. This has resulted in decisions being made by individuals without knowledge of the needs of PWPs. DHoR's lack of international development expertise has inhibited it from designing and implementing a Project that is sufficiently sophisticated to achieve the intended outcomes while navigating the considerable challenges of the Pacific context as mentioned earlier.

The strategies delivered are conditional upon involvement of Australian Parliamentarians and Parliamentary personnel. In practice, this has meant the Project has not benefited from specialist skills and expertise residing outside DHoR and the Australian parliament.

Effectiveness

Outcomes

The most significant outcomes were achieved in relation to support for PWPs through the establishment of a PWPP Network. This is a network of currently sitting Pacific women MPs (including Australian and New Zealand MPs) and was formed from the initial PWPP gathering in Sydney in 2013 and has since met four times (Tonga 2014, Fiji 2015, Samoa 2016). This network has effectively engaged PWPs. Respondents reported a range of significant benefits **such as: improved confidence; a sense of togetherness and solidarity; knowledge accumulation; the freedom to speak candidly;** greater knowledge of roles and responsibilities of being a parliamentarian **and increasing levels of assertiveness.**

There is evidence that some women have made specific changes to their behavior (e.g. after attending the Forum or an Exchange). However, PWPs have not been supported directly to act.

All respondents stated or displayed a change in belief that it is a woman's right to have equal representation in their Nation's parliament. They believe that the push for gender equality in Pacific parliaments has been established and there is now an acceptance, by the people engaged in this Project that women should be in parliament and that gender equality should be addressed in their nations.

PWPP has invested in a number of activities (Outrigger, research scholarships, attendance at conferences) 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.

Effectiveness of Strategies

The most effective strategies are the establishment of a network of PWPs, through the Annual PWPP Forum, and research scholarships. However, the implemented strategies could have been better planned and implemented and therefore led to better attainment of outcomes.

Lack of maximization of medium and longer term outcomes

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 attainment of intended outcomes.

Considering achievement against the program logic's intended outcomes, it can be expected, that after four years of investment there would have been better attainment of medium and longer term outcomes.

Efficiency

Value for Money

Overall, PWPP delivered a range of value-for-money 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.

Cost Effectiveness

The evaluation has suggested more cost effective ways of delivering these strategies and the project overall (e.g. by partnering with other agencies). However, for this evaluation it is more pertinent to consider if the strategies were the right ones to deliver in the first place. A more streamlined approach to project delivery would have resulted in greater efficiency overall.

PWPP is on track to be delivered within its overall allocated budget of AU\$2,850,037 over five years. However, it is important to note that several activities that were planned - and important to quality delivery – were not delivered.

Governance, management accountability and required capabilities

The standards of governance, management and accountability delivered by the Project management fall well short of DFAT standards. This is largely due to the different organisational culture of DHoR, compared to an agency that is calibrated toward effective program development and project management. DHoR 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. DHoR does have natural advantages in that it has expertise in parliamentary processes. Several respondents have also stated project staff have been good at building and maintaining relationships in the Pacific. However, this has not made up for skill deficiencies in other areas.

Leading Practice

PWPP needs to be considered in light of leading practice. There are various recent theories of change that represent leading practice in women's leadership and gender equality that should inform any refinements to the PWPP Project. These incorporate a focus on gender relations, yet this is largely missing from PWPP. Contemporary women's leadership and gender equality programs favour a stronger effort to support collective action in response to the complexities and depth of change needed. Distinguishing between women's leadership and gender mainstreaming is necessary to avoid counter productive outcomes in Pacific contexts.

Recommendations

The evaluation is optimistic that through implementation of the following recommendations there is potential to precipitate change through a revised program which is grounded in leading practice. In light of the findings of the evaluation, the project should be redesigned considering 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 particular niche that the Project needs to take. Should the investment focus on supporting UNDP Action 5 Supporting PWP's only or both Action 5 and Action 6. Following the principle of resourcing less Strategies but resourcing them well
- The principle of sustaining the outcomes achieved to date
- The principle of 'do no harm'
- A separation of support for Pacific women parliamentarians (a women's leadership mechanism) from support for Parliamentarians that are gender champions (a gender mainstreaming mechanism)

- The principle of collaboration and joined up effort leads to greater impact

Recommendation 1 - Alignment with *Pacific Women*

Consider the investment's inputs and strategies in relation to other diplomatic and programmatic efforts that are part of *Pacific Women* and DFAT in the region.

Recommendation 2 - Coordination and Collaboration

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.

Recommendation 3 - Modality

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.

Recommendation 4 – good design

Re calibrate the investment and ground it in good program design practice.

Recommendations considering the existing strategies of the current Project

Recommendation 5 - PWP Network / Forum

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.

Recommendation 6 - Individual support (mentoring and coaching)

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.

Recommendation 7 - Support collective effort as a priority

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.

Recommendation 8 - Engaging Parliamentary Staff

Completely reconsider the current strategies and activities that are addressing Objective 3: Parliaments to be more gender sensitive.

Pacific Women will need to test some of the recommendations of this evaluation at the next PWPP Forum in 2017 as only the views and wishes of PWPs and parliamentary staff that have engaged with the evaluation have been heard.

Overview

Pacific Women

Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development (*Pacific Women*) is a \$320 million, 10-year program (2012–2022) funded by DFAT. The program focuses on enabling women and men across the 14 Pacific Island Forum countries to improve the political, social and economic opportunities for women. It reflects the Government of Australia's commitment to work for improved equality and empowerment of women.

Pacific Women supports Pacific countries to meet the commitments made in the 2012 Pacific Leaders' Gender Equality Declaration. The Declaration commits countries to progress gender equality with particular attention to areas of gender-responsive government programs and policies, decision-making, economic empowerment, ending violence against women, and health and education.

In 2012, a delivery strategy was developed for *Pacific Women*. This strategy established the inter-connected nature of women's disempowerment in the Pacific and the need for change across several areas including:

- an enhanced knowledge and evidence base to inform policies and practice;
- strengthened women's groups, male advocates and coalitions for change;
- positive social change toward gender equality and women's agency;
- improved women's leadership and decision-making opportunities;
- increased economic opportunities for women;
- reduced violence against women and expanded support services; and
- improved gender outcomes in education and health.

Two interim program objectives were identified for *Pacific Women* to enable assessment of progress:

- By the end of the first three years of the program the capacity, resources and relationships are established and action in key result areas is evident across the country and regional program activities.
- By the end of Year Six, joined-up services and actions, independent of but informed by Pacific Women, will be evident in all 14 countries.

The four intended outcomes for *Pacific Women* include:

1. Women, and women's interests, are increasingly and effectively represented and visible through leadership at all levels of decision-making.
2. Women have expanded economic opportunities to earn income and accumulate economic assets.
3. Violence against women is reduced and survivors of violence have access to support services and to justice.
4. Women in the Pacific will have a stronger sense of their own agency, supported by a changing legal and social environment and through increased access to the services that they need.

The PWPP Project specifically contributes to *Pacific Women* intended outcome one.

The Pacific Women Parliamentary Partnerships (PWPP) Project (2013-2018)

With only 5.7% of parliamentarians across the Pacific (excluding Australia and New Zealand) being women, the PWPP Project contributes to the first intended outcome of *Pacific Women*. It aims to build the capacity of Pacific women parliamentarians (PWP), the institutions in which they work, and their staff to ensure that gender equality issues are better addressed in Pacific parliaments.

The PWPP Project works with parliaments in the Pacific Islands Forum community and the parliament of the Autonomous Region of Bougainville. It is delivered through the Parliamentary Skills Centre, Department of the House of Representatives (DHoR) in Australia and has three end-of-project objectives:

- Pacific women parliamentarians are supported in their parliamentary and representational work and are better able to use parliamentary mechanisms to raise gender equality issues.
- Pacific parliaments have improved mechanisms to raise and effectively consider gender equality issues and engage their communities on those issues.
- Parliamentary staff have improved capacity to support the gender equality work of parliaments.

The budget for the PWPP Project is AU\$2,850,037 over five years. The PWPP Project annually brings together the 35 currently elected Pacific women parliamentarians with Australian and New Zealand women parliamentarians at the PWPP Forum. The Project also delivers a number of other capacity building activities.

Evaluation

Evaluation Objectives

The evaluation has been commissioned by DFAT. The purpose of the evaluation is to undertake an independent assessment of the PWPP Project at the three-year point of its implementation to review progress and the effectiveness of strategies employed.

In alignment with PWPP Project objectives, there will be a focus on identification of effective strategies for:

- supporting Pacific women parliamentarians in their parliamentary and representational work;
- ensuring that Pacific women parliamentarians are better able to use parliamentary mechanisms in order to raise gender equality issues;
- improving mechanisms for Pacific parliaments to raise and effectively consider gender equality issues and engage their communities on those issues; and
- improving the capacity of parliamentary staff to support the gender equality work of parliaments.

This is a formative evaluation focused on establishing the extent of progress, effective strategies, and transferable lessons for engaging and supporting Pacific women parliamentarians and Pacific parliaments to identify, consider and respond to gender equality issues.

Evaluation Methodology

The evaluation takes stock and identifies effective strategies, challenges and areas for program improvement. This evaluation considers the extent to which progress has been made and identify those aspects of the program that are progressing well, those that are not, with reasons for both. There is a focus on the

identification of lessons learned that can inform future programming with associated recommendations to guide program improvement.

The Evaluation Questions are:

1. Relevance
 - 1.1. What was the basis for the selection of strategies for delivery as part of the PWPP Project design?
 - 1.2. What are the relevant contextual factors?
 - 1.3. Within this context, to what extent were the strategies employed the right ones for achieving Project objectives for women parliamentarians, parliamentary staff and Pacific parliaments? and
 - 1.4. Within this context, were there strategies that could have been delivered that were not, and if so, why?
 - 1.5. To what extent was the chosen modality the most appropriate for achieving Project objectives?
2. Effectiveness
 - 2.1. What short to medium term outcomes were evident from the aggregate of activities delivered?
 - 2.2. Of the strategies delivered, which could be considered the most effective for achieving intended short to medium term outcomes?
 - 2.3. Under what circumstances, and to what extent, were women parliamentarians supported in their roles? What were the barriers and the enablers?
 - 2.4. To what extent were women parliamentarians able to participate in and influence decision-making in parliament?
 - 2.5. To what extent were women parliamentarians able to effectively represent the needs and rights of all women and achieve improved development outcomes for women and families? What were the barriers and enablers?
3. Efficiency
 - 3.1. Has the PWPP Project delivered value-for-money¹ and which activities delivered greatest value for money?
 - 3.2. Were there alternate ways of delivering the activities that could be considered to be more cost effective?
 - 3.3. Were there any areas of inefficiency that could have been streamlined?
 - 3.4. To what extent was the PWPP Project well-governed, well-managed and accountable?
 - 3.5. Were the required levels of personnel and skills in place to support program delivery?
 - 3.6. Were the activities delivered on time and on budget?

To address these questions an evaluation plan was developed that outlined the evaluation methodology. An evaluation reference group was established to provide oversight, consisting of: Gaye Moore (DFAT Canberra), Emily Miller and Anne Markiewicz (*Pacific Women* Support Unit in Suva), with Anne as the Chair.

The evaluation plan was developed in consultation with the evaluation reference group and Fiona Way, the PWPP Program Manager, Parliamentary Skills Centre, DHoR. This group felt that further attention was needed to define the Project design and hence a small workshop was held in Canberra to clarify the PWPP Project Program Logic, strategies and activities with Gaye Moore and Fiona Way in attendance. A Program logic and strategy and activity descriptions are at Figure 1.

A targeted review of the literature on international good practice for supporting women parliamentarians was conducted. This is at Appendix 1. This evaluation has worked closely with the Consultant developing the 'Synthesis report on Women's Leadership' (Rodrigues 2016) that was being written simultaneously to this evaluation. A draft of this has been shared with the evaluation team and it contains a detailed analysis of contextual factors and literature that a Pacific Women's Leadership project needs to consider. We have drawn on this report in analysis.

Relevant programmatic and correspondence documents provided to the Evaluators were analysed. An evaluation stakeholder engagement matrix was developed and an evaluation information sheet to communicate the evaluation to respondents is at Appendix 2.

It was decided to both conduct semi-structured interviews and surveys with as many program participants as possible to increase the accessibility to Pacific women parliamentarians. The online survey was developed using the SMAP platform. The interview questions and survey is provided at Appendix 3. Participation by stakeholder group is provided at Appendix 4. Most Significant Change stories were gathered and have been developed into brief case studies and vignettes. Codes referencing the source, against evidential statements are made in square brackets [].

The draft value-for-money rubric that is being piloted and tested by *Pacific Women* as part of the Year 3 evaluation of *Pacific Women*, has been adapted and used for an assessment of the project's value for money. Other analysis rubrics were also developed and used for analysis of various elements of analysis including assessment of support needs for Pacific women parliamentarians.

Limitations

The key limitation of this evaluation was accessibility to Pacific informants. The original design relied on project participants being able to access an online survey and or participate in an interview via Skype and then participate in a webinar where key findings would be shared and feedback sort. This was based on the assumptions that these Pacific participants had access to reasonable information technology, had the time and inclination to participation in the evaluation. We have found that this is not the case and that accessing Pacific participants proved very difficult. The evaluation did achieve its target of 34 interviews but only 23 Surveys of 100 Invited participants were completed. Overall 57 people were engaged with including 16 Pacific Women parliamentarians, 1 Pacific male parliamentarian, 7 Australian women parliamentarians and 12 Pacific parliamentary staff. For the full breakdown see Appendix 4.

The evaluation could have achieved better access to Pacific women parliamentarians. This evaluation did not include travel to Project participant locations and relied on participants having access to the Internet and telephones to undertake interviews and fill out the survey. Many of the evaluation participants were extremely busy travelling internationally and it was clearly difficult for them to allocate time to undertake an Interview. This is not ideal as it is the voice of the Pacific women participants that is essential in this work. We recommend that future evaluations include face-to-face contact.

The relevance and efficiency questions lend themselves to a stronger focus on literature, project documentation and strategic key informant interviews as opposed to participant interviews and the survey.

Given this, the evaluation is only somewhat confident that the views and wishes of Pacific women parliamentarians and parliamentary staff have been heard and would recommend that the recommendations of this evaluation be tested at the next PWPP Forum in 2017 by *Pacific Women*.

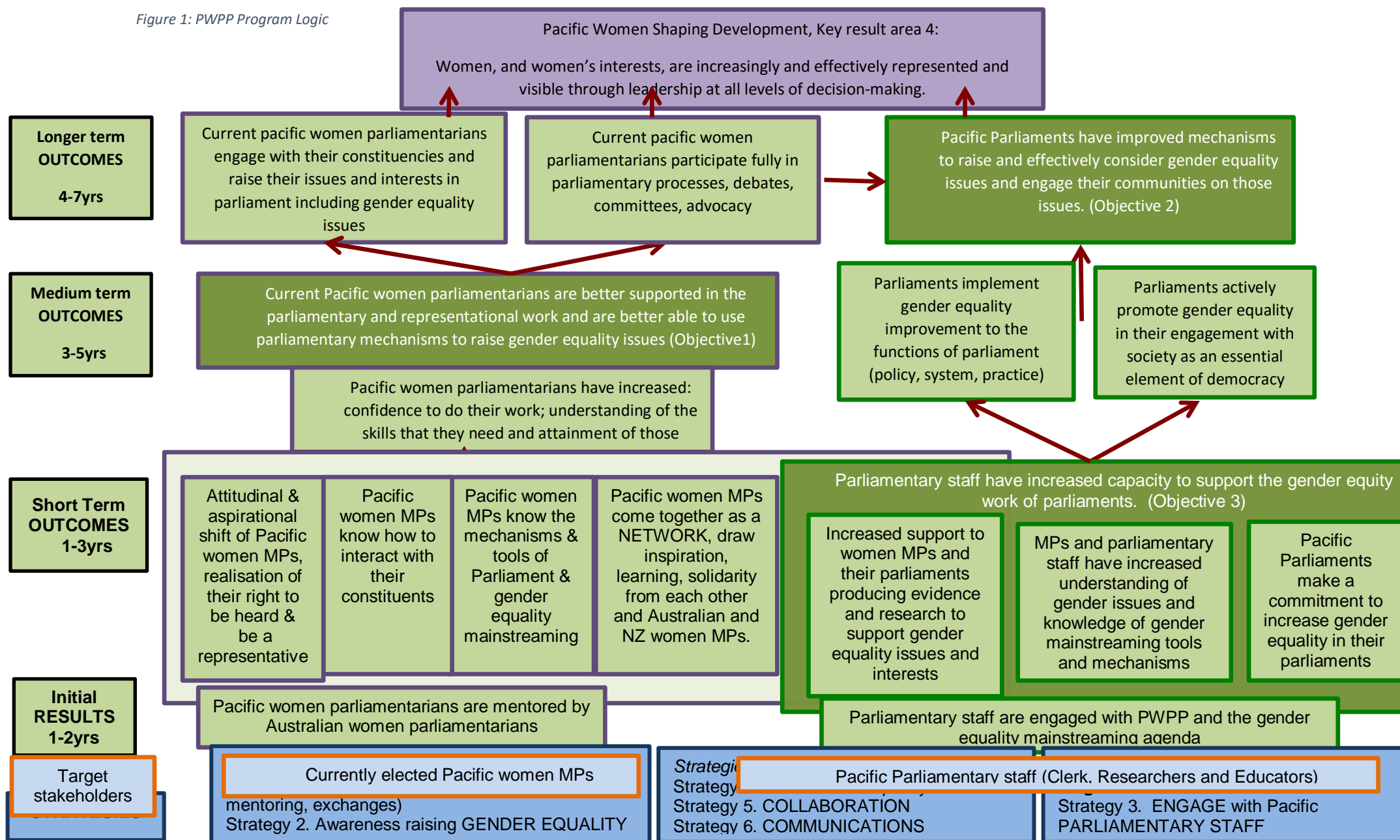
The Project design

For the purposes of evaluation the evaluators needed to establish a clear description of the Project design as the underlying rational is unclear due to the absence of a robust project design or program logic in documentation. In a program logic workshop with DFAT and the PWPP Project manager, a PWPP Project clarification Logic was developed (see Figure 1, next page). One of the challenges in this evaluation has been in defining the strategies and activities of the Project. In program documentation and practice the strategies are not clear and different Project staff and stakeholders have different perspectives on this. To address this the evaluation team has named, defined and classified the strategies (and activities) to be able to evaluate them. These described strategies (presented below in Table 1) are situated under the two identified pathways in the Program Logic. There are several other minor activities that have taken place but focus will be on strategies that were implemented to an extent to consider them an intended strategy of the Project.

Table 1: PWPP strategies and activities, as described by the evaluators.

Strategies and Activities	
Two strategies aimed at SUPPORTING Women Parliamentarians including: 1. Establishment of a NETWORK to support PWP: Activities: 1.1 The Annual PWPP Forum 1.2 Mentoring and Exchanges	3. Strategy to ENGAGE with Pacific PARLIAMENTARY STAFF to increase their capacity to improve the gender sensitivity of Pacific Parliaments. Activities: 3.1 Development of training package: 'Outrigger: Navigating gender equality through Pacific parliaments.' 3.2 Networking Parliamentary staff (attendance at APEC and other events, gatherings).
2. Awareness raising about GENDER EQUALITY and strategies to implement and other training to be an effective MP	
<i>Strategies that contribute to both pathways</i>	
4. Strategy to increase gender equality RESEARCH capability of parliament for use by gender champions through research scholarships to Australia.	
5. COLLABORATION and alignment with other regional stakeholders	
6. COMMUNICATIONS including a website	

Figure 1: PWPP Program Logic



Assessment of Relevance

1. The Relevance Evaluation Questions are:

- 1.1. What was the basis for the selection of strategies for delivery as part of the PWPP Project design?
- 1.2. What are the relevant contextual factors?
- 1.3. Within this context, to what extent were the strategies employed the right ones for achieving Project objectives for women parliamentarians, parliamentary staff and Pacific parliaments? and
- 1.4. Within this context, were there strategies that could have been delivered that were not, and if so, why?
- 1.5. To what extent was the chosen modality the most appropriate for achieving Project objectives?

1.1 What was the basis for the selection of strategies for delivery as part of the PWPP project design?

- There is a general mandate for the project, but the underlying rationale is unclear **due to the absence of an overarching project design or program logic.**
- **PWPP is framed by four inconsistent documents that do not clearly articulate the project's strategies and underlying rationale.**
- **The existing strategies do not reflect those in the initial project design and the rationale for this has not been adequately documented.**

There is a general mandate for the project, but the underlying rationale is unclear

PWPP's overall direction is consistent with the United Nations Millennium Development Goal 3 (to 'promote gender equality and empower women'). The proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments is one of the UN's three key indicators used to monitor progress toward this goal. Further impetus arose from the Pacific Islands Forum Declaration on Gender Equality of 30 August 2012.

The project's mandate arose from the first PWPP forum, which was held in Sydney during February 2013. The purpose of the forum was to present the PWPP Project concept and seek feedback and guidance to clarify the project's design. The forum was attended by 45 Pacific and Australian women parliamentarians from across the Pacific and Australia.

During the forum, the UNDP's paper *Gender Equality in Elected Office in Asia Pacific: six actions to Expand Women's Empowerment* (the UNDP paper) was presented by Professor Pippa Norris of Harvard University. The paper's six-step action plan is summarised in Table 2.

Table 2: UNDP six step action plan to promote gender equality in elected office

1) Constitutional right	Guarantee equal citizenship rights for women and men, including rights to the voting suffrage and to candidate nomination.
2) Electoral system	Reform the type of electoral system- proportional representation with large mean district magnitudes maximizes opportunities for women.
3) Legal quotas	Review laws regulating candidate recruitment processes for all parties- the uses of reserved seats for women members or gender quotas for candidates generally expand women's representation.
4) Party rules and recruitment procedures	Review internal candidate recruitment process within specific parties - fast-track strategies designed to achieve gender equality for nominated candidates are implemented through quotas and targets specified in party rulebooks and regulations.
5) Capacity development	Strengthen the skills and resources of women for elected office, with initiatives by parties the media, and NGOs, including knowledge networks, mentoring programs, skills training, and funding for women candidates.
6) Parliamentary reforms	Reform the rules and internal procedures, including the facilities and working conditions provided for members, such as those determining the hours and days of sitting, the principles used for recruitment to leadership positions, and the provision of childcare facilities.

The first four actions relate to increasing the participation of women in leadership roles and improving the political acumen of female electoral candidates. The forum agreed that significant effort was already being made in relation to these issues, but inadequate consideration had been given to providing support to women once they are elected to parliament.² For this reason, actions five and six were chosen as the main focus for PWPP's work.

While the general mandate for the project is relatively clear, there is a significant degree of uncertainty regarding the project's strategies and the underlying rationale for their selection. Primarily, this is because the project lacks a single, overarching document that articulates a robust project design and program logic. As a result, there is little assurance that a rigorous, evidence-based process was used for the selection of the project's strategies.

During interviews, strategic stakeholders within DHoR, DFAT and UNDP and consultants involved in the work had somewhat different perspectives on the project's core attributes. To varying degrees, stakeholders referenced four different documents when responding to questions about the project's design and rationale. However, these documents do not collectively provide a consistent description of strategies, nor clearly articulate a robust underlying rationale. The following section outlines each of these documents in more detail.

PWPP is framed by four inconsistent documents

These documents are:

- the original PWPP Project Proposal (Revised) April 2013 document
- a UNDP report (Gender Equality in Elected Office in Asia Pacific: six actions to Expand

² Document 1. Original Project Design 2013.

Women's Empowerment)

- the Outcomes Statement from the first PWPP forum in Sydney 2013
- the Record of Understanding between DFAT and the DHoR.

Original PWPP Project Proposal (revised) document (2013)

The original PWPP Project Proposal (revised) document 2013 ('original design') outlines three Objectives and several Activities. These are summarised in Table 3. Please note that 'PWPs' refers to Pacific women parliamentarians. This abbreviation is used in Table 3 and throughout this document.

Table 3: Objectives and Activities in original PWPP design

Objectives	PWPs are supported in their parliamentary and representational work and are better able to use parliamentary mechanisms to raise gender equality issues.	Pacific parliaments have improved mechanisms to raise and effectively consider gender equality issues and engage their communities on those issues.	Parliamentary staff have improved capacity to support the gender equality work of parliaments.
Activities	<p>Women MP exchanges (trialed 13, expanded 2-14-15)</p> <p>Online networking platform (duration)</p> <p>Parliamentary training</p> <p>Community engagement forums (trialed 13, expanded 2014-15)</p> <p>Follow up on community engagement forums</p> <p>Youth engagement forum (2014)</p>	<p>In-country needs assessments and self-assessments (trialed 2013, expanded 2014-15)</p> <p>Follow up from needs assessments</p> <p>IPU workshop on improving parliaments capacity to address gender equality (July 2013)</p> <p>Supporting parliamentary oversight on gender equality (duration)</p> <p>Group study visits to Pacific countries without women MPs (2014&2016)</p> <p>Regional workshop to discuss the project's progress (annually)</p>	<p>Parliamentary Skills Scholarships (2 in 2013, & 3 each yr. following)</p> <p>Parliamentary research support service for parliamentary staff (%MPs (ongoing))</p> <p>Research workshop for Parliamentary staff (2014)</p> <p>Building a research base for pacific parliaments (from 2013 to 2015)</p>

The original design acknowledges the correlation between women's presence in political institutions, and the achievement of gender equality in the broader community. The document reflects an intent to use existing 'parliamentary twinning arrangements' as a means of helping to achieving this objective. Parliamentary twinning is a relationship between two parliaments that provides the opportunity to enhance relations, exchange information and learn from each other (CPA, 2016). Twinning is an initiative of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA).

Importantly, the document explicitly states that its contents are preliminary in nature and that further consultation and needs assessment is required to further develop and refine the design. Attached to the document is advice from AusAID recommending further development of the design, as well as the development and inclusion of a monitoring and evaluation framework. There is no evidence that this advice has been considered to any meaningful degree.

Gender Equality in Elected Office in Asia Pacific: six actions to Expand Women's Empowerment

As previously mentioned, the first PWPP Forum featured a presentation of the UNDP's paper. The contents of the paper are summarised above in Table 2. While action five and six were chosen as PWPP's focus, the focus of Pacific women and men parliamentarians striving for gender equity relates to all six actions and for this reason there is significant overlap needed in the implementation of effort. This is important to note because, although PWPP directly focuses on action 5 and 6, the other actions are also discussed, analysed and planned at PWPP events. This overlapping nature established the need for there to be coordination between the Agencies (UN Women, UNDP, *Pacific Women Support Unit*, IWDA etc) committed to working towards these six actions in the Pacific.

'Outcomes Statement' from the first PWPP forum in Sydney 2013

The first Forum declared that 'Women members of Pacific Parliaments ... forge friendships and build a new path forward in addressing gender equality'³ The Forum established 12 agreed priorities (Table 4).

Table 4: Abbreviated Sydney Forum Outcomes Statement priorities.

1.	Mentoring between women parliamentarians, both within the Pacific and Australia and New Zealand
2.	Creating an online platform to strengthen networking and implement strategies as a bank of information including draft legislation and gender mainstreaming information.
3.	Ensure that where IT capacity is needed alternative communications are used.
4.	Further development and embedding this project in Twinning relationships
5.	Extending the network to include countries that are not part of the Commonwealth
6.	A suite of inputs mainly delivered through workshops on gender equality in country and the region.
7.	Creating a cross-party parliamentary body that is responsible for ensuring that parliament raises gender equality issues and legislation. The body must include men.
8.	Supporting male champions of gender equality
9.	Using alternative media sources to promote the work of women in parliament.
10.	Requiring all countries to report back on progress in achieving the outcomes of the 2012 Pacific Islands Forum Declaration on Gender Equality, and that reports be debated in parliament and, in doing so seek a relationship with the Pacific Islands Forum
11.	Facilitating women parliamentarians' joint submission to the Pacific Plan Review and the engagement of women in each country parliaments' report
12.	Organising a forum every year, with the next one in the Pacific, to sustain the networks and momentum.

'Record of Understanding' between DFAT and the DHoR

The 'Record of Understanding' between DFAT and the DHoR is the contractual agreement between the funder and the implementing partner. This document outlines the Goal of the Project to be: to build capacity of women MPs in the Pacific and develop understanding of the factors that contribute to Pacific women's success in achieving political office and the support they require once they are elected. And then lists seven project objectives, namely:

- a) Create strategic partnerships between women MPs in the Pacific and Australia;
- b) Provide Pacific women MPs with on-the-job training in community consultation;
- c) Enhance Pacific parliaments' capacity to engage their communities on gender issues;

³ PWPP Forum Outcomes Statement 2013.

- d) Improve capacity of Pacific parliamentary staff in parliamentary skills and research;
- e) Raise awareness of the concepts and practices underpinning a 'gender sensitive parliament' among MPs in the Pacific;
- f) Identify and develop the capacity of potential young women leaders in the Pacific;
- g) Commission research in areas where knowledge gaps have been identified, specifically in respect of the cultural obstacles to women's access to parliament in the Pacific.

The original Record of Understanding^{4,5} outlines that the project will be delivered in two distinct phases:

- **Phase 1:** Needs assessment and revision and finalisation of project design, including monitoring and evaluation framework. This document also outlines that, based on feedback from the first Forum, the Project will design will be revised, including a monitoring and evaluation framework.
- **Phase 2:** Implementation of project in accordance to the final design document.

The rationale for project management to be situated with the then 'International and Community Relationship Office (ICRO)⁶ at the Australian Department of the House of Representatives, was that they have 'demonstrated a comparative advantage in the coordination of parliamentary strengthening activities in the Pacific through... partnering with the UNDP to deliver the Pacific Parliamentary Partnerships program and the twinned Australian and Pacific Parliaments'⁷. This discussion is further addressed at Evaluation Question 1.5.

The existing strategies do not reflect those in the initial project design and the rationale for this has not been adequately documented.

The intended redesign and development of the PWPP Project including a Theory of Change and a Monitoring and Evaluation Framework has not taken place to a satisfactory level to be able to garner an understanding of the rationale for the current strategies. The strategies that have been implemented are somewhat different to those outlined in the original program design. What we can establish is that mentoring or partnering was considered a central strategy of the original Project however it is not central to how the Project is being delivered now.

The original intention was to hold a gathering of Pacific women and Australian women parliamentarians at the beginning and end of the project only. These two gatherings were to engage and consult on the design of the Project and then reflect on progress at the end of the Project. Most of the Project effort was planned to be in other strategies such as mentoring, training and online tools. At the initial PWPP Forum in Sydney (2013), Pacific women parliamentarians declared that a gathering should be held each year. From this point on, the Annual PWPP Forum has dominated the work of the Project and has become its flagship strategy. Thus, the Project has shifted in focus and the main Strategy is 'the facilitation of a network that has an annual gathering as its main event' [113]. For some respondents the PWPP Project has become known as the Annual PWPP Forum.

⁴ Because this Project is commissioned from one Australian government department (DFAT) to another Australian Parliament a contract is not required. The instrument used is a 'Record of Understanding'.

⁵ Section 4.1, 4.2

⁶ The International and Community Relationship Office (ICRO) originally managed the project. It is now called the Parliamentary Skills Centre.

⁷ P16, Pacific Women's Parliamentary Partnerships Project Proposal to AusAID, Original Project Proposal, by Mr Andres Lomp, Director International and Community Relations Office Parliament of Australia. March 2013.

It is also difficult to establish a complete rationale for the strategies that have been implemented as there is no clear documentation of a rationale for the change to strategies over time other than the key shifts to face-to-face delivery (Annual PWPP Forum and Outrigger learning package). Therefore the evaluation needed to establish a program logic and a description of the strategies that can be reasonably expected to have been delivered so as to be able to have clear elements to evaluate (Chapter Project Design).

1.2 What are the relevant contextual factors?

The evaluation has explored relevant contextual factors⁸ to be able to address the relevance of strategies. These are:

- **The challenge of gender-related political reform in fragile democracies**
- **Programs and activities being conducted by other entities in the region**
- **Challenges faced by Pacific women Parliamentarians**
- **Parliament to parliament twinning arrangements.**
- **The Pacific is geographically vast and diverse in terms of distance, size of nations and cultural and constitutional diversity**

The challenge of pursuing gender-related political reform in fragile democracies

Aiming to increase gender equity in Pacific Parliaments is gender mainstreaming at a deep structural level (Rao and Kelleher, 2002). Such efforts represent a challenge to patriarchal power structures that are deeply rooted in local culture and deeply embedded in political institutions. As one interviewee put it:

‘This (gender) work is challenging the deepest and strongest political institutions of these nations’ [I02].

The challenge of doing so is exacerbated by the fragile nature of Pacific democracies – a fragility that is well documented. One of the most common challenges is the tension between the traditional chiefly system of government and the advent of national representative democracy.

As one interviewee noted:

‘They (Pacific Nations) have minimal or weak democratic systems. Representational democracy is a challenge in itself.’ [I04]

This necessitates an ability to pursue structural reform without causing collateral damage to fragile, fledgling democracies and increased violence. A good understanding of the political economy of Pacific nations is required, [I02] as well as a sound working knowledge of the intersection of traditional chiefly systems and democratic systems in the unique context of each nation.

⁸ Note: The Synthesis Report on Women’s Leadership (Rodrigues 2016) is being written simultaneously to the conduct of this evaluation. The evaluation team have been provided with a draft, which contains a detailed analysis of contextual factors that Pacific Women’s Leadership projects need to consider. The contextual factors considered in this evaluation correlate strongly with those in the draft report.

Programs and activities being conducted by other entities in the region

A range of organisations are engaging in activities that are relevant to the objectives of PWPP and *Pacific Women*. These organisations include UNDP, UN Women, IWDA and other NGO's, other DFAT programs and the New Zealand Government and other government programs. Some of these entities participate in the twinning arrangements between parliaments. Proper coordination of these activities is necessary in order to exploit synergies, avoid duplication of effort, and ensure organisations are not operating at cross-purposes.

It is generally understood that there is a lack of agency coordination and alignment of effort in gender mainstreaming, parliaments and women's leadership space in the Pacific. The work has also been accused of being add hock and last minute. For example:

- All sector stakeholders interviewed and documented (Rodrigues 2016) stated that efforts are discombobulated and that 'last minute efforts to support women candidates is not good enough' [I01, I02].
- This work lies at the intersection of two sectors; 1. Parliaments, governance and democracy and 2. Gender mainstreaming. Making alignment more complex Rodrigues (2016) found that "change requires complementary interventions at all levels" (p3).
- DFAT (2013, 2015, 2016) highlighted this challenge in advice to the PWPP team.

In acknowledgement and to address this together UN Women and UNDP held a regional workshop in September 2016 in Fiji, aimed at better coordination of regional efforts.

Overall, the apparent lack of a sufficient level of agency coordination and alignment in the Pacific of Agency's efforts has hindered attainment of intended outcomes.

Challenges faced by Pacific women Parliamentarians

Interview and survey respondents outlined a range of serious challenges confronting PWPs and the significant part they are playing in spear heading the task of redefining gender relations in their nation. In particular, PWPs face violence and threats of violence during election processes. Rodrigues (2016) highlights the fact that 'the intersection between politics, money and violence also has a serious chilling effect on the ability and desire of women to participate in political life...' (p7). This finding is affirmed by the Draft Women's Leadership Synthesis Report, which states that:

'Anecdotal feedback indicates a genuine fear amongst some women leaders and ordinary people to speak out on issues of democracy and development. At the personal level, evidence and research indicates that intimate partner violence and family violence is particularly high in the Pacific and women are often subjected to multiple forms of abuse, often exacerbated by cultural practices and social norms.' (Ending Violence Against Women team Synthesis Report, 2013)

Other significant challenges faced by PWPs include:

- Violence and threats of violence in election processes and in office – "every women that is a MP gets the same abuse: *you should be at home, you are ugly, you should be looking after the children*, we all experience this and that is what we share" [I22]
- Disadvantages in engaging with their constituencies – Women are often excluded from spaces where meaningful engagement occurs, e.g. women are not invited to Kava circles where many

important community decisions are discussed and made.

- Political corruption and lack of transparency – PWPs feel as though there are few people they can trust within political institutions [I02, I04, I25].
- Resistance to gender equality – Relations with male MPs are often made difficult by the fact that many do not believe in gender equality.
- The pressure of having to display leadership, be a role model and spear head changing gender relations – As recognized by respondents and Rodrigues (2016) gives one example ‘...simply having more women MPs has an important role-modeling effect for young women contemplating their own leaderships potential and even a handful of effective, pro gender women MP’ can still have a positive effect...” (p8)
- Public scrutiny – PWPs are unaccustomed to public office and therefore the high levels of public and media criticism that come with it [I25].
- Pay disparity – PWPs are often paid less in office compared to what they would otherwise earn elsewhere. [I12]
- Domestic life - PWPs still have responsibility for their family and household.

Parliament to parliament twinning arrangements

In this context, twinning is defined as a relationship between two parliaments (CPA, 2016). The concept of twinning is like the ‘sister city’ relationships that exist between cities of different countries. The twinning arrangements provide the opportunity to enhance relations, exchange information and learn from each other. Australian and Pacific parliaments that belong to the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) are participating in this twinning program. The twinned parliaments sign an agreement that commits them to exchanges of information, undertake training activities together and exchanges of visits to assist with the professional development of parliamentarians and parliamentary staff. The twinned Australian and Pacific parliaments are:

- Australian Capital Territory with Kiribati
- New South Wales with Bougainville and Solomon Islands
- Northern Territory with Niue
- Queensland with Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu
- South Australia with Tonga and the Marshall Islands
- Tasmania with Samoa
- Victoria with Nauru and Tuvalu
- Western Australia with Cook Islands

The national parliaments of Australia and New Zealand provide an overall coordination role for the twinning program, through the Pacific Parliamentary Partnerships Program.

It is important to note ‘There are two different spaces, gender development and supporting parliaments. This project is situated in the parliaments space. It is a quality driver. Through this project Australian governments can be building relationships with Pacific parliaments. It is a good thing because they as institutions will not go away. Relations are important for long term diplomatic relations in the region as opposed to organisations that take a development approach who’s intent is to build capacity and then step away’. [I01] hence situating the PWPP in this Twinning context is a helping factor.

Given this, the broader twinning parliament to parliament arrangements comparatively have almost no financial support. ‘The broader ‘twinning program’ was developed first but comparatively it has

little financial input' [I101]. (However) relations are important for long term diplomatic relations in the region and for support of DFAT and *Pacific Women* in general [I03]

Compared to the PWPP Project, the twinning arrangements do not receive specific financial support and hence the twinning activities are ad hoc and require motivated individuals to activate them. It is also difficult to coordinate efforts with twinning arrangements because there isn't a single co-ordination point.

Overall, situating this Project in the twinning arrangement has helped progress the PWPP Project as the activities of the Project leverage off existing arrangements. They are an investment in a parliament to parliament relationships, which may lead to more sustainable diplomatic relationships between parliaments and a structure on which to hang the work of PWPP.

Challenges of working in the Pacific context

The Pacific is a vast region featuring hundreds of islands spread over vast stretches of ocean. This creates makes travel expensive and logistically challenging, and communication difficult considering the region's limited capacity in terms of IT infrastructure and resources [I03, I05].

Pacific nations are very different to each other in size. For example, PNG's population was 7.3 million in 2013 and Niue's population was 1,190 in 2014. There is a desire to hold the Forum in different countries, however it is logistically easier and more cost-efficient for participants to attend one of the larger countries relative to smaller nations. Furthermore, smaller nations generally do not have the capacity to host such a large event.

Although the Pacific is often considered as a homogenous region, the diversity and difference between the nations in the Pacific is significant and hinders the Project. There are three cultural sub regions being Melanesia, Micronesia, and Polynesia and Pacific nations which have several different constitutional systems. This adds complexity due to the considerable time and effort needed to adapt interventions to fit each nation's context. For example, the Outrigger learning package required content needed to be applicable across nations with different constitutions, systems of governance and size of their Parliamentary institutions. As a result, Outrigger became a 'lowest common denominator' package rather than a tool that was tailored to the specific needs of each country.

1.3 To what extent were the strategies employed the right ones for achieving Project objectives for women parliamentarians, parliamentary staff and Pacific parliaments?

- **PWPP's strategies only partially addressed the support needs of PWPs.**
- **PWPP's strategies were not sufficiently well-designed to address the complex nature of gender equity within parliaments across the Pacific**

In general, given the context the strategies employed were appropriate but the project has departed from the original plan and has fallen short of addressing needs overall.

Ideally, a consideration of relevance should be grounded in an understanding of the size of the intervention. It is difficult to make an informed judgment regarding this without an appreciation of

the scale and depth of need, or a detailed knowledge of other agencies' interventions in this space. As there are significant uncertainties in relation to the project design and underlying rationale, the appropriateness of strategies was assessed based on whether the strategies addressed need.

PWPP's strategies only partially address the support needs of PWPs

This section assesses the relevance of strategies implemented in relation to Objective 1, namely:

Pacific women parliamentarians are supported in their parliamentary and representational work and are better able to use parliamentary mechanisms to raise gender equality issues

In pursuit of this objective, PWPP implemented:

- Strategy 1: Establishment of a network to support PWPs
(activities included The Annual PWPP Forum and Mentoring and Exchange)
- Strategy 2: Awareness raising regarding gender equality
(activities included training on gender and other topics during the Forum)

The strategy of networking through an annual event was not in the original design. Rather, it was an appropriate response to PWPs preference for face-to-face networking and collective modes of working that allows for Pacific solutions to Pacific issues. Similarly, gender equality training was intuitively a worthy response to contextual factors such as the complexity and depth of change required to political and parliamentary systems and cultural beliefs. However, the absence of a needs analysis has meant missed opportunities for PWPP's strategies to better support PWPs.

How do we know this? In the absence of a needs assessment, we identified PWP's needs by asking respondents the following question:

What support do Pacific women MP's need to be effective parliamentarians?

All 56 respondents to the interviews and surveys including 16 PWPs shared their views on this question providing rich feedback. It is interesting to note that while the responses that PWPs gave were clear the responses that Pacific parliamentary staff and Australian women parliamentarians gave were more direct and illustrative practically affirming the support that PWPs mentioned. We then mapped the PWPP strategies and activities against these needs. The results are summarised in Table 5, which highlights missed opportunities to provide targeted support to PWPs. A more detailed version with examples is provided in Appendix 6.

The Project was never intended to address all of these needs but rather find its particular niche in this work. It is not within scope for the Project to support PWPs through the full electoral cycle, or do general community gender equality awareness. However, this analysis does give a glimpse as to what strategies can be expected to have been implemented. This is discussed in the next section.

Table 5: Support needed for Pacific women MP's to be effective parliamentarians

Support needed (as identified by survey respondents and interviewees)	Support provided by PWPP
BROADER SUPPORT Support should be provided throughout a PWP's political journey – from their initial election, being in office and to re-election.	None
CONFIDENCE BUILDING Building and maintaining personal strength and confidence through sisterhood solidarity	The annual PWPP Forum (network) effectively provides sisterhood solidarity and builds personal strength and confidence
IDENTITY & STRATEGY	Informal support through Forum

Understanding their role / their power and then a personal strategy for what they want to achieve	
KNOWLEDGE & SKILLS Knowledge, understanding and skills to undertake their role and implement their own personal strategy	PWPP has provided some of this through sessions at the Annual Forum
GENDER RELATIONS Support to carefully and effectively redefine, in their cultural context, the gender relations between women and men in their country, beginning with between female MPs and male MPs.	PWPs informally gained through participation at the Forum
ENGAGE CONSTITUENCY Support to engage their constituency and the general population.	None
CULTURALLY- SITUATED SUPPORT that is tailored and strategic	PWPs informally gained through participation at the Forum – but it is not tailored and strategic
POLITICAL ACUMEN Political strategist / advice	None
COLLECTIVE ACTION Establishment of an organising group	None
AWARENESS of gender equity in the general population	None (not in scope)

PWPP's strategies were not sufficiently well-designed to address the complex nature of gender equity within parliaments across the Pacific

This section assesses the relevance of strategies implemented in relation to Objective 2 and Objective 3, namely:

Pacific parliaments have improved mechanisms to raise and effectively consider gender equality issues and engage their communities on those issues

Parliamentary staff have improved capacity to support the gender equality work of parliaments

In pursuit of these objectives, PWPP implemented Strategies 3 and 4:

- Strategy 3: Engage with Pacific parliamentary staff to increase their capacity to improve the gender sensitivity of Pacific Parliaments (activities included the development of the training package: 'Outrigger Navigating gender equality through Pacific parliaments'. And networking Parliamentary staff).
- Strategy 4: Strategy to increase gender equality RESEARCH capability of parliament for use by gender champions through research scholarships to Australia.

These strategies have merit but fall short of what is required to meaningfully pursue Objective 2. Strategies have not been informed by a robust needs analysis, which would have provided a greater appreciation of the scale, complexity and challenges inherent to the problem being addressed. While it is useful to bear in mind the project's limited scope, the strategies nevertheless amount to a fraction of what has been identified as needed to address problems that are complex and structural in nature – namely gender equity within 15 different parliaments across the Pacific. The strategies address Objective 3 to a limited degree, while Objective 2 is not addressed at all.

What brought us to this conclusion? In the absence of a needs analysis, we established need by asking respondents:

What support is needed to increase gender equity of Pacific parliaments?

All 56 respondents to the Interviews and surveys including 16 PWPs shared their views on this question providing rich feedback. We then mapped the PWPP activities against these needs. The results are summarised in Table 6, with a more detailed version provided in Appendix 8.

Table 6: Support needed to increase the gender equity of Pacific Parliaments

Support needed (as identified by survey respondents and interviewees)	Support provided by PWPP
General population AWARENESS raising on Gender Equity – mentioned most often.	A little - But the 'event' of the Annual PWPP Forum contributes to this in the country where it is hosted and to a significantly lesser extent regionally.
Effective Women Parliamentarians as ROLE MODELS (part of point above)	PWPP is contributing to this by supporting Pacific women MPs
GETTING WOMEN ELECTED - second most mentioned	Not within scope
MALE CHAMPIONS – third most mentioned	PWPP has invited a few Male MP's to the PWPP forum. Implementation of the Outrigger Learning program will include the training of Male MPs
Change the FUNCTIONS of the PARLIAMENT - fourth most mentioned	In a minor way, through discussion topics at the Forum, Content of the Outrigger training, networking of Clerks, Research Scholars
Change POLITICAL PARTIES	None

The support needs mentioned above need to be considered in light of what is reasonable to expect a Project of this scale and with this scope to deliver. It also needs to consider the level of complexity of this work. It is more complicated than work addressing Objective 1. And hence a more collaborative approach is required, for the following contextual reasons:

- the nature of the context is challenging and deep (as mentioned in Evaluation Question 1.2);
- the theory of change is complex;
- there are multiple entities working in the space; and
- there are several overlapping spaces including gender equality, democracy and governance and women's leadership.

1.4 Were there strategies that could have been delivered that were not, and if so, why?

- **Five strategies forming part of the original project design were not delivered for various reasons.**
- **A needs analysis should have been conducted but was not, likely due to lack of capacity with DHoR.**
- **Mentoring did not occur to any meaningful degree**
- **The development of online tools was abandoned in favour of face-to-face interaction but a project website should arguably have been delivered.**
- **Collaboration, alignment and value-adding to regional efforts has not occurred strongly enough, causing missed opportunities and duplication.**
- **Targeted, ongoing support to Pacific PWPs was justified by need but not delivered, likely due to limited capacity within DHoR.**

Five strategies forming part of the original project design were not delivered

The five strategies were:

1. a needs analysis upon which to base the project design
2. targeted ongoing support to PWPs (mentoring and exchanges)
3. online tools
4. collaboration, alignment and value-adding to regional efforts to increase influence
5. support for targeted strategic collective effort

The above strategies and activities are listed in the original Project design document. The exact reasons for their non-delivery are largely unclear. Each of these strategies / activities are discussed in further detail below.

A needs analysis should have been conducted but was not

The original project design reflects an intent to conduct a needs analysis for each parliament and for each Pacific women parliamentarian. This was confirmed by one interviewee who stated that:

“(The) original intention was to undertake a needs assessment for each MP and then firm up or develop design of the work from this. This has not occurred” [I04].

Given the complexity and sensitivities inherent to the context and the depth of change being pursued, a detailed needs analysis is critical to the development of strategies that are relevant and effective. The underlying reason for this is likely to be the underdeveloped level of capacity with DHoR, or the limitations in the maturity of program design and project management culture. This point is discussed further at Evaluation Question 1.5.

Mentoring did not occur to any meaningful degree

As previously discussed, there are a range of contextual factors that necessitate targeted and ongoing support for PWPs. These include:

- deep-set political and structural factors that mitigate against women politicians
- the high-profile nature of their role and their leading role in pursuing gender equality
- the personal challenges associated with being a female politician in the Pacific.

The support required must:

- be from a Pacific cultural perspective exploring Pacific solutions
- empower them to be effective in pursuing their goals and aims
- distinguish between support that builds their capacity as an effective MP, and support for ‘gender champions’.

Despite several interviewees and documents citing mentoring as being a core element of PWPP, the project is yet to deliver a strategy that bears the commonly accepted attributes of a mentoring program. Management Mentors (2015), outline important elements of formal mentoring programs:

- a strategic purpose
- a project manager, to design and implement the program including matching mentors and mentorees, monitor, evaluate and report progress

- a process whereby matching occurs depending on the specific needs of the mentoree
- training for mentors and mentorees
- a safe environment where mentors and mentorees feel safe to trust one another and share their experiences and emotions
- provide communication and support to both mentors and mentorees.

None of these elements are present in any of PWPP activities, despite mentoring and exchanges being intended as the central ongoing strategy to support PWPs.

Mentoring and coaching are well-recognised as effective ways to strengthen leadership capabilities. Rhodes (2014) argues that long-term mentoring – which emphasises confidence building – is more likely to result in a successful capacity building program in the Pacific than short term externally driven programs. According to Leadership Victoria (2016), ‘research shows that informal relationship-based learning such as mentoring serves as the most powerful source of individual and career performance’. It is about developing a relationship over time which grows and is based on active listening, encouragement, constructive comments, openness, mutual trust, respect and willingness to learn and share.

The term ‘mentoring’ is used inconsistently in relation to PWPP. It is sometimes used in relation to activities that are also referred to as ‘exchanges’, ‘partnering’, or ‘twinning’. The ‘Record of Understanding’ states it as ‘Strategic partnerships between women MPs in the Pacific and Australia’.

Interviews reveal a number of factors that have contributed to the project’s underperformance in delivering an effective strategy. These are outlined in Table 7. Despite the absence of a formal mentoring program, there is strong evidence of informal mentoring occurring within the Annual PWPP Forum. The relationships formed and maintained at the Forum are highly valued. This aspect of PWPP is discussed in more detail in the Effectiveness Chapter.

Table 7: Factors underlying the failure to deliver an effective mentoring strategy

Lack of specialist knowledge	Mentoring strategy or program has not been developed or conceptualised as something that needs programmatic design and or implementation. There is clearly a perception that mentoring will just happen if you bring people together [I03, I05, I06]. The project has not procured experts who can build mentoring capacity.
Pacific to Pacific mentoring is more appropriate	One interviewee stated that it would be more useful for PWPs to receive mentoring from other, experienced Pacific MPs rather than Australians: “I would agree with that - linking Fiji MPs with Samoan MP is much more useful because of the cultural contexts. It should be much more of a partnership in the context” [I24]
Cross-cultural sensitivities	The concept of mentoring is proving difficult in a cross-cultural context and respondents are not comfortable with the term. The perception that Australia MPs will be imparting something to Pacific MPs is considered by some to be patronising [I23]. Some Australian women parliamentarians consider the idea of ‘mentoring’ to imply that PWPs are deficient in some way and argue that it is critical for PWPs not to be publicly perceived in this manner. Respondents preferred the terms ‘partnering’ and ‘exchange’, which may account for the reason for the shift of how this strategy is referred to in project documentation.
Failure of project management to act on advice and feedback	Various sources provided advice on how the project could deliver a quality mentoring program [I01, I04 and program documents] – including formal design feedback from AusAID. None of this advice has been incorporated into the Project. The nature of the advice was to focus on recruitment of mentors from retired Pacific Parliamentarians and, if necessary, retired Australian women parliamentarians as they have more time to commit to the relationship.
Currently-sitting Australian women MPs have limited time	The project manager has only engaged currently sitting Australian women MPs who are often too busy to engage in meaningful mentoring and cannot be absent from their own constituency for extended periods of time.
Selection of Australian women MPs is not conducted by project team	The selection of Australian women MPs to attend the annual PWPP Forum is not within PWPP Project management’s power, i.e. the DHoR cannot influence who attends the

	Forums and hence they cannot select participants based on appropriateness to mentor/partner Pacific women parliamentarians.
Lack of resources	Over time, the Annual PWPP Forum has proportionally taken up the time and financial resources of the program so that there are now limited resources for a robust and effective mentoring program.

The development of online tools was replaced with face-to-face interaction

The Project design in the original PWPP Project proposal document (2013) reflects an intent to implement online resources that would strengthen networking, facilitate relationship building and provide convenient access to online resources. This was to occur in the form of:

- an online networking platform
- a parliamentary training e-learning tool
- online access to research.

The inclusion of these elements was based on an assumption that PWP's would be willing to use online resources. This has proven not to be the case for the following reasons.

- Pacific women exhibited a reluctance to use online tools including the online networking platform, a Facebook page and online access to research.
- 'Pacific women MPs are reluctant to make some comments via email; therefore, the Forum is an important opportunity to get views in person' (PR#2).
- Building a network in the Pacific requires face-to-face contact for it to function as was requested in the first Sydney Forum. The shift of the focus of the PWPP Project to hold an Annual Forum where women connect face-to-face. Therefore, there was less reliance on the online communication tools for networking.
- People in the Pacific lack access to reliable IT resources. [mentioned by 5-6 Australian respondents].
- The original design included the development of a parliamentary training e-learning tool. Pacific Parliamentarians and staff advised [Clerks gathering Katoomba 2014] the Project manager that face-to-face training would be more appropriate and effective. This advice was taken and resulted in the development of the Outrigger training modules.

For these reasons, PWPP Project management took the decision to favour face-to-face interaction over the implementation of online tools.

A PWPP Project website was also planned but has not been implemented. Unlike the afore mentioned online resources, there is a stronger case for the website to have been developed. This is because the website:

- would have provided a channel for profiling PWPs, enhance their standing and promoting their leadership role in changing gender relations throughout the Pacific, and
- could have facilitated networking and better coordination among relevant NGOs and government agencies (discussed in the following section).

Collaboration, alignment and value-adding to regional efforts has not occurred strongly enough

As previously mentioned (see Evaluation Questions 1.2) the context for PWPP creates a need for strong coordination and alignment of efforts with entities (agencies) working on relevant projects in the Pacific. The original design reflected an intention to collaborate and coordinate with other NGOs and government agencies working on related programs throughout the Pacific. DFAT, and previously AusAID, emphasised the importance of such efforts, through advice provided in 2013, 2015, and 2016.

However, collaboration and coordination does not appear to have been prioritised to date. PWPP's failure to do so has manifested in missed opportunities to align and consolidate efforts being undertaken across the region. Thus, key stakeholders' ability to contribute to and complement PWPP's strategies and activities has been severely limited. Table 8 lists major examples that illustrate how this has hindered PWPP from precipitating the desired outcomes.

Table 8: Major missed opportunities and duplications resulting from lack of regional coordination

UNDP duplication of Outrigger program	UNDP is currently in the process of developing parliamentary training on gender equality in Fiji, which is very similar to Outrigger. The UNDP didn't know about the development of Outrigger and questions the modality of Clerks delivering the training given the power dimension of Clerks to MPs. This is an example of duplication that could have been prevented if there was more collaboration between PWPP and UNDP [124]
Missed opportunities for gender advocates to access research capacity	Three key stakeholders managing sister programs based in-country have not been informed of the Research Scholars graduates. This meant missed opportunities to connect returning scholars with gender advocates. Hence, potential users of research can't access increased gender research capacity as they do not know it exists [121].
Non-attendance at UN Women workshop featuring key regional stakeholders	<p>In September 2016, UN Women and UNDP held a workshop in Fiji titled 'Innovating for Impact: A Pacific Regional Consultation on Women's Political Empowerment and Leadership'. The workshop gathered together key agencies, NGO's and a number of PWPs. However, PWPP Project staff were not in attendance.</p> <p>The objectives of the workshop were to critically review progress, agree on a framework for action and consolidate partnerships for implementation. The draft workshop notes indicate that many of the discussions were relevant to PWPP, given the workshop was framed in part by the UNDP's '6 action steps' that informed the PWPP Project mandate.</p> <p>The absence of PWPP representation was particularly unfortunate considering workshop participants did not have a clear understanding of what PWPP is doing (UN women 2016, I01, I04, 124). Thus, PWPP Project staff missed a critical opportunity to explain and clarify the role of PWPP. As a result, discussions were not based on an understanding of relevant achievements and activities. Furthermore, PWPP is not properly informed of the workshop's outcomes and the direction participating agencies and stakeholders have decided upon.</p>

Support for targeted, strategic collective effort was justified by need

The original design incorporated a suite of strategies designed to progress Objective 2 (i.e. activities aimed at ensuring Pacific parliaments can address gender equality issues). The intended activities included:

- in-country needs assessments
- follow up
- ongoing supporting parliamentary oversight on gender equality

- study visits to countries without women MPs.

These activities were designed to leverage intermediate outcomes or preconditions that would have been achieved through strategies relating to Objectives 1 and 3. For example, when Pacific women parliamentarians and parliamentary staff are aware, confident and skilled in gender equality (as per program logic) they then can help bring about structural changes within their parliament. The Project would then support them to do this.

Some of the afore-mentioned contextual factors create specific needs for support for targeted strategic collective effort. These include:

- the challenge of gender-related political reform in fragile democracies
- programs and activities being conducted by other entities in the region
- challenges faced by Pacific women Parliamentarians.

This creates the need for a strategy that:

- supports gender champions to lead (via network, coalition or caucus) to develop targeted and strategic action on gender equality at a national, regional or sub-regional level
- brings gender champions together on issues-based and interest-based working groups to develop strategies and then support the implementation of their strategies
- provides access to political strategists who can provide specialist input into the development of campaign strategies.

The absence of such a strategy is likely due to limited capacity within PWPP and the apparent reluctance of DHoR to engage in activities that could be seen to be political in nature – the customary duties of DHoR are apolitical in nature. This is further discussed at Evaluation Question 1.5.

1.5 Given the context, to what extent was the chosen modality the most appropriate for achieving Project objectives?

‘Modality’ is defined as the ‘vehicle or organisational arrangements for the delivery of the combined strategies and mechanisms of the project’. For the purposes of this evaluation, modality encompasses:

- the project’s attachment to DHoR.

The underlying assumption of this modality is that the project’s objective of PWP’s becoming more effective in their roles, will be achieved through Pacific women parliamentarians accessing Australian, knowledge, skills and solutions.

This modality has some advantages – particularly for the first phase of this Project – but these are outweighed by the limitations or challenges of DHoR’s organisational culture and mismatched expertise.

Advantages of DHoR as the Project proponent

- DHoR enabled access to pro bono support of parliamentary staff in the development of Outrigger and in hosting the Research Scholars.
- Situating this Project in an Australian parliament has enabled parliament to parliament

twinned relationships to develop. The DHoR has skills and knowledge in relation to the operation of parliaments and can effectively form collegiate relationships with staff of other parliaments. Good relationships between DHoR and Pacific Parliaments have formed.

- The DHoR can access and work with current Australian parliamentarians, which brings gravitas to the Project and has exposed the work of PWPP and Pacific Women to current Australian parliamentarians.
- DHoR's organisational culture means the project is delivered in a flexible way, which has enabled project management to respond to need and interest when it arises. This is particularly apparent when new women are elected to Parliament in the Pacific and opportunities for an Exchange arise. For example, the newly elected MP from Bougainville visited Australia in 2016 and the recently and first elected women MP in Tonga will come to Australia soon on an exchange.

Disadvantages of DHoR as the Project proponent

Culture of 'service'

DHoR has a culture of service, rather than development and leadership [I03, I04, I05]. This has resulted in decisions being made by individuals without knowledge of the needs of PWPs. For example, Australian women MPs that attend the Annual PWPP Forum are not chosen based on the needs of Pacific Forum participants. Rather, selection is undertaken by political party whips – PWPP program managers are unable to influence the selection process.

As several DHoR interviewees stated:

“We serve we do not direct. We cannot choose (which MP's attend the annual PWPP Forum). DFAT want us to direct the selection process but this is not what we do”.

Please note this 'culture of service' serves the purpose and niche of the DHoR well and makes it the strong and competent organisation that it is in service to Australian parliamentarians.

Furthermore, DHoR are obliged to only work on activities that serve currently sitting Australian Parliamentarians. This has precluded the use of several retired Australian MPs and or technical specialists that may be better suited to mentoring roles than currently sitting parliamentarians.

The modality is one of 'Partnering'

The Project title (Pacific Women Parliamentary Partnerships' Project) reflects the modality that it be situated as a partnership between Australian and the Pacific Parliaments. Despite this, the concept of partnerships is not clearly articulated in the Project's design (objectives and activities). However it is clear through undertaking some interviews with stakeholders that the basis for this project is:

The project's objectives can be achieved through PWPs and Pacific Parliaments partnering with Australia.

In other words, through accessing Australian, knowledge, skills and solutions, PWP's will become more effective and Pacific Parliaments will become more gender sensitive. This is overtly stated in the original Project design as an assumption.

Assumption 1: That the activities outlined in the proposal will be sufficient to make a substantive difference to the knowledge and capabilities of Pacific women parliamentarians, the institution of parliament and its staff in the Pacific.

More specifically, the project proposal assumes that exchanges between women parliamentarians in Australia and the Pacific will provide a particular value for capacity building of Pacific women parliamentarians.

Lack of program development and implementation expertise

DHoR's limitations in program development and implementation expertise has inhibited it from adopting a programmatic approach to the development and implementation of key strategies. Adopting such an approach would involve (1) assessing need in order to (2) inform the design of an activity plan and (3) the facilitation of needs-based access to support services. According to DFAT standards and expectations a programmatic approach would also have involved the ongoing review against the original activity plan and refinement as deemed necessary.

The absence of such an approach has had a deleterious effect on the Mentoring and Exchange activity and the Annual Forum activity. Each lack clear objectives and have not benefited from ongoing review and refinement during the course of implementation. An opportunity was missed to involve working groups of interested PWP – an approach which would have helped ensure relevance.

Limitations identified have resulted in slower than necessary progress in certain areas. For example, the learning program, Outrigger, has been slow to develop and implement [I01, I02, I03, I04, I05, I06]. The timeline for the development and implementation of such a program should have been significantly shorter.

Lack of international development expertise

Limitations in international development expertise in the cross cultural context of the Pacific has inhibited DHoR from designing and implementing a Project (and M & E Framework) that is sufficiently sophisticated to achieve the intended outcomes while navigating the considerable challenges of the Pacific context as mentioned earlier.

Strategies are conditional upon involvement of Australian Parliamentary personnel

Current Australian parliamentarians and parliamentary staff are almost exclusively responsible for the delivery of activities such as mentoring and exchanges, forum participation, the development of Outrigger and the provision of research scholarships. In practice, this has meant the Project has not benefited from specialist skills and expertise residing outside DHoR and the Australian parliament. For example:

- Interviewees mentioned that there are a number of retired Pacific parliamentarians that PWPs have expressed a desire to engage with and the retired Pacific parliamentarians have offered their services [I8, I12, I22, I24, I25, I26]
- Interviewees mentioned that there are a number of appropriately skilled retired Australians parliamentarians that would be appropriate supporting partners [I09, I20, I26] who currently have ongoing informal relationships.
- The Project does not have access to Pacific political strategists who can provide specialist input into the development of campaign strategies.
- The Project has not co-opted experts with a working knowledge of:
 - the political economy of Pacific nations
 - the intersection of traditional chiefly systems with representative democracies within unique context of each nation.

Assessment of Effectiveness

This section assesses the effectiveness of PWPP. It includes consideration of the following evaluation questions:

- 2.1. What short to medium term outcomes were evident from the aggregate of activities delivered?
- 2.2. Of the activities delivered, which could be considered the most effective for achieving intended short to medium-term outcomes?
- 2.3. Under what circumstances, and to what extent, were women parliamentarians supported in their roles? What were the barriers and the enablers?
- 2.4. To what extent were women parliamentarians able to participate in and influence decision-making in parliament?
- 2.5. To what extent were women parliamentarians able to effectively represent the needs and rights of all women and achieve improved development outcomes for women and families? What were the barriers and enablers?

2.1 What short to medium term outcomes were evident from the aggregate of activities delivered?

The outcomes will be presented for the two target actors: Pacific women MPs and Pacific Parliaments and their staff. There are also unexpected positive outcomes for Australian women MPs and Australian parliamentary staff.

This assessment of the extent to which Outcomes have been achieved is analysed against the PWPP Program Logic developed as part of the evaluation (Figure 1). The analysis has been divided into two outcome pathways:

1. Supporting Pacific women MPs
2. Influencing Pacific Parliaments and their staff.

A number of short case studies are presented in this Chapter to illustrate outcomes.

Short term outcomes affecting Pacific women MPs

Short term level outcomes for PWPs identified in the Program Logic:

- Attitudinal and aspirational shift of PWPs, realisation of their right to be heard, to be representative
- PWPs know how to interact with their constituents
- PWPs know the mechanisms and tools of parliament and gender equality mainstreaming
- PWPs are part of a network where they come together, draw inspiration, learning, solidarity from each other.

The most significant outcomes were achieved in relation to support for PWPs through the establishment of a PWPP Network. This is a network of currently sitting Pacific women MPs (including Australian and New Zealand MPs) and was formed from the initial PWPP gathering in Sydney in 2013 and has since met four times (Tonga 2014, Fiji 2015, Samoa 2016). The PWPP project has successfully engaged 33 of the 39 Pacific women parliamentarians from all nations in the Pacific that have women parliamentarians. Respondents reported a range of significant benefits. **PWPs**

reported significant benefits arising from their participation in the PWPP Network **such as confidence-building, feelings of solidarity, knowledge accumulation and increasing levels of assertiveness.** These are summarised in Table 9.

Table 9: Reported outcomes arising from participation in PWPP Network

A sense of togetherness and solidarity among PWPs	<p>This is an attitudinal change from a sense of isolation to being part of a movement 'Relationships have been built - Pacific women parliamentarians know each other and the sense that they are not alone has strengthened them in their parliamentary roles generally' (PR#3)</p> <p>The Forum has effectively provided a networking opportunity for relationships and friendships to be formed. Respondents articulated a sense of 'sisterhood' and solidarity with each other through a shared purpose.</p> <p>(See also Case Study 2)</p>
Knowledge accumulation among PWPs	Through participation, PWPs have gained specific knowledge and skills that they need to undertake their roles, including about gender equality and other issues.
Freedom to speak candidly	Respondents strongly expressed that the annual PWPP Forum provides them with a safe space to speak outlining that for many (if not most) of the PWPs the Forum provides their only safe space to speak freely.
Improved confidence	The confidence of PWPs has increased and many have a 'sense that I can do this' [I09]. Most women who attend the Forum report that it is an affirming and empowering experience (PR#3)
Greater knowledge of roles and responsibilities of being an MP	A couple of Pacific women parliamentarians stated that they now had a deeper understanding that being (and being seen to be) an 'effective' female MP is important for gender relations in their Nation. They mentioned the Hon Fiame Naomi Mataafa, now the Samoan Deputy Prime Minister, as their role model. See Case Study 1.
Increasing levels of assertiveness	Many of the participating PWPs expressed now being poised to act. They are aspiring to act and have a desire to lead through stepping up into increased leadership roles such as Parliamentary Speaker and chairing Parliamentary committees. A couple of Pacific women parliamentarians stated how they were now 'speaking up' or aspiring to and spending time on working out how to overcome and change the gender relations that are inhibiting them speaking up. <i>'As is the culture in the Pacific, especially Melanesian, I noticed that women MPs have gained ground in trying to overcome male domination by being modest, cool and straight to the point in whatever they are debating on and able to contain themselves from interference and interjections from male MPs'.</i> [S20]

Case study 1: Annual Forum – Aspiring to leadership

The flagship activity of the PWPP Project has become the Annual PWPP Forum. This is an annual gathering that brings together all of the current 35 elected Pacific women parliamentarians and a number of Australian and New Zealand women parliamentarians for two days in a Pacific location. The first Forum was held in Sydney in 2013, then Tonga in 2014, Fiji in 2015 with the theme of violence against women and recently in Samoa 2016 with the theme of women's economic empowerment. The PWPP Forum has become a high level and high profile networking event that is highly valued by its participants.

One of the significant outcomes of the Forum for Pacific women is that there is a realisation of what their role is and requires of them. A number of interview respondents stated that they now had a deeper understanding that being (and being seen to be) an 'effective' female MP is important for gender relations in their Nation. A number mentioned the Hon Fiame Naomi Mataafa, now the Samoan Deputy Prime Minister, as having inspiring them to lead as she is role modelling new Pacific gender relations. Two women reflect on this.

The significance of our role

"As a result of participating in the PWPP Forum, individual self-confidence has improved. Women have realised their full potential and capabilities as individuals that they can also contribute as much as their male counterparts and this only comes through experiences as a member of parliament and through workshops and mentoring processes. Women have become more knowledgeable and self motivated when given the chance to lead. As leaders and taking part in decision making our knowledge increases and we are motivated to work extra miles. We know our roles as members of parliament and once we are familiar with procedures and protocols we work towards our goals and aspirations as a member of parliament. As a result we become pro-active workers rather than passive workers."

Why is this important?

"All the above criteria are very important to women because politics is always considered masculine. As women's roles change, their perspectives and aspirations also change in regards to their responsibilities as mothers and their professional work."

We have a women Deputy Prime Minister

"The most significant change has been the promotion of a woman to Deputy Prime Minister and Legislation (a constitutional amendment to ensure that 10% Women in Parliament) in Samoa. This legislation reinforced the need (and a mandate) for women to be in parliament, it gave hope and as a result twenty odd women put their hands up as candidates in the recent Samoan elections. Other Pacific countries are also considering this now."

"The Samoan Deputy Prime Minister, Hon Fiame Naomi Mataafa was at our very first gathering in Sydney in 2013. Here we started with a vision or theory being the UNDP: six actions to Expand Women's Empowerment. Considering this where we have got to? Samoa is actually achieving this."

Why is this significant to you?

"It is significant because we have come together to commit to bring about change. The aspirations of the women that have come to these meetings is that they are saying 'I can be a Prime Minister' etc. It is a change in how they see themselves. That is an unintended consequence. They have got strength from one another and started to envisage the different roles they can have."

Case study 2: We are not alone

The most significant change for me is that I see that we are no longer a country that is alone fighting for gender equality and empowerment. I have seen that it is a collective effort everywhere. Women have to stand up together. At PWPP Forums we learn from each other, at the same time it strengthens us ... my debating capacity has been improved. I spoke up at the Parliamentary grievance debate. It has empowered me, elevated my position to stand firm.

Why is this significant?

It has enabled me because I am not alone in this fight. We are learning from and sharing from each other. The Forum makes us come back and contribute. It has strengthened us empowered us. I see that I have come out a better person. This is now always with me as Governor of a Province, 120 thousand people voted for me, I am the winner, I still believe in myself in my leadership. But I need to be more effective in the Parliament, in the Parliamentary Committees and in the parliamentary debates. I'd like to debate on more of the issues. Sometimes I hold back, I need to build on this.

Not all observed outcomes have been positive. Some unintended negative outcomes have arisen from the manner in which the PWPP Forum has been managed. For example, attending the Forum meant four PWPs were absent for their first sitting week following their election. As one interviewee observed:

“There was a whole lot of ructions in parliament because they were off doing other things funded by the Australian Government – really not good”. [I21]

Another observed that “pulling women MP’s out of their first sitting week to attend the PWPP Forum is not OK. Programming needs to reflect what is going on where the MP’s live” [I02]

Furthermore, the presence of Australian MPs and Pacific male MPs has inhibited some PWPs from speaking freely and participating fully in the Forum. One respondent observed that “there needs to be an increase in Australian MPs understanding of the Pacific context” [I02] for them to improve their usefulness to PWPs. At the 2015 Forum in Fiji, it was felt that there were too many Australians in attendance. While it was acknowledged that including male MPs was important, they expressed a desire for them to be well facilitated so that they do not dominate [I03, I06, I26, Correspondence from DFAT].

High profile female role models

One outcome that has been achieved is that PWPs are now playing a significant leadership role in regional gender equality. The Forum is high profile work and contributes to or adds value to other gender equality work in the country and region. “Taking an institutional transformational approach as opposed to getting women elected is important. Unless you support women MPs to be effective you will not see the institution or parliament change”. [I04] PWPs have a really big job that is in the spotlight. What they do and how they do it has flow on effects for other programmatic areas such as the other program areas of *Pacific Women* (Ending violence against women, Women’s economic empowerment) and governance and democracy work.

Unexpected outcomes for Australian Women MPs

Despite the original project design not anticipating outcomes for Australians, some significant outcomes have nonetheless been observed. All Australian’s interviewed and surveyed reported how

engagement with the Pacific people through this Project has led to changes in their own lives including:

- Gaining a cross-cultural understanding about the Pacific.
- A sense of friendship and sisterhood with Pacific women. Many are galvanised to maintain these friendships and work in solidarity with Pacific women MP's.
- Implementation of awareness of cross cultural dynamics and learning from this being applied in their home context. There are a couple of significant examples of where participation in a PWPP Forum has changed the approach and practice of how the Australian MP is now relating and working with the Australian cross cultural population, (including the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities) in their home constituency. See Case Study 3. An example of the change for one Australian women parliamentarian
- A greater understanding of the *Pacific Women* program and the contextual issues in the Pacific.

Case study 3: Outcome for an Australian women MP

"The Annual Forum is a great experience for Australian MP's to participate in. They're (Australia Women MP's) absolutely embracing of being with other women MP's. There is a connection that really does exist between women MPs, being a Parliamentarian and not as a politician. It is a very different space that we are occupying. It was quite stunning when women from Bougainville talked about domestic violence. No matter who you are it is the same thing everywhere. Breathtaking, quite an emotional experience. International sisterhood has emboldened them and strengthened them, all experiencing the same things. I'm a big fan of the program.

"I am involved in selecting who goes, but I have only been on one trip because I have been trying to send others. I have been trying to get good state and party representation to attend. So, before I went to the Forum, I had never been to the Pacific and had no intention to go but since I attended, I have been strengthened personally and now I have been back to Fiji 3 times on personal trips.

"How is this translating into my politics? How is this making a larger difference to me? Even in just understanding my own Indigenous community, it has inspired me to get up and inquire into a death of an indigenous child. It is giving me skills to better work with the indigenous community. Connections to country in the Pacific are very similar to Indigenous connections here. It has given me skills to do this. In turn, we have so much to learn about the concept of custodianship, our whole country could benefit from this. They have a richness about them that we do not have.

"Issues like domestic violence, we have been able to explain to them very clearly, X gave a strong speech saying that \$ doesn't buy you happiness. Your traditional indigenous structure and culture is critical in the mix. Pull apart your traditional structures will ruin things. They need to evolve solutions to problems within those traditional structures. Do not throw them out. Success is not about being rich and modelling structures on ours. Money is not the solution. Unfortunately a lot of the workshops are about where is the money.

"The 'mentoring activity' is bewildering as a goal. The idea of me advising these women? They are already remarkable women. I don't understand their culture, the systemic patriarchy. How can I be credible as a mentor? It has never been articulated as to how Mentoring would happen."

Short term outcomes for Pacific Parliaments and their staff

The strategies and activities in Pathway 2 of the Program Logic are aimed at achieving PWPP Objective 3:

Parliamentary staff have improved capacity to support the gender equality work of parliaments.

PWPP has invested in a number of activities (Outrigger, research scholarships, attendance at conferences) 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. Pacific Parliamentary staff respondents highlighted the short term results achieved in this cohort include:

- increased knowledge and understanding of gender equality and ways to implement it into their parliaments.
- belief that gender equality is needed and will lead to a better nation
- have committed to pursuing gender equality in their domain
- An increase in gender equality research capability for Parliaments where a research scholar is employed. See case study 4 – Inspired Research Scholars

Several clerks and other parliamentary staff are now taking action within their domain by:

- implementing gender-aware practice in parliamentary committees
- drafting research on gender equality in response to parliamentarian's requests
- being more mindful and supporting female staff
- giving women parliamentarians specific support
- identification of specific committees where gender will be considered
- attempting to establish an office for women
- committing to undertaking 'facilitation training' to then deliver Outrigger training in their parliaments.

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. There are a number of Pacific women parliamentarians that are now working with the returned Research Scholars. See Case study 4 – Inspired Research Scholars.

Case Study 4: Inspired Research Scholars

The Project's strategy was to increase gender equality research capability of Pacific parliaments for use by gender champions through research scholarships to Australia. To date eight Pacific Research Scholars (1 in 2013, 3 in 2014, 4, 2015) have come to Australia for a month to improve their gender equality research skills. They have been from Tonga (3), PNG (1), Samoa (1), Naru (1) and Kiribati (2). The House of Representatives Parliamentary library hosts them. Some of them spend half their time with their Twinned parliament establishing links there also. They are required to come with a research topic based on a need in their parliament. During their time in Australia they draft a research paper and present it at the conclusion of the Scholarship. The average cost of a Scholarship is AU\$11,500.

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. There are a number of Pacific women parliamentarians that are now working with the returned Research Scholars. Here are three of their stories:

Tonga Scholars

Scholar 1 *"I applied for the scholarships to research and write a paper on Gender Equality. I came to Canberra in August in 2013. I was the first from the Pacific. My colleague came in November 2014. We both wrote research papers. My paper was research on the gender Quota system (Temporary Special Measures). I asked the only female MP for the topic to research on and she suggested this. Scholar 2's research topic was advancing women's access to justice in the context of domestic violence. I proposed this paper to the Clerk because in that year the Family Protection Act had just come into force. I used the research scholarship as an opportunity to conduct this research.*

Scholar 2: *The most significant change for me has been sensitising me to gender equality. Before the scholarship I had very little knowledge of gender equity and importance of electing women to local and a national parliament. My area of importance is getting more women elected and ensuring that women will be there in the long run, making this sustainable.*

Why is this important?

Scholar 2: *This is important because I am strategically placed to influence what MPs are thinking. I am the secretary for the parliamentary committee on social issues, which includes gender equality hence because of the research scholarship I am now better able to give advice and to influence the thinking of Members of Parliament on these issues.*

Scholar 1: *The most significant change for me is very similar to [Scholar 2], I gained a great awareness for gender equality and the importance of having more women in our Parliament. We are the youngest of staff here. We have grown up with only knowing men in Parliament hence our generation has accepted that it is normal that Parliaments are just male. Through exposure to this program we have realised the benefits of women in Parliaments and what we as a country are missing out on.*

I was fortunate to have the opportunity to be in Canberra for two weeks and then two weeks in the South Australian Parliament (Tonga Parliament's twinned relationship). I still maintain contact with library in South Australian. If I have issues I contact library in SA, and because they know me they respond quickly to my requests. During this visit not only did I focus on Parliament they were able to take me to a number of domestic violence NGO's, the family law courts, women's crisis centres and legal aid. I learnt so much.

When we were given the research opportunity, and knowledge that we gained from it, we are now writing advice on these issues for our Members of Parliament. The Members request advice from us on gender equality and so with the research skills and the confidence to undertake and speak for this research we have been able to comfortably give advice. You must understand that some times these issues are not well received here and we get negative comments. But because of the knowledge we gained we are confident.

Case Study 4 (continued)

PNG Scholar:

The most significant change for me was the Research Scholarship and the attachment to the House of Representatives in Canberra. The exposure to an environment where you are surrounded by professionals who were very willing and attentive to my training, and made me feel very important and welcomed (a change of environment). We don't have that kind of work attitude, especially for women.

I am able to talk with my male counterparts with confidence, stand my ground and argue my case and the male can look at the issues and say yes she is right. To talk to the issue, coming up with logic and rationale, I think that is what I have got from Canberra. I am able to talk out and a lot of women have seen me speaking up and they are now coming to me for assistance and guidance to help them and I have been able to organise a lot of things here for the Hon Julie Soso Akeke.

My research project proposal to have a Gender Office or a Gender Desk in our Parliament will be established under our new Corporate Plan which has been approved by the Speaker and will be launched shortly. I have been mentoring young officers and others. I am now given greater recognition and tasks to do major responsibilities in organising activities from the Executive level (Clerk and Deputy Clerk). I have a good reputation and communication ability with outside stakeholder organisations, and government organisation in dealing at the Legislative level.

This is because of my exposure in attending the PWPP workshops and forums. And Participating in all the activities which has given me the skills and experience at that highest level.

Why is this significant?

It is important to me because I am about to stand out amongst the male colleagues and the women are also wanting and the women are trying to get out of their shell so to speak. Their rights also this is from experience from women we have had a lot of harassment of women and I can talk to them to talk to the men and I can move back and watch the women develop themselves

It is significant to me because I think I have broken the barrier in a male dominated organisation.

Unexpected outcomes for Australian Parliamentary staff

Despite the original design not reflecting an intent to influence Australian Parliamentary staff, some positive impacts have been observed. Parliamentary staff reported enjoying being involved and also indicated an increased awareness and understanding of Pacific culture. Some have also formed lasting relationships with Pacific parliamentary staff.

Quotes from Australian parliamentary staff involved in PWPP

"Great [to be] learning, hearing from others. Great to think about how gender equity concepts can be delivered in a non-threatening way. Hope that people find it useful – this is a first step in a longer journey." [I31]

"I was excited to work on something that is meaningful. It's different to the other work I do and not about the Australian parliament." [I29]

"We need to understand cultural and social and economic conditions of communities that women represent." [I27].

Medium and longer term outcomes

In the program logic model (Figure 1), the medium-term outcomes that relate to Parliaments and Parliamentary staff are as follows:

- Parliaments implement gender equality improvement to the functions of parliament (policy, system, practice); and
- Parliaments actively promote gender equality in their engagement with society as an essential element of democracy.

The longer-term outcomes for the Project are:

- Pacific Parliaments have improved mechanisms to raise and effectively consider gender equality issues and engage their communities on those issues. (Objective 2)
- Current Pacific women parliamentarians engage with their constituencies and raise their issues and interests in parliament including gender equality issues
- Current Pacific women parliamentarians participate fully in parliamentary processes, debates, committees, advocacy & raise gender equality issues

This evaluation has found limited evidence of progress in relation to outcomes being achieved. At this level the outcomes that respondents discussed are as follows.

All respondents stated or displayed a change in belief that it is a woman's right to have equal representation in their Nation's parliament.

The push for gender equality in Pacific Parliaments has been established. Respondents generally stated that there had been enough gender equality awareness raising events with key stakeholders and partners. This awareness raising has established a desire for gender equity in the Pacific. Respondents stated that they are now ready for action and that if visible action and changes in Parliaments are not achieved soon momentum will be lost.

Respondents stated that there is **now an acceptance that women should be in parliament and that gender equality should be addressed** in their nations. Without further research this outcome cannot be solely attributed to the efforts of PWPP but to the combined efforts of the numerous players in the gender equality space in the Pacific. Given this, there could be a number of instances where PWPP is the only investment being made.

Outcomes not achieved.

A number of the interview and survey respondents felt that there is a need to act now to bring about structural parliamentary change. Evidence of this includes:

- One respondent said "Women have been arguing for 35 years for women to be in parliament" [I21].
- Respondents stated that despite efforts the numbers of women in Pacific Parliaments has not increased and that there is a lack of political will for the introduction of TSM and gender equality implementation.
- Respondents mentioned the lack of appropriate support for women candidates and building the general population's awareness of gender equality was where focused attention is needed

to improve the representation of women in Pacific parliaments and gender equality.

- A few of the respondents felt that the PWPP Forum has been meeting and building relationships for long enough and that it was time for action. Respondents felt that the focus of the Forums needed to shift to action and to assisting PWPs to act including drafting Bills and legislation, building women's caucuses and or gender equality coalitions. One respondent stated a strong desire for more action "We need to start to focus on legislation and reform to draft Bills, build support for and get Bills passed. The past three years have been about building capacity - now as a group of women in parliaments we need to start producing legislation, it should be one of our KPI's" [I11].

Lack of maximization of medium and longer term outcomes

Although PWPP has clearly contributed to achievement of a number of outcomes programming is not sufficiently based on an understanding of need or targeted and focused attainment of intended outcomes.

Considering achievement against the program logic's intended outcomes, it can be expected, that after four years of investment there would have been better attainment of medium and longer term outcomes. This is specifically we should be seeing:

- More Pacific women parliamentarians taking specific action within their parliaments and with their constituencies
- More collective groups forming to take action on gender equality interests and issues
- Particular changes to the functions of Pacific Parliaments
- A considerable increase in the alignment and coordination of effort across stakeholders in the space leading to strategic and targeted efforts that are meeting needs.

However these statements need to be tempered with an analysis of contribution. It is difficult to separate clearly what interventions have led to medium and longer term outcomes attainment when there are numerous actors involved in the parliamentary space. If the Project took a collaborative practice approach and aligned efforts with the other stakeholders then a collective analysis of contribution could also be considered giving a more comprehensive understanding of what is working and what is not across all of the investments.

2.2 Of the strategies delivered, which could be considered the most effective for achieving intended short to medium term outcomes?

In addressing this question, we evaluated the effectiveness of each strategy/activity assigned it a rating of 'Excellent', 'Good', 'Adequate', 'Needs work', or 'Poor'. Table 10 summarises our findings, with further discussion of each strategy following below.

Table 10: Effectiveness of strategies in delivering short to medium term outcomes

Strategies and activities	Rating	Justification for rating
1. Establishment of a network to support PWPs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Annual PWPP Forum ▪ Exchanges (and Mentoring) 	Adequate to Good	The Forum and exchanges are effective at building a network. However, this needs to extend to more targeted actions based around strategic objectives and shift to coalition building. Outcomes could have been enhanced with better planning, follow up and a

		programmatic approach. 18 Exchanges have taken place but there is no mentoring program.
2. Awareness raising about gender equality ■ training and information on gender equality and other topics)	Needs work	General awareness raising on gender equality and other topics is undertaken at the Forum. Training needs to be more targeted and linked to strategies for action.
3. Strategy to ENGAGE with Pacific PARLIAMENTARY STAFF to increase their capacity to improve the gender sensitivity of Pacific Parliaments ■ Development of training package: 'Outtrigger: Navigating gender equality through Pacific parliaments. ■ Networking Parliamentary staff (attendance at APEC and other events, gatherings).	Adequate	This has been an effective strategy in successfully engaging Clerks. However, it has been slow and hence there are no outcomes to report. Also, investment is comparatively small to need. Participatory development of training package is effective. Without understanding scale of need in complex systemic change environment it is difficult to judge proportionality of investment.
4. Strategy to increase gender equality RESEARCH capability of parliament for use by gender champions through research scholarships to Australia.	Good	As a discrete program this has been effective at delivering outcomes. However, this capability needs to be accompanied by a country based action strategy.
5. COLLABORATION and alignment with other regional stakeholders	Needs work	This can be substantially improved as it is critical to maximise outcomes. There are examples where this hasn't happened.
6. COMMUNICATIONS including a website	Needs work	A newsletter has been regularly produced, but there is no operating website and communications with stakeholders is under-developed. This can be substantially improved. Effective communication can help to maximise outcomes, due to the high-profile nature of the work and potential contribution to multiple interventions.

Strategy 1. Establishment of a NETWORK to support PWPs

This strategy is rated as **'adequate to good'** in terms of effectiveness. It incorporates two activities, namely:

- the annual PWPP Forum
- exchanges (and mentoring).

The Forum and exchanges are effective at building a robust network. Of the 39 PWPs, 33 have attended the Forum, 30 have come more than once and they are representing 14 of the 15 Pacific Nations. However, this needs to extend to more targeted actions based around strategic objectives and a shift to coalition building. Outcomes could have been enhanced with better planning, follow up and a programmatic approach. 18 exchanges have taken place but mentoring has not occurred to any meaningful degree.

Annual PWPP Forum

The flagship activity of PWPP is the Annual PWPP Forum. It has evolved into a high level, high profile, face-to-face networking event that is highly valued by its participants. The original PWPP design document 2013 does not reflect an intention to support PWPs through face-to-face networking, yet this has been the source of PWPP's most significant outcomes.

A snapshot of the Annual PWPP Forum, including location, year, cost and participant numbers is given in Table 11.

Table 11: PWPP Forums 2013-2017 Snapshot

Location / year	Sydney 2013	Tonga 2014	Fiji 2015	Samoa 2016	Solomon Islands 2017 (planned)
Theme	Inaugural		Violence Against Women	Women's Economic Empowerment	Climate Change
Days	2	2	2 (.5)	3	
Cost	\$103,000	\$137,000	\$278,000	\$284,000	\$345,000 (est.)
# of participants	45	29	71	67	
Women	42	29	59	57	
Men	3	0	12	10	
Pacific MPs	19	21	38	48	
Aus. / NZ MPs	20	5	21	14	
Other attendees	7	3	12	5	

The number of participants, duration and the cost of the Forum has increased over time (2013 to 2016). The Forum currently consumes most of the Project's budget.

Despite the success of the Forum in its current form, there are several opportunities to improve its effectiveness (Table 12). As mentioned in the Relevance chapter, various respondents observed that the Forum needs to be the mechanism that enables PWPs to organise themselves to take direct action, have a more programmatic approach and be supporting ongoing efforts to 'get some runs on the board'.

Table 12: Opportunities to improve effectiveness of PWPP Forum

Scope for a more programmatic approach	The Forum is managed as a one-off event. It is not underpinned by clear objectives and purposes and is not monitored or evaluated. It has not been integrated into a broader support program as requested by PWPs. Each Forum results in an 'Outcome Statement' that lists 10-12 declarations and actions. However, there is no mechanism for implementing or following up on these statements.
Sharper focus on what's most valued by PWPs – establish clear Forum purposes / objectives	The design and implementation of the forum is not grounded in what is most valued by PWP participants. The Forum needs to be designed to address three purposes / objectives: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. having a woman-only space in which personal connection and sisterhood can flourish 2. creating a high-profile event that raises the profile of issues (VAW, WEE etc.) relating to gender equality in parliaments and showcases changing gender relations. 3. Collective action planning; i.e. facilitating committed people that want to take action in the two domains of this work: PWPs being effective in their representational roles (addressing purpose 1 above); and 2. gender champions collectively progressing an issue (addressing purpose 2 above).

Greater distinction between 'gender equality' and 'support for PWPs'	As observed by one respondent, 'thematic discussions on gender equality issues are different to supporting MPs' [I24]. This highlights the need to separate the concepts of 'women's leadership' and 'gender champions'. This is not merely a semantic distinction. PWPs must feel free to advocate gender equality when they feel safe to do so. In some circumstances, being too vocal regarding equality can be counter productive – particularly if it results in PWPs losing newly-obtained leadership positions. This is discussed further in on page 65.
Scope to better foster regional cooperation and collaboration	The Forum could be re-calibrated to foster collaboration and align effort among agencies delivering related projects throughout the Pacific.
Diplomatic issues	Diplomatic issues have arising as a result of a lack of planning, coordination and collaboration with others. The Forum needs to be designed with diplomatic interests in mind, be planned earlier, and include DFAT Post in the organising group.

Exchanges

A flexible program of Exchanges has developed resulting in 18 exchanges taking place as described (Table 13). There have clearly been some beneficial exchanges between Pacific and Australian women parliamentarians with outcomes for participants (see Evaluation Question 2.1). Exchanges are occurring on a flexible basis where the individuals have similar roles and / or a mutual interest. However, it is not clear how exchanges are strategically aligned to a parliamentarian's personal strategy or plan and there is no follow up of impact. Respondents did not always clearly distinguish between the outcomes gained from relationships built at the Forum and/or deepened through exchanges.

While 18 exchanges have occurred through the Project, a formal mentoring program has not been implemented (Evaluation Question 1.2). This represents a missed opportunity. As one interviewee put it: 'A whole lot of relationships have been built up that have not been tapped into' [I04]. Another respondent observed that 'exchange visits are useful but ... what Pacific women MPs need for their agenda is cultural context support and an exchange to Australia cannot provide that' [I24].

Table 13: PWPP project exchanges by year

Year	2013	2014	2015	2016
Exchange details	2 Australian women went to Palau (2 to Palau, 1 from Solomon Islands), 1 Australian women went to Cook Islands	2 Women from Palau, 4 Women from Bougainville came to Australia	1 pacific women and 1 Australian women went to Vancouver together	4 Bougainville women came to Australia. The newly elected Tongan MP to Adelaide with senior female parliamentary officer
Total number of participants	4	6	2	6
Cost	\$28,693	\$40,527	\$11,296	\$19,027

Strategy 2. Awareness raising about gender equality and strategies to implement and other training to be an effective MP

This strategy '**needs work**' in order to effectively achieve the desired outcomes (Table 12).

General awareness raising on gender equality and other topics is undertaken at the Forum. However, the topics presented at the Forum are not based on a needs analysis of participants. Respondents have suggested (as per the analysis presented in Evaluation Question 1.3) that the PWPP Project Evaluation March 2017

Forum could focus on supporting participants to being an effective MP, by providing training on the media, lobbying and the operation of parliaments. The training needs to be more targeted, linked to strategies for action and serve the identified purpose and objectives of the Network / Forum. Training to support PWPs in their role, needs to be separated from training to pursue gender equality.

Strategy 3. To ENGAGE with Pacific PARLIAMENTARY STAFF to increase their capacity to improve the gender sensitivity of Pacific Parliaments

This strategy is ‘adequate’ in terms of its success at achieving desired outcomes (Table 12).

The strategy incorporates two activities, namely:

- development of training package (Outrigger: Navigating gender equality through Pacific parliaments)
- networking parliamentary staff (attendance at APEC and other events and gatherings).

This has been an effective strategy and has successfully engaged Clerks; however, this has been slow and hence there are limited outcomes to report because Outrigger is yet to be implemented. Participatory development of training package is effective. Also investment is comparatively small to need although without a better understanding of the scale of need in this complex systemic change environment it is difficult to judge proportionality of investment.

Training package (Outrigger)

The original intention of the Project was to develop an online training package for PWPs. In the early stages of the Project (2013), it became obvious that PWPs preferred face-to-face interaction and the online training wasn't considered appropriate. As a result, the decision was made to develop a training package for clerks to deliver to newly elected MPs. This has become the ‘Outrigger’ program, which is focused on improving the gender sensitivity of parliamentary operations.

Outrigger has taken over three years to develop. Parliamentary clerks and educators have been engaged in a participatory manner and DHoR staff have been involved on a pro bono basis. Interviews highlighted the isolation of this activity from similar regional activities and potentially beneficial technical expertise. This has led to duplication – UNDP has developed a similar training without having knowledge of Outrigger’s development.

One technical specialist questioned the appropriateness of using clerks to ‘train’ Pacific MPs:

‘Clerks should not be giving the training ... it is about power. Clerks are there to serve the MPs not guiding or teaching the MPs. It is different to other places in the world. It is not the right route as it will not have the (required) impact’ [124].

Networking Pacific Parliamentary staff

The Project has facilitated Pacific parliamentary clerks to come together at a retreat (2014) and at a meeting attached to an APEC conference (2015). The Project has also supported Parliamentary educators to attend two APEC conferences (2014, 2015). These meetings have allowed staff to network, undertake gender equality training and be engaged in the development of Outrigger.

However, this is duplication of effort as there is another established gathering of Pacific Clerks. One respondent stressed the importance of coordinating efforts ‘they also have another Clerks conference’ [I24] that they already attend.

Strategy 4. Increase gender equality RESEARCH capability of parliament for use by gender champions through research scholarships to Australia.

This strategy is ‘**good**’ in terms of ability to effectively achieve outcomes (Table 12).

To date, eight Pacific Research Scholars (one in 2013, three in 2014, four in 2015) have travelled to Australia for a month each for the purpose of improving their skills in gender equality research. The scholars travelled from Tonga (3 scholars), PNG (1), Samoa (1), Nauru (1) and Kiribati (2). The DHoR Parliamentary library hosted the scholars – some scholars spent half their time with their Twinned parliament, allowing them to maintain or establish links there.

The scholars arrived with a research topic based on a need in their parliament. During their time in Australia, they drafted a research paper and presented it at the conclusion of the Scholarship. The average cost of a Scholarship was AU\$11,500.

As a result, there is some evidence that gender champions have increased access to research skills and therefore better information on gender equality research. There is evidence that a few of PWWs are now working with the returned Research Scholars perusing a gender equality agenda.

The scholars report that the accumulation of new skills and knowledge have helped them function more effectively within their parliaments – a good result given the relatively small investment. However, there is further scope to improve the impact of this initiative through a country-based action strategy that fully uses these new skills and capabilities.

For further information, see the Research Scholars Case Study 4. Efficiency issues are also discussed in the Efficiency Chapter.

Strategy 5. COLLABORATION and alignment with other regional stakeholders

This strategy ‘**needs work**’ in terms of ability to effectively achieve outcomes (Table 12).

There are many other entities implementing programs in the political, gender and parliamentary space in the Pacific region. This strategy has been discussed in the Relevance Chapter, which highlights the importance of collaboration and alignment with interventions in the Pacific. This strategy could be substantially improved as it is critical to maximise outcomes.

Strategy 6. COMMUNICATIONS including a website

This strategy ‘**needs work**’ in terms of ability to effectively achieve outcomes (Table 12).

Online activities to strengthen networking, relationship building and to access to resources about taking action were outlined in the original PWPP design document 2013. These were in three forms, i.e. an online networking platform, parliamentary training e-learning tool and online access to research. These activities were not fully implemented. Some were partially implemented, but due to a lack of use and other developments, they were not continued.

The original design also included establishment and operation of a PWPP website. This hasn't been delivered. However, recently a decision was made to incorporate a PWPP page in the broader *Pacific Women* website.

The major ongoing form of communication was via a regular newsletter. Generally, communication with regional stakeholders was less than optimal, as mentioned in the Relevance Chapter.

Australian respondents expressed frustration at a lack of online presence and their inability to communicate to their 'sisters' via online platforms. Pacific respondents didn't mention the online elements of the program, but they did express a desire for improved IT to better facilitate communicating with each other.

This can be substantially improved as it is critical to maximise outcomes due to the high-profile nature of the work and potential contribution to multiple interventions.

In summary, the strategies have organically developed over time although it is difficult to develop an understanding of why these strategies were chosen as there is no clear program rationale and design, monitoring or evidence of decision-making in relation to the Project implementation year by year. However, two key adaptations that have been made are appropriate in response to Pacific people requesting face-to-face interactions. There is evidence from a number of documents and respondents that programmatic strategies that are ongoing in nature, designed with clear objectives and intended outcomes have been requested however they have not been fully responded to.

The most effective strategies are the establishment of a Pacific women parliamentarians network and research scholarships. In effect the mentoring and exchanges and MP's increased access to research has been minor. The majority of effort and resources have been committed to holding the Annual PWPP Forum and this has effectively led to the establishment of a Pacific women parliamentarians network. However the implemented strategies could have been better planned and implemented and therefore led to better attainment of outcomes.

2.3 Under what circumstances, and to what extent, were women parliamentarians supported in their roles? What were the barriers and the enablers?

Please note most of the evidence and information to address this question has been presented earlier in this report. As such, this section includes conclusions only.

Pacific women parliamentarians were supported in their role, to a limited extent, through attendance at the Annual PWPP Forum and some opportunities to participate in Exchanges to Australia.

In answering Evaluation Question 1.3 we compared the strategies and activities delivered and the short to medium outcomes achieved to what respondents stated Pacific women parliamentarians need to be effective (survey and interview). The finding here was that the **mechanism of establishing a network to support Pacific women parliamentarians** was the right and an effective strategy (including the activities: Annual Forum and Exchanges) as it has established relationships, solidarity, inspired leadership aspiration, developed awareness, skills and knowledge. However Pacific women parliamentarians have not been supported directly to act. **They were not supported /they need /are asking for** support that is:

- **Targeted** and ongoing individual and/or country based strategies developed through individual or group coaching based on a needs analysis
- Builds issues and interest based **collective** action such as supporting action working groups (coalitions / caucus) to develop strategies and then supports their **ongoing** action
- Access to **political acumen / strategist** assisting them to set goals, develop a strategy and implement.
- Support for 'being an effective women parliamentarian' (women only) is **separate** to support to 'pursue a gender equality agenda' (which can involve male gender champions)
- In strong **collaboration** with other efforts in the Pacific so that support is joined up

The circumstances that have led to this level and type of support are discussed in the Relevance Chapter.

Barriers and enablers to supporting Pacific women Parliamentarians

The barriers to supporting Pacific women parliamentarians are:

- The Project was not fully designed, does not set goals or monitor them
- Not based on an understanding of need or context or map out an appropriate theory of change for this context
- Management is not taking a programmatic approach to implementation, DHoR is service focused
- All strategies delivered through the DHoR need to/will involve currently sitting Australian MPs or staff when their involvement will not necessarily meet the needs of Pacific women parliamentarians.
- Lack of political acumen. A coalition and political economic approach is needed. There is a lack of ability and belief to operate in a political context. Strategies implemented are basically low level networking and collegiate with gender equality content.
- Lack of alignment and collaboration with other agencies' interventions and hence joined up effort and scale of and targeted influence is missed.

The enablers to supporting Pacific women parliamentarians are:

- The success of the Forum
- The high profile nature of the Forum and the fact that there are currently only 35 Pacific women parliamentarians and hence they can be brought together.
- Access to currently sitting Australian and New Zealand women parliamentarians and Australia's Ambassador for women and girls.
- An investment in twinning parliament to parliament relationships as staff 'speak the same language' and these relationships are more sustainable over time
- The positive relationships that PWPP Project staff have developed with Pacific Parliamentarians and Parliamentary staff.
- The dedication and commitment that the women parliamentarians have to solidarity with each other
- The willingness of Australian parliamentary staff to commit time and effort to PWPP activities and DHoR to commit pro bono effort to the Project.

2.4 To what extent were women parliamentarians able to participate in and influence decision-making in parliament?

There is some evidence of women being directly inspired at the Forum and through the exchanges then returning to their country and taking specific action. For example:

- One PWP gained confidence at the Forum in Fiji in 2014 and has raised questions in parliament re: treatment of reports about women's crisis centres to make sure they are referred to the relevant standing committee. She also asked questions of Minister for Women about ensuring a role for male parliamentarians in promoting policy and programs on family violence (Obj. 1) (PR#3)
- Another PWP said that the Forum was very informative and sharing of experience helped her because her legislature was considering a bill on domestic violence and she is chairing hearings on that legislation (Obj. 1) (PR#3)
- Two senators from Palau set up the Centre for Women's Empowerment Belau, after attending the Forum in Sydney. Senator Urquart from Australia visited the centre in Palau after it was opened (NL#1)
- A returned Research Scholar and a PWP are working to establish a gender office in their parliament in PNG.
- As mentioned earlier a number of PWP's stated that they are now speaking up and striving to take on more leadership roles in their Parliaments.

Although women have been inspired through participation, attribution to only this projects is difficult because it was not possible to establish the contribution of the PWPP Project to the Outcomes. Pacific Parliamentarians spoke of collective efforts often interchangeably referring to other agencies projects and programs as the same time.

2.5 To what extent were women parliamentarians able to effectively represent the needs and rights of all women and achieve improved development outcomes for women and families? What were the barriers and enablers?

In searching for outcomes through document analysis, interviews and the survey there has been no mention of Pacific women parliamentarians being able to better represent the needs and rights of women. There is some evidence of preconditions being achieved for example:

- Increased knowledge of parliamentary processes
- A better understanding of gender equality
- Being more confident and motivated to be an effective parliamentarian
- A desire to have a clear personal strategy and collective for change in their nation.

However the strategies and activities that were focused on working with PWPs to effectively engage their constituencies and women were not clearly implemented.

We feel that given the 'light' and unfocused nature of the strategies implemented this level of outcomes is premature to be evident.

There is also a couple of other considerations here. The first being that the evaluation was only able to interview / survey a small number of Pacific Parliamentarians (16 of 35), if more were interviewed there may be some evidence of outcomes. Secondly, when several of the outcomes were mentioned by Pacific Parliamentarians during interviews, it was not possible to establish the contribution of the PWPP Project to the Outcomes. Pacific Parliamentarians spoke of collective efforts often interchangeably referring to other agencies projects and programs as the same time.

Assessment of Efficiency

This section assesses the efficiency of PWPP. It includes consideration of the following evaluation questions:

- 3.1 Has the PWPP Project delivered value-for-money and which activities delivered greatest value for money?
- 3.2 Were there alternate ways of delivering the activities that could be considered to be more cost effective?
- 3.3 Were there any areas of inefficiency that could have been streamlined?
- 3.4 To what extent was the PWPP Project well-governed, well-managed and accountable?
- 3.5 Were the required levels of personnel and skills in place to support program delivery?
- 3.6 Were the activities delivered on time and on budget?

3.1 Has the PWPP Project delivered value-for-money and which strategies delivered greatest value for money?

Overall, PWPP delivered a range of value-for-money from adequate to poor.

This question was answered using a value-for-money rubric based on DFAT's Four E's and OEDC DAC's domains (see Appendix 9). This rubric was developed specifically for this evaluation and covers the following areas:

- appropriate selection of strategies, activities and outputs to be delivered;
- how effectively outputs are converted to outcomes and impacts;
- efficiency in managing costs; and
- ethical practices.

Each of these are assessed against 5 rankings being: High level, good, adequate, needs work and poor. Rankings 'good' and 'needs work' have been added by the evaluators to expand the scale from 3 to 5. Evaluative criteria were defined and judgments were made based on the evidence that emerged during this evaluation.

The value for money rubric analysis is at Appendix 9.

3.2 Were there alternate ways of delivering the strategies that could be considered to be more cost effective?

The cost of delivering the strategies in PWPP is in line with that expected by other organisations. The evaluation has suggested more cost effective ways of delivering these strategies and the project overall (e.g. by partnering with other agencies). However, for this evaluation it is more pertinent to consider if the strategies were the right ones to deliver in the first place.

The PWPP Forum

Holding a large and high profile two to three-day event in the Pacific with up to 70 participants is an expensive venture because most of the participants need to fly there from remote and costly locations. The cost of the Forum has increased over the years (Table 14).

We also asked two other organisations, who regularly run programs in the Pacific, what they expect a gathering like this to cost. The spend for PWPP was in line with their estimates.

Table 14: cost of delivering the Forums – 2013-16 and budgeted cost for 2017.

Annual PWPP Forum Location, year	Sydney 2013	Tonga 2014	Fiji 2015	Samoa 2016	Planned for Solomon Islands 2017
Theme	Inaugural		Violence Against Women	Women's Economic Empowerment	Climate Change
Days	2	2	2.5	3	
Cost	\$103,000	\$137,000	\$278,000	\$284,000	\$345 Budgeted
Total number of participants	45	29	71	67	(estimated 70)
Cost per participant	\$2,300	\$4,724	\$3,900	\$4,238	\$4,900

Outrigger development and research scholarships

We also asked the same two organisations what they think it would cost to develop Outrigger and to implement the research scholarships. Again, the cost of PWPP was similar to the estimates provided by comparable organisations.

More cost-effective methodologies for delivery

There may be more cost-effective ways of delivering these strategies. For example, it may be more cost-effective to deliver the Forum (i.e. one of the activities that delivers Strategy 1) by:

- using a conference organiser located in the Pacific
- coordinating the delivery with other agencies and events that are working towards similar objectives
- deliver the event with other partners and share costs

However, the biggest potential to improve PWPP's value for money is for the project to be grounded in evidence-based design that targets need and incorporates best practice in relation to gender empowerment

in the context of fledgling parliamentary democracies in the Asia Pacific. The strategies delivered (and related activities) need to be:

- coordinated and aligned with other efforts in the Pacific
- based on a needs analysis and evidence
- provide tailored, needs-based support to Pacific Women Parliamentarians to act
- implemented with a programmatic approach
- implemented in a way that maximises outcomes
- utilising human resources with an appropriate mix of qualifications and skills to match need
- based within an organisation in the Pacific or one that has significant experience in the Pacific.

Redesigning the Project in line with these principles may result in an increase in cost, but would almost certainly deliver superior value for money.

3.3 Were there any areas of inefficiency that could have been streamlined?

A more streamlined approach to project delivery would have resulted in greater efficiency overall. This is particularly the case with respect to Outrigger, which is yet to be delivered four years after its conception – an inordinately long time for a program of this nature. This has been a source of great frustration to some who have been involved in its development. As one respondent observed:

“Approval [of Outrigger] could have been done more efficiently. Parliaments are requesting the training - but it's not ready to go yet. This has been a constraint’ [I31]

Based on comparable programs observed by the evaluation team, a reasonable timeframe for Outrigger development would be 18 months. Implementation should have occurred in 2015 / 2016 with outcomes now being observed. There does not appear to be a valid reason why project management could not identify and address the underlying reasons for these delays.

DHoR has facilitated a significant amount of pro bono Australian parliamentary staff time in the development of Outrigger and hosting Research Scholars. The cost of delivering Outrigger and Research Scholars would have been higher if this pro bono time wasn’t available.

Limitations in the degree of international development capacity (and working knowledge of the Pacific) within the DHoR have caused delays. While the accumulation of cross-cultural skills and knowledge is a positive outcome, this has never been one of PWPP’s objectives. A more streamlined development process would almost certainly have resulted from the project being designed and delivered by an agency with specialist skill and knowledge.

3.4 To what extent was the PWPP Project well-governed, well-managed and accountable?

The standards of governance, management and accountability fall well short of DFAT standards. This is largely attributable to the different organisational culture of DHoR, compared to an agency that is calibrated toward effective program development and project management.

Governance

The project's relevance, effectiveness and efficiency suffered due to the lack of effective high-level oversight. Most notably, the project lacked an appropriately experienced governance or advisory group. Oversight from such a group could have addressed some of the project's key limitations – namely the absence of project targets, quality indicators and the failure to maintain key strategic relationships. It could also have been used to engage with other key agencies in the region – and in doing so exploit potential synergies and avoid duplication of effort.

Following the 2013 Sydney Forum, a governance or advisory group was established to address this issue, however this group has never met. The reasons for this remain unclear.

Management

The DFAT standards of program design, management, implementation and monitoring have not been adhered to (DFAT quality standards). However, respondents indicate that the program is perceived by DHoR management to have been to a good standard (I03, I05).

The failure to apply DFAT quality standards has manifested in the following ways:

- project strategies and activities are not well described – activity objectives, intended outcomes and target groups are not outlined
- budget allocations for each activity are not clearly defined
- absence of a clear rationale that articulates the reason why certain activities have been chosen
- decisions taken to refrain from implementing particular activities have not been properly documented
- progress is not monitored against objectives or intended outcomes.

On several (March 2013, July 2015, May 2016) DFAT – and previously AusAID – made recommendations to address these deficiencies in program management. For example, AusAID 2013 recommendations included:

- mentoring (use of past Pacific MP's and past Australian MPs)
- clarify the design by undertaking a needs analysis with Pacific women, use this information to redesign PWPP in the first year
- undertake a contextual analysis
- coordinate efforts with other programs
- gather evidence and lessons learned
- develop an M&E Framework.

Some adjustments have been recently made at the insistence of DFAT (2016), but these have predominantly occurred at a functional rather than a program oversight level. DHoR's failure to adequately address the

recommendations has been the primary reason why PWPP has delivered outcomes that represent much lesser value for money than could otherwise have been achieved.

For example, in March 2013 AusAID advised the PWPP project team that the Research Scholarships needed to be grounded in greater clarity about (1) who and how research priorities are decided and (2) who will use the research outcomes. There is also no follow up after Scholars return to their Parliaments to establish the usefulness of the increase in research capacity. Interviews reveal relevant gender champions are unaware of increased skill capacity and have therefore missed an important opportunity to access relevant evidence to strengthen their arguments and lobbying efforts.

One respondent, who manages a *Pacific Women* component and hence is in close contact with gender champions, was surprised to be informed that a Parliamentary Staff member from their country had visited Australia. Their observations further evidence the need for a more robust management approach:

“There definitely needs to be improved coordination between PWPP and *Pacific Women* in country. It has not worked very well. I have no idea about what the program is up to and how we can link into it, how can I then support people after they have participated? Linking in and connection with (us) so that we can do the follow up. We could be making a lot more of it in (country) if we knew what was going on” [I21].

Another respondent recommended that “PWPP sets a work plan, that should be tied into the multi donor program” [I23].

Personnel from agencies affirmed these sentiments, and the desire for better coordination and collaboration between PWPP and other agencies operating within the region.

Accountability

The arrangement between DFAT (the commissioning agency) and the DHoR (the delivery agency) is not contractual. Financial arrangements between two Commonwealth government departments is established via a ‘Record of Understanding’. This means that DFAT has had little power to address performance that falls short of an acceptable standard, such as:

- late reports that are not up to DFAT standard;
- work plans that do not contain enough detail or a programmatic approach
- budgets and actual spend only been submitted in 2016.

However, project management staff said that the operation of this Project was within the DHoR accountability standards.

3.5 Were the required levels of personnel and skills in place to support program delivery?

DHoR does not have the required skills, management expertise and international development experience to deliver the project in a manner that meets DFAT standards. DHoR does have natural advantages in that it has expertise in parliamentary processes. Several respondents have also stated project staff have been good at

building and maintaining relationships in the Pacific [I04]. However, this has not made up for skill deficiencies in other areas. As one stakeholder observed:

“[I] just don’t think DHoR has the skill set to do this’ [I04].

As previously discussed in the Relevance Chapter, the following expertise should be procured in order to address this issue:

- programmatic management (design, implementation and monitoring)
- international development
- gender equity
- pacific regional knowledge and experience (and general cross cultural)
- political economy of the Pacific
- democracy, electoral and parliamentary processes
- event management
- diplomacy
- collaborative practice.

3.6 Were the activities delivered on time and on budget?

PWPP is on track to be delivered within its overall allocated budget of AU\$2,850,037 over five years. However, it is important to note that a number of activities that were planned - and important to quality delivery – were not delivered. This included:

- a needs analysis,
- program redesign
- Monitoring and Evaluation Framework,
- programmatic implementation of support to Pacific women MPs
- activities to address Objective 2
- mentoring or a redesigned version
- a functioning website
- coordination and alignment with other agencies working in the Pacific.

The total spend over the 2012-2016 period has been AU\$2,068,481. This is difficult to break down year by year as there are under spends and over spends that have been carried over. The submitted budget for 16/17 is \$822,777, which takes the total spend to the allocated amount.

It is difficult to assess whether activities were delivered on time and on budget on a year to year basis because there are no detailed work plans describing intended activities with budget allocations or rationale for these allocations. The work plans do not stipulate times or a rationale of why an activity is to be undertaken, with whom and for what purpose.

The Forum, being the largest budget item, has increased in participant numbers and its budget over the four years (\$103,000 in 2013 to \$284,000 in 2016, and in 2017 the budget is \$345,000). The increasing spend on the Forum means that there has been less for other activities. There is no analysis of the effect or intent of this trend and whether this constitutes a meritorious allocation of resources.

Other considerations

- Various recent theories of change that represent leading practice in women's leadership support should inform any refinements to the PWPP Project.
- Leading practice incorporates a focus on gender relations, yet this is largely missing from PWPP.
- Contemporary women's leadership support programs favour promoting collective action over support to individuals.
- Distinguishing between women's leadership and gender mainstreaming is necessary to avoid counterproductive outcomes in Pacific contexts.

Various recent theories of change that represent leading practice in women's leadership support

As previously discussed, the PWPP Projects design is incomplete. As a result, it has not been grounded in a robust theory of change (TOC) that reflects best-practice in the field of women's leadership and gender equality. There are several TOCs from other current and recent projects that shed light in this regard. Five notable examples are described in Table 15.

Table 15: Current and recent TOCs relevant to PWPP

Conceptual Framework for Women's Leadership	This theory of change recognises the importance of considering agency, relations and structural conditions which enable women's leadership. The framework also identifies strategies which contribute to leadership, and expected development outcomes. Developed by Kenway et al for the Office of Development Effectiveness in 2014 the work is informed by several frameworks including CARE's Gender Framework.
Oxfam Australia's Gender Justice Outcomes Hierarchy	Guides Oxfam's work in support of women's leadership.
Oxfam Australia's Right to be Heard Outcomes Hierarchy	The Gender Justice Outcomes Hierarchy also aligns with their 'Right to be Heard' (RtBH) TOC otherwise known as an 'influencing' TOC.
UN Women's Pacific women's leadership TOC	Recently presented at the recent UN women and UNDP workshop in Fiji ⁹ . This framework is attempting to provide an overall roadmap for work in gender justice in the Pacific.
The Rao and Kelleher model (2002) ¹⁰	The Change Matrix articulates four domains in which gender power structures operate including: 1. Individual beliefs, attitudes and values; 2. access to and control over resources; 3. Internal culture and deep structure; and 4. formal rules and policies.

Leading practice incorporates a focus on gender relations

There is increasing recognition by development agencies and practitioners of the need for a connected approach to the challenge of individual verses collective development posed by gender equality interventions to date. This approach informed work by researchers undertaking the DFAT Office of Development Effectiveness's women's leadership evaluation in 2014 (Kenway et al).

Kenway et al concluded that the root causes of gender inequality contributing to women's lack of leadership are complex. They advocate women's leadership programs be grounded in theories of change that conceive

⁹ UN Women and UNDP workshop 'Innovating for Impact: A Pacific Regional Consultation on Women's Political Empowerment and Leadership' (September 2016, Fiji)

¹⁰ Originally developed by Aruna Rao and David Kelleher at Gender at Work (2002) and adapted by Srilatha Batliwala (2008)

of changes at multiple levels. In particular, they suggest structuring theories against three domains: agency, relations and structures. An analysis of the PWPP Objectives reveals that it coopts two out of three of these domains. Objective 1 is focused on PWP's 'agency' and Objective 2 and 3 on 'structures', but 'relations' is missing.

This has been identified by a few of the evaluation's respondents (at Evaluation Question 3.1). Respondents cited an important need for support to carefully and effectively redefine gender relations between women and men in their country and cultural context – beginning with relations between female MPs and male MPs. In discussing the belief that it is not culturally appropriate for a woman to openly debate a man, one parliamentary staff member observed that:

"Women MPs have gained confidence in public speaking or oratory skills; a good training area for them to face the challenges in a male dominated parliament. ... As is the culture in the Pacific, especially Melanesian, I noticed that women MPs have gained ground in trying to overcome male domination by being modest, cool and straight to the point in whatever they are debating on and able to contain themselves from interference and interjections from male MPs". [S20]

Respondents identified that small number of Pacific women have achieved this and they need to be involved in support of other PWPs to do the same. As one respondent observed:

"Women get elected to the national assembly but then... 'how do I get my voice heard?' How can we network and support women to speak up is important?" [I26]

Pacific women respondents share a view, when it comes to gender relations, they must be central to finding solutions that are appropriate for their cultural context.

Contemporary women's leadership support programs favour collective action

While acknowledging that the relative merits of individual vs collective leadership development is an 'open question', Rodrigues (2016) cited leading examples that favour the latter. For example, she cites a 2016 ODI review of development support to women's leadership efforts that tended to fall on the side of investing in collectives and coalitions, rather than individuals (O'Neil & Domingo, 2016: 33).

Rodrigues also cites DFAT's emphasis on coalition-building in its gender equality and leadership support programs. She states that in Indonesia, DFAT is implementing the flagship \$30 million MAMPU project in support of women's leadership, which explicitly includes support for coalition-building and networking, as well as including organisational development assistance for individual women's groups (DFAT, 2015).

It's worth noting that the afore-mentioned TOCs reflect a strong view that collective groups are particularly important in situations where highly-challenging structural and cultural change is needed. These TOCs recognise collective action as important for its ability to build pressure, and directly or indirectly influence decision makers precipitate increased gender equality. Oxfam Australia (Moxham 2014) emphasises this in its Right to be Heard TOC, in which it clearly distinguishes between networks and a coalitions by articulating key outcome steps that lead from the former to the latter – a network is considered to be a precondition or a lower level outcome for the establishment of a coalition. Oxfam identifies distinctly different strategies to achieve networks and coalitions; strategies for supporting a network are primarily for relationship and learning purposes, while strategies that support a coalition are much more overtly politically in nature. Reinelt (2016) affirms this by describing 'networks' as the relationships that people have with each other through which information, ideas, resources, experience, interests and passions are shared. She defines a 'coalition' as a 'network in action mode' – partnerships amongst distinct actors that coordinate action in

pursuit of shared goals. Coalitions generally have a more formalised structure with members making a long-term commitment to share responsibilities and resources.

PWPP's original intention was to provide mentoring (individual support) but has evolved to focus on the creation of networks. The Annual PWPP Forum and the Exchanges have been effective at developing a much needed and valuable network of PWPs, and in doing so they have achieved some short-term outcomes and preconditions to collective action that has the potential to precipitate significant change. In fact, there are signs that PWPs are already expressing a desire to embark on a trajectory toward collective action. For example:

- PWPs declared, in the 'outcomes statement' of the 2016 Forum the theme for the next Forum in 2017 to be climate change. PWPs have not set the theme for the PWPP Forums' before.
- PWPs are exhibiting a desire to embark on more targeted action: "We need to start to focus on legislation and reform to draft Bills, build support for and get Bills passed. The past three years have been about building capacity, now as a group of women in parliaments we need to start producing legislation, it should be one of our KPI's" [I11].

Leading practice suggests Pacific people must conceive of their own solutions that suit their cultural context

The design of PWPP Project should reflect best-practice approaches to development programs in the Pacific context. In 2014, Deborah Rhodes in 'Capacity Across Cultures: Global Lessons from Pacific Experiences' considered capacity development in the Pacific, centered on stories told by Pacific Islanders and their development partners about effective capacity-focused programs. In this she proposes that development activities will be 'more effective if they consider and respond to the cultural values which influence the existing and nature of capacity and how it changes over time' (2014).

Rhodes (2014) argues that aid activities often aim to change behaviour without acknowledging that for such changes to be sustained they need to be aligned with changes in values, which are deeply embedded in culture. This view suggests programs that are culturally informed will have a higher chance of achieving significant and lasting change to values and behaviours. Rhode's preferred method of capacity development includes 'engaging in development dialogue with people under their local condition, drawing upon their expert knowledge and values, and tapping into their already established capacities.'

Rhodes (2014) highlights the following principles and guidance:

- Views of capacity are influenced significantly by cultural values.
- No-one can build another's capacity – Pacific Islanders are responsible for their own capacity and program managers will only influence this if their contribution makes sense in terms of cultural values.
- Context matters – cultural values which underpin the behaviour of organisations and communities in each context should influence the design, delivery and evaluation of external aid programs.

The design and practice of PWPP being contingent on Australians participation in the delivery of Project strategies does not currently reflect Rhodes thinking. This was recognized by various respondents. As one observed: "... linking Fiji MPs with Samoan MP is much more useful because of the cultural contexts. It should be much more of a partnership in the context" [I24]. Another observed that "exchange visits are

useful but ... what Pacific women MPs need for their agenda is cultural context support and an exchange to Australia cannot provide that" [I24].

One Australian women MP went so far as to say that:

"The mentoring issue is bewildering as a goal, the idea of me advising these women... They are already remarkable women. I don't understand their culture, their system of patriarchy – how can I be credible as a mentor? It has never been articulated, as how that would happen. [I22]

Women's Leadership and gender mainstreaming are separate approaches

Another consideration is the distinction between 'women's leadership' and 'pursuing a gender agenda'. These are related concepts with important differences.

Gender work requires all genders to be engaged, men, women and transgender. Gender champions can be anyone who has an understanding of a gender equality agenda and a desire to pursue it.

Women's leadership should be conceived of separately. The support for a woman to lead should not be conditional on her overt support for or against gender equity. Supporting women to lead is gender work, but this does not mean that they will necessarily have a 'gender agenda'. This is an important distinction in the context of PWPP's work.

This evaluation began by considering the inherent assumption in the PWPP Project design 'that Women MPs want to and will raise gender equality issues and interests'. However, according to Kenway et al (2014), this is not necessarily the case. They argue that 'women may feel the need to limit the extent to which they voice their concerns to remain in power or to be respected by men in leadership positions'.

During this evaluation, we discovered two examples of current Pacific women Parliamentarians who are not pursuing a gender agenda – and may in fact may be compromised if they are seen to. It's unlikely they would succeed in being re-elected if they are too vocal regarding gender-related issues. They need to be seen to be pursuing the issues and interests of their constituencies. It is worth considering that such women parliamentarians may in fact disengage with the PWPP Project if too much moral pressure is applied to be a gender champion. This is an important if we are to be mindful of the 'do no harm' principle. Indeed, it's arguable PWPs do more to redefine gender relations within their culture simply by remaining in office, rather than risking expulsion at the next election by being overly vocal regarding gender.

Recommendations

In light of the findings of the evaluation, what now happens to the resources / investment allocated to this work should 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 particular niche that the Project needs to take. Should the investment focus on supporting UNDP Action 5 Supporting PWPs only or both Action 5 and Action 6. Following the principle of resourcing less Strategies but resourcing them well
- The principle of sustaining the outcomes achieved to date
- The principle of ‘do no harm’
- A separation of support for Pacific women parliamentarians (a women’s leadership mechanism) from support for Parliamentarians that are gender champions (a gender mainstreaming mechanism)
- The principle of collaboration and joined up effort leads to greater impact

Recommendation 1

Alignment with *Pacific Women*

If the resources allocated to this Project are the only resources that *Pacific Women* commits at this highly visible political level then these resources need to be strongly considered in relation to the *Pacific Women* roadmap (currently under development) and diplomacy.

Consider the investment’s inputs and strategies in relation to other **diplomatic and programmatic efforts** that are part of *Pacific Women* and DFAT in the region.

- 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 *Pacific Women* Roadmap
- Also consider alignment with efforts of the New Zealand Government.

Recommendation 2

Coordination and Collaboration

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.

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.

Such as including:

- *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

Recommendation 3

Modality

Given what has been achieved, the progression of the network of Pacific women parliamentarians being on the brink of ‘coalition action’, 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 appropriately expertise to deliver the Project and not be compromised by the political nature of the work.

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. Considerations include:

- 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 *Pacific Women* Support Unit
- DHoR to maintain involvement as a secondary partner in the Forum and hosting the research scholarships.

Recommendation 4

Re calibrate the investment and ground it in good program design practice. By undertaking:

- 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
- 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.

Recommendations considering the existing strategies of the current Project

Recommendation 5

PWP Network / Forum

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.

Such a redesign should incorporating the following:

- A focus on delivering three purposes being:
 1. a supportive network for PWPs supporting them to be effective women parliamentarians
 2. a high-profile gender equality event that builds and supports Pacific gender champions and their agenda
 3. 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 Australians 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 (purpose 2) to be a biannual event to enable resources to be focused on support for collective efforts (Recommendation 7).
- Maintain a lower profile annual gathering of PWPs. In the alternate year this would be a smaller gathering focused on purpose one.

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.

Recommendation 6

Individual support (mentoring and coaching)

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. Considerations here include:

- 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.

Recommendation 7

Support collective effort as a priority

Focus and target resources to support for **collective efforts** of parliamentary gender champions in whatever form they take (coalition, alliance, caucus) to pursue gender equality issue or interest.

- 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

Recommendation 8

Engaging **Parliamentary Staff**

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.

Completely reconsider the current strategies and activities that are addressing Objective 3: **Parliaments** to be more gender sensitive.

- 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.

Pacific Women will need to test some of the recommendations of this evaluation at the next PWPP Forum in 2017 as only the views and wishes of PWPs and parliamentary staff that have engaged with the evaluation have been heard.

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