



Final Report

**Review of DFAT Partner Performance
Assessments**

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Executive Summary: Are the PPAs useful in their current format?

Ninti One was engaged by DFAT in September 2018 to review DFAT's Partner Performance Assessment (PPA) process, with the objective of 'assessing whether the PPAs are a useful tool in their current format'. The review also aimed to assess the extent to which the scores are supported by evidence, and any changes between the 2017 and 2018 PPA scores, and what DFAT and/or the supplier have done to improve performance from 2017 in 2018.

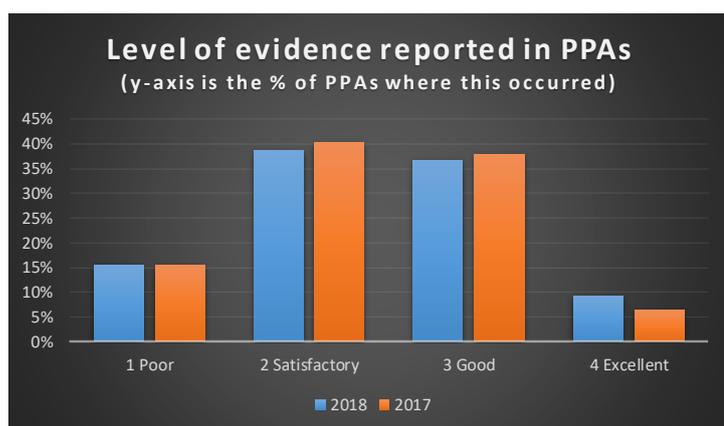
The spot-check consisted of a sample size of 57 PPA reports which represents nearly 20% of the total 2018 PPA population. All data was kept confidential between DFAT and Ninti One. All interviews were conducted in confidence and all notes from the interviews were kept confidential to Ninti only.

Partner Performance Assessments (PPAs) are key agreement management tools for the Australian Aid Program. PPAs enable DFAT to measure performance against strategic targets, in particular Target 7: Working with the most effective partners and Target 8: Ensuring Value for Money. Partner Performance Assessments (PPAs) assess how well implementing partners (NGOs, commercial suppliers and multilateral organisations) are delivering the services required in aid agreements. The focus of the PPA is on the performance of the implementing partners, as distinct from the quality of the investment itself. PPAs cover performance against five standard criteria over a 12-month period. PPAs are completed for implementing partners in relation to commercial agreements and grants valued at \$3 million and above. A PPA ratings matrix and six-point scale are used to score PPA criteria. Evidence is required to support ratings given, and comments must be provided where areas have been identified for improvement. The PPA ratings matrix provides guidance to agreement managers on determining an overall rating for each quality criteria and assists those approving PPAs.

Our review found that PPAs are a useful tool in their current format. Overall the PPA process is highly valued by DFAT and Managing Contractors (MCs). We found that staff on both sides are very professional, diligent and committed to delivering the best results and specifically, good development outcomes for their programs.

The graph below shows the % of PPA reports with appropriate evidence and analysis, based on an objective desk study of the PPA reports, using a rating system described in Annex 2 of this report.

For example, a rating of '3 = good' was given when there was written evidence/mention of the following: *'Systematic review of evidence including review of performance against all of the four following areas: contractual obligations; feedback from partner government stakeholders; project reports; and periodic reporting such as face-to-face meetings, weekly or monthly progress reports'*.



Despite this desk analysis, through the interviews, we found that DFAT staff used an appropriately wide range of evidence to write the PPAs, however this perhaps wasn't always reflected in the reports.

Key findings and suggestions for DFAT: (no specific order)

(i) Strengthening PPA tool

- DFAT should consider requiring the assessors to write a minimum of four specific 'defendable' pieces of evidence (for each criterion, to support their rating) in the written PPA report. This is because the DFAT staff say that they use plenty of evidence (agreed by MCs), however the written PPA reports reflect only a slightly-more-than 'satisfactory' amount of evidence.
- DFAT could consider making sure there is a stronger correlation between the PPA ratings and the performance payment clauses in individual contracts.
- DFAT should redefine the ratings between a '5' and a '6' to ensure a greater separation between the two. Currently, there is not a large distinction.
- DFAT should share the highly valued 'Partner Performance Assessment Ratings Matrix' with MCs. MCs will then feel that the PPA process is fairer because they will have a deeper understanding of what they are being scored on.
- The PPA tool would benefit from having a performance follow-up section, so that the key issues identified can be actioned throughout the year.
- Consider strengthening Q. 4- policy alignment, risk management and innovation. It was felt by many that these are quite separate issues but are being "lumped" together.
- Consider strengthening Q. 4 (a) and how these policies are being implemented. Just because an MC has the relevant policies doesn't mean they are being successfully applied to their projects. Eg. GESDI.

(ii) Communication and stakeholder involvement

- The 'Diplomacy' aspect of performance was commonly mentioned by DFAT staff, as what is missing in the assessment. i.e. how activity performance affects the all-important Partner Government relations. This could be added to the Matrix.
- Partner Government involvement and viewpoints are currently inadequately recorded in the PPA and should be increased.
- The PPA process does not adequately recognise that DFAT has some responsibility for the MC's performance. MCs are called 'partners', but there was a widespread feeling that the PPA process does not reflect a partnership approach. A 360-degree system was mentioned (unsolicited) as a fairer system by more than 50% of the MCs and also by some DFAT staff.
- An independent moderator would be beneficial in some cases.

1. Summary of process

Interviews¹ were held with both DFAT activity managers and representatives from Managing Contractors (MC) on 57 activities. The activities were chosen based on a PPA having been completed for both 2017 and 2018. Close to 150 individuals were interviewed, with several programs having more than one person represented at the interviews. Most DFAT interviewees were at Post.

Notes were taken for each of the discussions and recorded in a database. These discussions have been used as the base for this report, in addition to the analysis.

Interview questions were crafted in consultation with staff from the Aid Business Engagement section of the Contracting and Aid Management Division at DFAT. Nominated DFAT assessors (often at Post) were asked 13 questions and MCs were asked 11 (please refer to Annex 1 for a copy of the questions). The questions were designed to seek information on the robustness and usefulness of the PPA process and to confirm the evidence used to support ratings. In addition, we sought feedback on how satisfied they are with the PPA tool and asked for recommendations on how the tool could be improved.

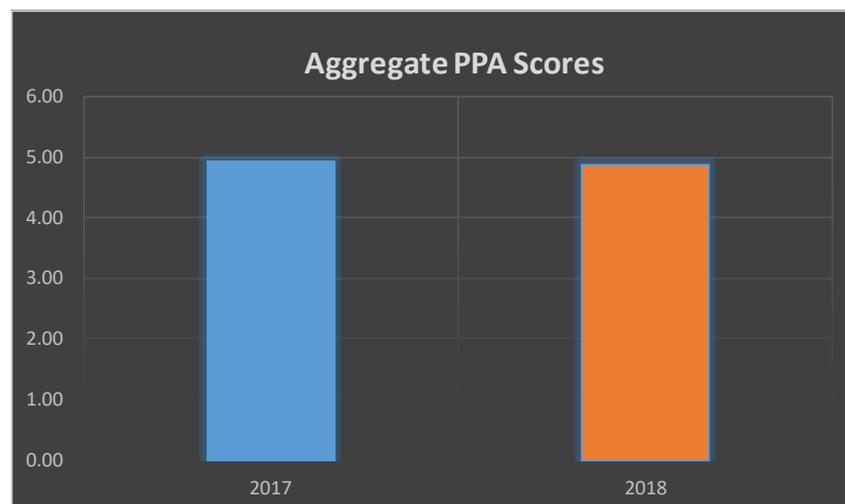
A large data-set of PPA ratings was also analysed. This covered all of the ratings and comments from 57 activities in 2017 and 2018.

2. What are the trends in performance?

The following graphs highlight some of the key trends in performance – specifically the 57 activities broken down into sectors, geographies, by contractor and by evaluation criteria.

Figure 1 below shows that the average rating is nearly '5', which is defined as 'good, satisfies criteria in almost all cases'. There was only a 0.04 point difference between the two years, with 2017 averaging a higher rating.

FIGURE 1



¹ The interviews were conducted by Kristen Collins and Rod Reeve

Figure 2 below shows small changes in PPA scores depending on the sector (note the y-axis scale). The 57 activities have been broken down into sectors in Figure 2 below. 'General development support' has the highest average, closely followed by 'building resilience and education' sectors, while 'governance' and 'health' activities scored the lowest on average. Agriculture, fisheries and water had 4 activities, building resilience - 11, education - 18, general development - 4, governance - 7, health - 5 and infrastructure and trade - 8.

FIGURE 2

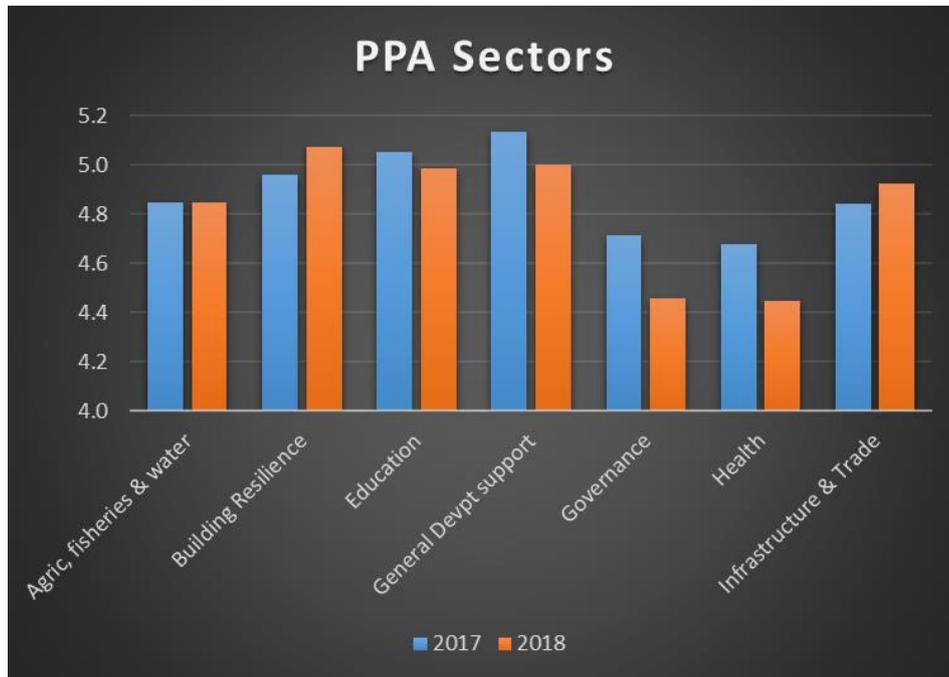


Figure 3 below shows the relative performance of the MCs. There is some variation between suppliers (de-identified), as is to be expected. The number of contracts held by individual suppliers in this spot check ranged from 1-12 each.

FIGURE 3

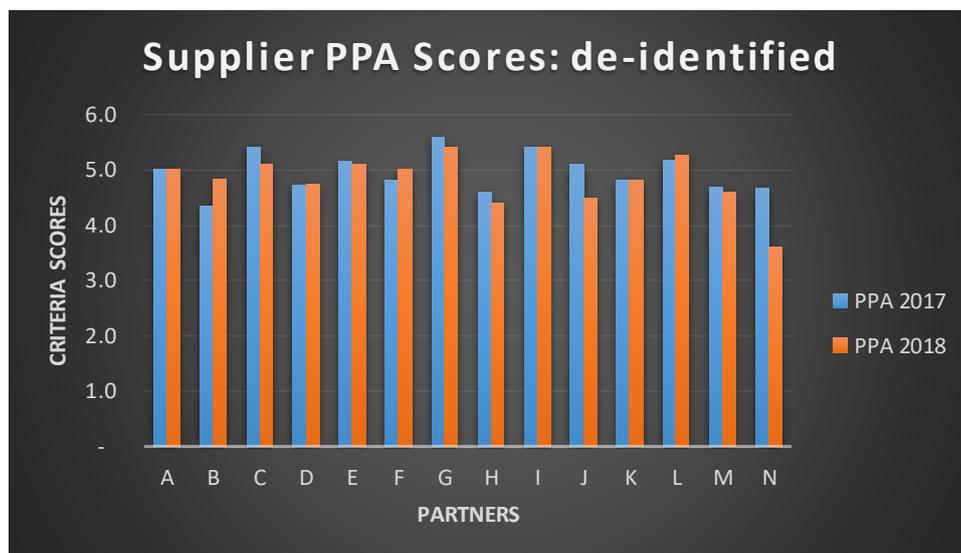


Figure 4 shows the variance in geographic regions. Global had 4 activities, Pacific – 27, South East Asia – 23 and South and West Asia – 3. ‘Africa’ scored the highest, but it was excluded because there was only one activity in Africa.

FIGURE 4

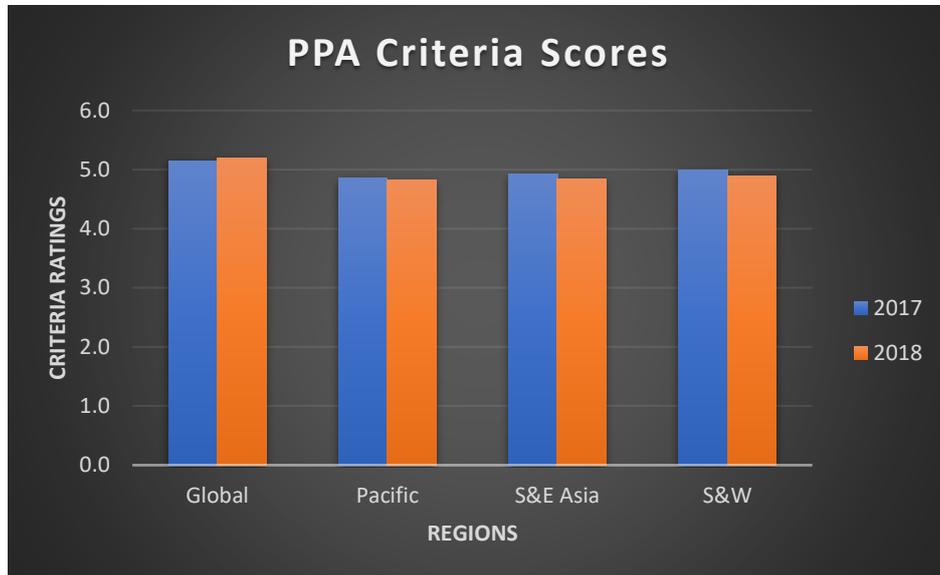
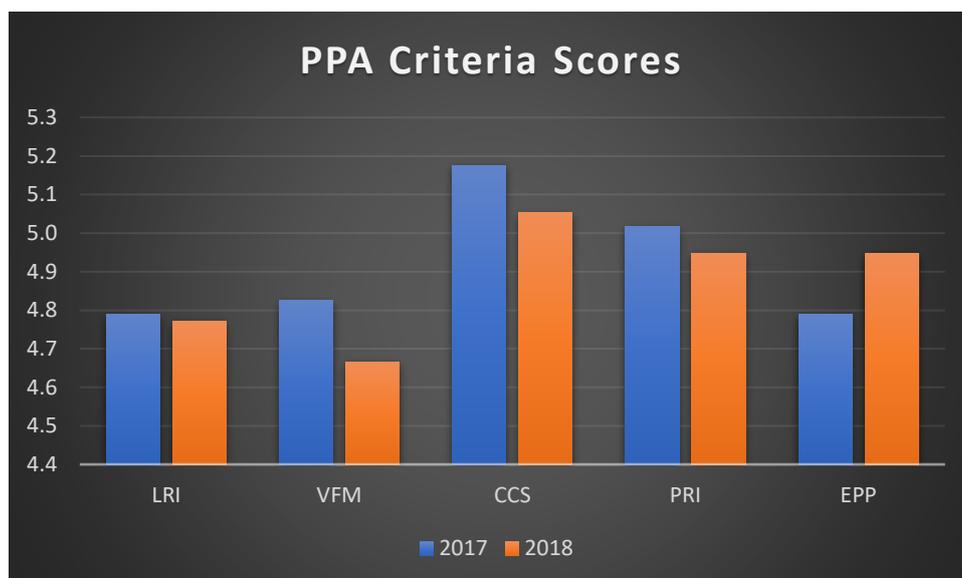


Figure 5 below shows the variation amongst the five PPA criteria, with respect to ratings (please note the scale on the y-axis). ‘Collaboration, communication and responsiveness’ scores the highest overall, which is perhaps reflective of this criterion being easier to answer. Conversely, ‘value for money’ and ‘delivering lasting results and impact’ were generally cited as more difficult to answer.

FIGURE 5

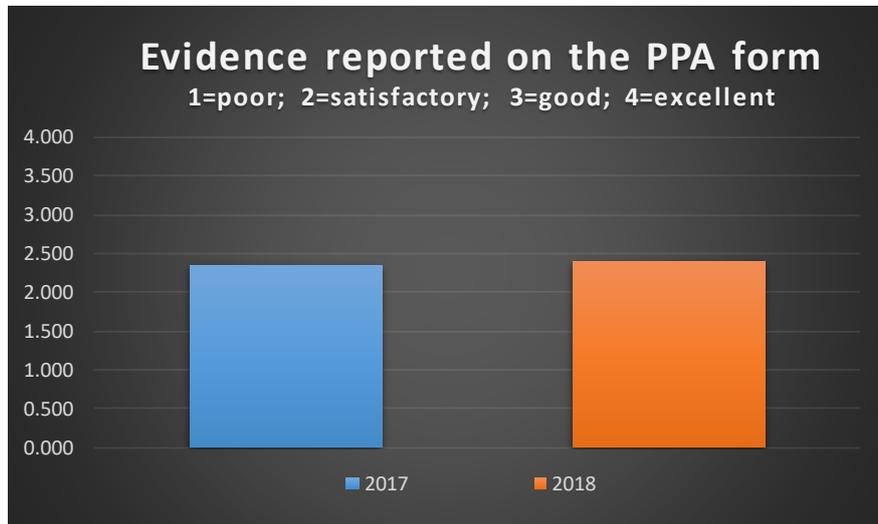


LRI = ‘Deliver Lasting Results and Impact; VFM = Maximise Value for Money; CCS = Collaboration, Communication and Responsiveness; PRI = Policy Alignment, Risk Management and Innovation; EPP = Effective Partner Personnel.

3. Commentary on the evidence used

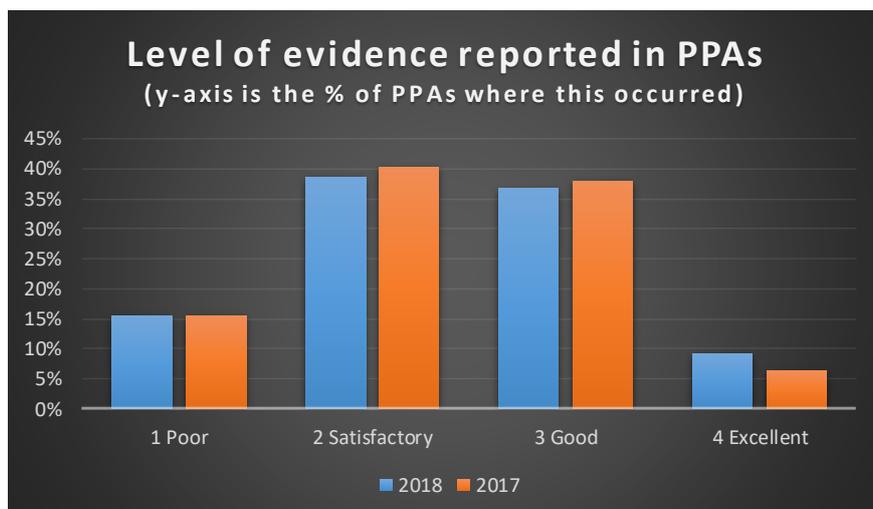
Figure 6 summarises the evidence used and the PPA ratings for 2017 and 2018. The evidence ratings were derived from a desk-based analysis of the comments sections of each of the five assessment criteria (Annex 2 describes the 1-4 scale). This graph shows that the evidence used in both years was rated slightly above satisfactory (while the rating score averages around '5' for both years).

FIGURE 6



An objective assessment of the 'record of evidence' in the written PPA reports was rated using a 1-4 scale (attached as Annex 2). The graph below summarises the assessment, which shows: 15% of the written reports recorded poor evidence; 39% had satisfactory; 37% good; and 9% excellent, as shown in Figure 7 below. Despite this evidence, through the interviews, we found that DFAT staff used a lot of evidence to write the PPA however perhaps wasn't reflected in the PPA reports. For this reason, we recommend DFAT considers requiring the assessors to write a minimum of four specific pieces of evidence for each criterion in the PPAs.

FIGURE 7

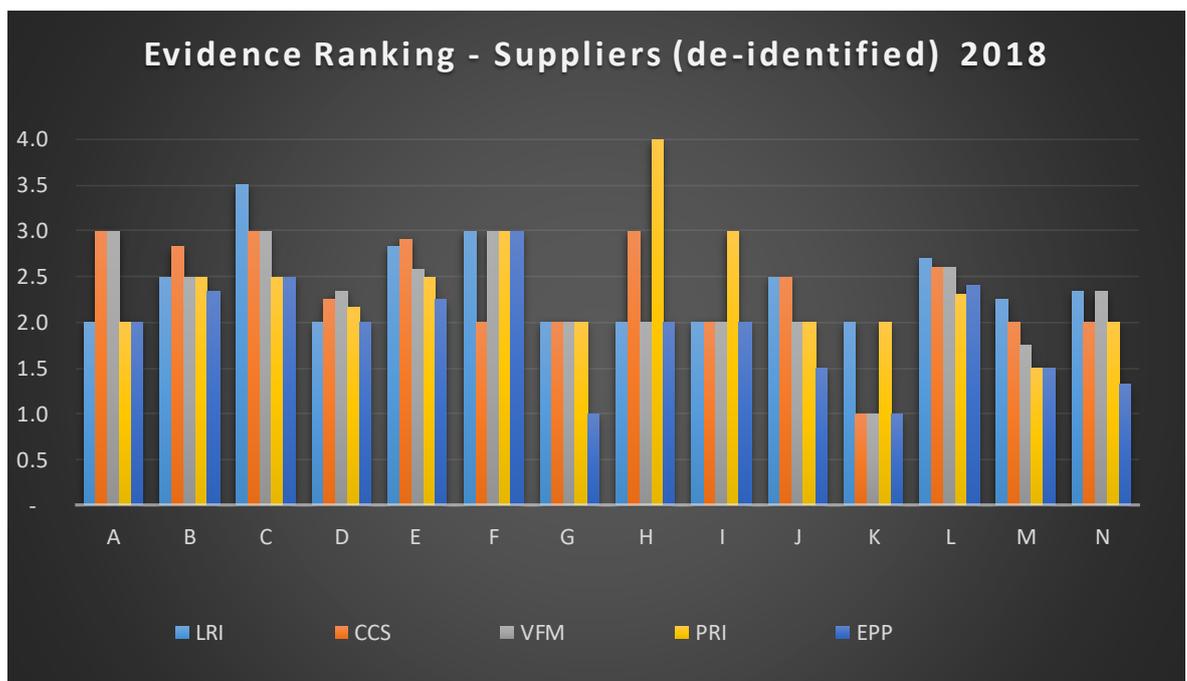


See Annex 2 for definition of the 1-4 rankings of 1= 'poor evidence'; 2 = 'satisfactory evidence'; 3 = 'good evidence'; and 4 = 'excellent evidence'.

- In the interviews, almost all DFAT assessors said that they used every source of evidence available (reports, audits, minutes of meetings, independent review reports, email records, face-to-face meetings, partner government views, other stakeholders in DFAT).
- In the interviews, the MCs said that they had ample opportunity to respond/challenge the ratings. The majority of PPAs were challenged, with different levels of intensity and many provided additional evidence to support their challenge.
- But, the analysis of the written reports shows that evidence is reported as only around a rating of 'satisfactory' – refer to Figures 8 and 9 below, and Annex 2 for definition of the 1-4 rankings of 1= 'poor'; 2 = 'satisfactory'; 3 = 'good'; and 4 = 'excellent'.

There was some variation amongst the level of evidence that was reported for each the 14 suppliers, across the five PPA criteria, as shown in Figure 8. This could be investigated further. There was no correlation between the 'robustness of the evidence used' and the nature of the suppliers. To clarify, there was no relationship between the 'robustness of the evidence used' and any of the following: the number of contracts held by the suppliers, or the size of the activity.

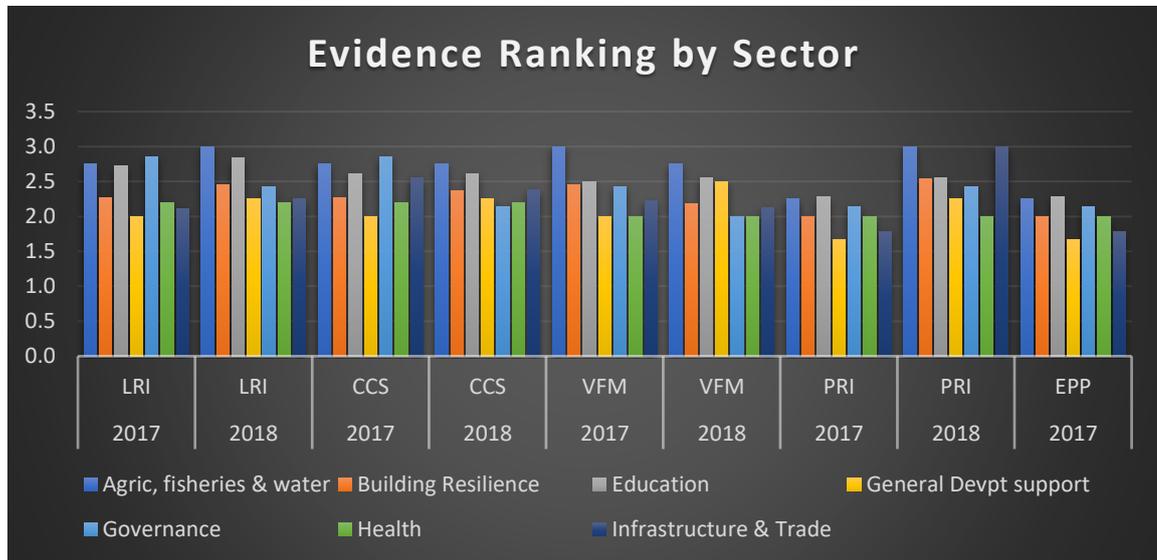
FIGURE 8



LRI = 'Deliver Lasting Results and Impact; VFM = Maximise Value for Money; CCS = Collaboration, Communication and Responsiveness; PRI = Policy Alignment, Risk Management and Innovation; EPP = Effective Partner Personnel.

There was some variation amongst the level of evidence that was reported for each the five PPA criteria, as shown in Figure 9. Interestingly, the criteria that received the higher average ratings (e.g. Collaboration, Communication and Responsiveness; Policy Alignment, Risk Management and Innovation) in Figure 5, did not always stand out as having the most robust evidence in Figure 9.

FIGURE 9



LRI = 'Deliver Lasting Results and Impact; VFM = Maximise Value for Money; CCS = Collaboration, Communication and Responsiveness; PRI = Policy Alignment, Risk Management and Innovation; EPP = Effective Partner Personnel.

4. Summary of the PPA process used by DFAT

It was found that a very consistent process for completing the PPA is used throughout DFAT. Most agreement managers would draft the PPA, using all the available evidence at hand, then liaise with their supervisor before sending to the Managing Contractors for their comment. The majority of the PPA's were signed off by a senior manager (usually Counsellor or Minister Counsellor) before being sent to the MC. There was a mix of PPA's being completed alone and by a team.

A few examples were provided whereby this process was different. In those cases, the process deviated when there were performance issues and where more discussion with senior management early on in the process was required. Other examples where the process was different was when the MC drafted their own PPA and then submitted to DFAT for their comment and ratings.

5. Experience addressing the quality criteria

The majority of DFAT staff found the quality criteria equally easy to answer, although a few mentioned value for money, innovation and delivering lasting results and impact was challenging. The reasons they were found more difficult to respond to include: not a clear definition of value for money or innovation; there being different ways to interpret the criteria, and not having the right evidence (particularly relating to value for money). Other interesting comments included:

- Word limit was restrictive (this was mentioned a few times by National staff).
- The criteria closely followed the AQC criteria, which was useful.

- Sometimes it is difficult to separate the head office team and the in country project team
- The criteria assume all activities are the same – they don't consider the different types of activities - one size fits all approach. E.g. facilities versus a project.

6. Other influences

Some people found this question difficult to answer. While a number said there were no other influences, others said there were. These other influences included:

- Pressure from senior management at Post.
- Pressure from MCs because payments are linked to ratings and they're always pushing for the highest ratings possible.
- Pressure from recipient government.
- If change in staff, tend to follow what was done previously.
- Focus on recent activity and not necessarily reflective of the full year.

7. Did practices change as a result of the PPA?

All MCs interviewed said they changed practices as a result of the PPA. As one MC said: "we always strive to be the best contactor we can be and actively address any issue". This emphasises the importance MCs place on the PPA process, as their response to issues is reflected in future PPAs, that also get discussed in future tender processes. This was particularly the case for the MCs, but also for DFAT in some examples.

8. Summary of the benefits of the PPA process

There was very clear evidence from the discussions that the majority of DFAT staff and the MC's believe the PPA's are a useful process. What was particularly valued was the opportunity to have a "formal" documented discussion on performance, which was based on evidence. It was also noted that conversations on performance should be happening throughout the year and when issues occur and that there should be "no surprises" in the PPA.

DFAT mentioned the following benefits:

- DFAT liked to have the opportunity to discuss and document the MCs performance.
- Document a summary of the issues.
- Feedback mechanism that captures the good work being done.
- Good process – particularly for the MC – management fee linked to performance.
- Enhance opportunities for getting new tenders.
- Good structured tool – useful for having tough conversations and documenting success.
- Gives MCs a clear sense of what to expect.
- It enables DFAT to communicate better with MCs.
- Helps to communicate DFAT's expectations.
- Useful tool when there is turnover of staff as there is a documented history of the performance of the program.
- Should be no surprises.
- Good way to benchmark contractors.
- It is a critical tool when there are controversial issues.
- A way to determine which delivery partners are effective.

MCs mentioned the following benefits:

- The process incentivises MCs to perform well.
- Enables MCs to view performance over time and see patterns.
- MCs tend to take the PPA process more seriously than DFAT.
- Very pleased when you get a good result.
- Need to have a strong relationship with the activity manager.
- Use to benchmark for future procurement.
- Good stick and carrot – if performance issues arise can have a good conversation and make changes to improve the program.
- Informs resourcing and helps with internal communications on performance management of own staff.
- Drives a lot of internal processes and improvements.

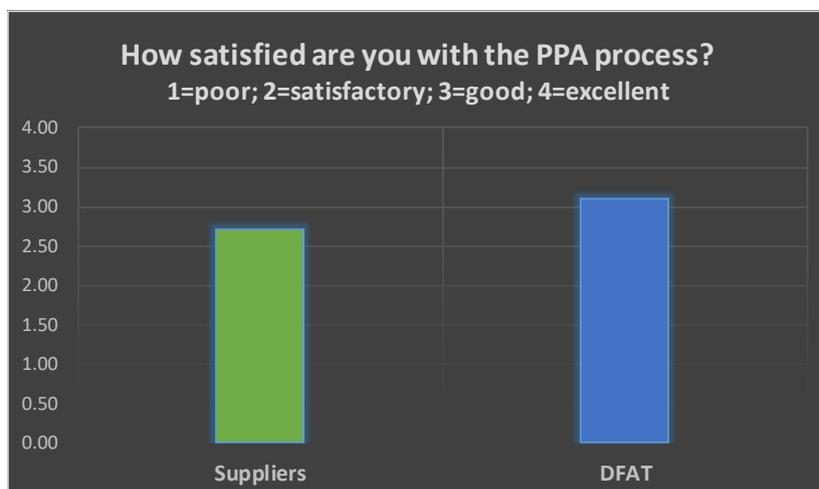
9. DFAT and MC's views

Most DFAT staff and MCs considered the PPA to be a useful and valuable tool.

- Some DFAT staff commented (unsolicited) that the PPAs are more useful than AQCs and many noted that it was good that the two processes happen close together as one informs the other. However, they also mention that they receive more support to fill in the AQCs than the PPAs, but tend to find the PPAs more useful.
- The general industry view is that DFAT does not appreciate the importance of the PPA to the MCs. E.g. in the interviews, some DFAT assessors were ignorant of, or oblivious to the fact that substantial \$s were riding on the PPA assessments. In these cases, the \$s were one of the main drivers for the MCs.
- It's too subjective and depends on the personality of the DFAT assessor
- MCs feel that it is a one-way exercise.
- It gets dominated by recent issues, issue *de jour*, or issues in the 'PPA Season'.
- Some DFAT staff are new to the activity, and/or don't understand the contracting model/contractor's environment.
- Some MC experiences include DFAT referring to PPA-contingent payments as 'bonuses', not performance payments. In these cases, the MC thinks that the DFAT assessor believes that it is not so important if the 'bonus' gets paid, because it is only a bonus.

10. Satisfaction levels

Generally, there was satisfaction with the PPA tool, more so by DFAT staff than MCs.



A breakdown of responses is shown below:

Satisfaction rating	% of suppliers who rated this satisfaction level	% of DFAT assessors who rated this satisfaction
Poor	6%	-
Satisfied	22%	9%
Good	56%	73%
Excellent	17%	18%

11. Are DFAT assessors adequately skilled and supported to conduct PPAs?

Yes. DFAT seems to have a very supportive culture. Most assessors are provided with support and expertise from other DFAT staff, whether that be through their supervisors, specific M&E support or their broader activity team members. A number of PPAs were completed by teams, rather than one individual.

Many of the DFAT staff were very experienced and said they did not need any support to fill in the PPAs. There was a mixed result around whether they knew support on the process could be provided. While some mentioned training and refresher courses provided by Canberra, many also said they did not know what support was on offer.

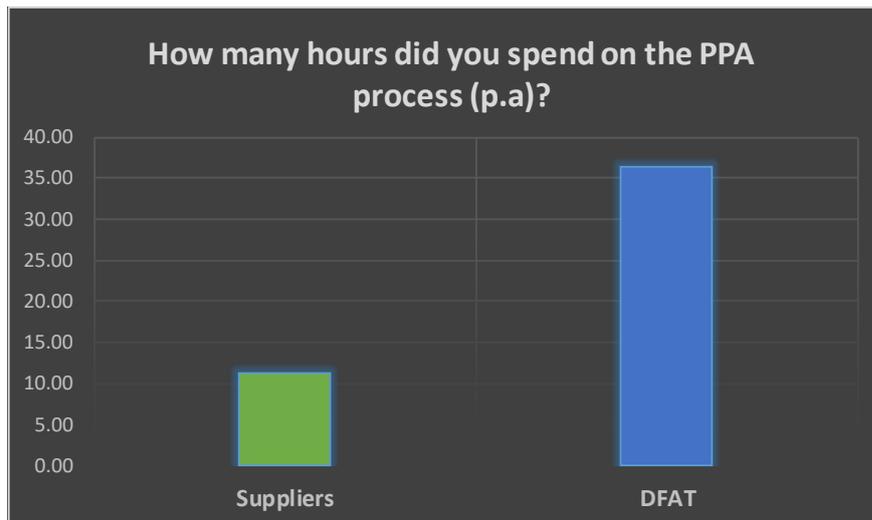
In general, there was limited engagement from Post with Canberra to fill in the PPAs, although this is not a criticism, rather support was more often provided at Post and many staff were experienced enough and didn't need any further support. It was noted however, that if support was needed, they knew where they could get it from.

12. Other performance systems

There was a very little knowledge of other performance systems, particularly those used by other donors. One mentioned DFID performance systems but did not detail what this looked like, while another made mention of the World Bank debarment system. It was also mentioned by at least two DFAT staff that other donors are coming to DFAT asking for their advice on performance management systems. MC's did not highlight any other performance systems used by other donors.

13. How much time is invested in the PPA process?

DFAT invests about a week in each PPA (full time equivalent). This is cumulative, and includes the initial drafting of the report, discussions within DFAT, seeking sign off from senior managers and discussions and negotiations with the MC.



Those that took longest was when either 1) the performance was so bad that the activity was being 'performance managed' (sometimes with the Ambassador's interest); or, 2) where there was strong disagreement between the parties.

It was noted by many that the PPAs generally take longer when there are performance issues.

Annex 1: Interview questions

DFAT staff

1. Could you explain the process you went through this year in producing the PPA report?
2. What was your experience in addressing the quality criteria? (Prompt: Are some criteria easier, or harder to address than others? Why?)
3. In your experience, are there are other influences that might impact assessment ratings?
4. What evidence did you use to support your assessment scores? *
 - a. Contractual obligations such as milestones?
 - b. Feedback from stakeholders?
 - c. Project reports?
 - d. Periodic reporting such as face to face meetings
 - e. Other
5. Did you refer to the 2017 scores when you assessed 2018? If so, what do you think are the reasons for change in scores from 2017 to 2018?
6. Did any of your practices change/did you do anything differently as a result of the PPA?
7. How was senior management involved in quality assuring the report (including the ratings)?
8. From your perspective, what is the value of the PPA process for DFAT and for Managing Contractors? (does DFAT assessor understand how important the PPAs are to the suppliers?)
9. Do you believe the PPA's are a useful tool in their current format and is there anything you'd like to add that could improve the system?
10. On a scale of 1-4, how would you rate your satisfaction with the PPA tool? (poor, satisfactory, good, excellent)
11. Are you aware or familiar with other systems for performance tracking / management and why they are better/worse?
12. What support did you receive to assist you in preparing the report? Did you find this support useful? If so how. If not, do you have any suggestions as to how it could be improved? (Prompts: written guidance, ACD workshops, 'Workshop in a Box'; advice from colleagues
13. How much time in total (hrs) did you consume in producing the report? (learnings = DFAT can get some idea of how much if costs)

Managing Contractors

1. What form did the discussion take (phone, face to face, email etc?) and who was present? (i.e. Team Leader, Contractor Rep etc...)
2. Generally, did you feel happy with the process?
3. In your experience, are there are other influences that might impact assessment ratings?
4. What evidence did you present to support the process?
 - a. Contractual obligations such as milestones?
 - b. Feedback from stakeholders?
 - c. Project reports?
 - d. Periodic reporting such as face to face meetings
 - e. Other
5. What do you think are the reasons for change in scores from 2017 to 2018?
6. Did any of your practices change/did you do anything differently as a result of the PPA?
7. Did you challenge the scores (using the mechanism available)? If so, were you satisfied with the process and the outcome?
8. From your perspective, what is the value of the PPA process for DFAT and for Managing Contractors?
9. Do you believe the PPA's are a useful tool in their current format and is there anything you'd like to add that could improve the system?
10. On a scale of 1-4, how would you rate your satisfaction with the PPA tool? (poor, satisfactory, good, excellent)
11. Are you aware or familiar with other systems for performance tracking / management and why they are better/worse?
12. How much time in total (hrs) did you consume in contributing to the report?

Annex 2: Evidence ranking criteria

1	<p>Poor</p> <p>DFAT officer's opinion without explicit critical appraisal</p>
2	<p>Satisfactory</p> <p>Mid-range or minor level of evidence including review of performance <u>against some of:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • contractual obligations • comprehensive feedback was obtained from partner government stakeholders • project reports • value of periodic reporting such as face-to-face meetings, weekly or monthly progress reports
3	<p>Good</p> <p>Systematic and moderate review of evidence including review of performance <u>against all of:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • contractual obligations • comprehensive feedback was obtained from partner government stakeholders • project reports • value of periodic reporting such as face-to-face meetings, weekly or monthly progress reports
4	<p>Excellent</p> <p>Systematic and significant review of evidence as in 3 above, but with extra analysis and review of performance that is above and beyond the scope of the PPA, such as assessment against international standards, assessment of new approaches and/or exceptional innovation in the review methodology</p>

Annex 3: Report on with commercial-in-confidence information

All consultants contracted by Ninti on this assignment signed individual confidentiality agreements (deeds). Under these deeds, all data provided by DFAT to Ninti was kept confidential. Upon receipt of data, Ninti's standard practice was to encrypt it with passwords.

Ninti described to each interview participant, at the start of the conversation that the interviews are to be conducted in confidence.

All notes from the interviews were kept confidential to Ninti only and not shared with DFAT.

As such, the source of all of the data in this report remains unidentifiable at an individual or organisational level.

Annex 4: List of the 57 agreements that formed part of the review

	Section	Activity Name
1	Gender Equality Section	Investing in Women (East Asia)
2	Papua New Guinea Branch (B)	Deployee Support Services (Papua New Guinea)
3	Papua New Guinea Branch (B)	Bougainville Program (Papua New Guinea)
4	Indonesia Program Delivery and Timor-Leste Branch (B)	GOVERNANCE FOR GROWTH KOMPAK
5	Papua New Guinea Branch (B)	Management Support Unit (Papua New Guinea)
6	Indonesia Program Delivery and Timor-Leste Branch (B)	Australia Timor-Leste Partnership for Human Development (Timor-Leste)
7	Papua New Guinea Branch (B)	Health & HIV Implementing Services Provider (HHISP)
8	innovationXchange (B)	Innovation Resource Facility Core Support Activities (Australia)
9	Pacific Aid Effectiveness and Advice Branch (B)	Pacific Horticultural and Agricultural Market Access Program
10	Indonesia Program Delivery and Timor-Leste Branch (B)	Indonesia Road Survey Services (IRSS)
11	Pacific Aid Effectiveness and Advice Branch (B)	Labour Mobility Assistance Program (Pacific)
12	Pacific Aid Effectiveness and Advice Branch (B)	Pacific Leadership Program Phase 3 (Pacific)
13	Solomon Islands Section	Facility Operations (Solomon Islands)
14	Indonesia Program Delivery and Timor-Leste Branch (B)	Management of a Program to Support the National Program for Village Development (Timor-Leste)
15	Pacific Aid Effectiveness and Advice Branch (B)	Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development Support Unit (Pacific)
16	Southeast Asia Regional Engagement Branch (B)	The Australia-Asia Program to Combat Trafficking in Persons
17	Indonesia Program Delivery and Timor-Leste Branch (B)	Management of Towards a Strong and Prosperous Indonesian Society (MAHKOTA) Program (Indonesia)
18	Southeast Asia Maritime Branch (B)	Facilitating Contractor
19	Southeast Asia Mainland Branch (B)	Cambodia Agricultural Value Chain Program Phase II - Operational Contractor
20	Papua New Guinea Branch (B)	Management of the Joint Understanding Technical Enabling Unit (Papua New Guinea)
21	Papua New Guinea Branch (B)	Justice Services and Stability for Development Program (PNG)
22	Pacific Aid Effectiveness and Advice Branch (B)	Pacific Impact Investing Facility (Pacific)
23	North East Asia Branch (B)	Mongolia Australia Scholarships Program Phase Two (MASP II)
24	Indonesia Program Delivery and Timor-Leste Branch (B)	Promoting Sustainable Commercial Scale Beef Cattle Breeding in Indonesia Program (Indonesia)
25	Southeast Asia Mainland Branch (B)	Australia Awards Scholarships in Cambodia
26	Southeast Asia Mainland Branch (B)	Management of Human Resource Development and Australia Awards - Laos Australia Institute
27	Vanuatu Section	Management of the Education Support Program (Vanuatu)
28	Southeast Asia Mainland Branch (B)	Vietnam - Australia Partnership on Human Resource Development

29	Southeast Asia Mainland Branch (B)	Basic Education Quality and Access Managing Contractor (Laos)
30	New Zealand Polynesia and Micronesia Branch (B)	Improvement Program for Education (Kiribati)
31	Papua New Guinea Branch (B)	Incentive Fund Phase 4 (Papua New Guinea)
32	Indonesia Program Delivery and Timor-Leste Branch (B)	Management of the Australia Awards in Indonesia 2014-2018
33	Papua New Guinea Branch (B)	Australia Awards Papua New Guinea (Papua New Guinea)
34	Vanuatu Section	Health resource mechanism for local recruitment and management (Vanuatu)
35	Indonesia Program Delivery and Timor-Leste Branch (B)	Management of the Empowering Indonesian Women For Poverty Reduction Program (Indonesia)
36	Governance Fragility & Water Branch (B)	Australian Water Partnership (Australia)
37	Archival Examination and Access Section	Pacific Sports Program Phase 2 (Pacific)
38	Humanitarian Response Risk & Recovery Branch (B)	Warehouse Management Services
39	Papua New Guinea Branch (B)	Health and Education Procurement Facility (Papua New Guinea)
40	Development Policy and Education Branch (B)	Research on Improving Systems of Education (Global)
41	Governance Fragility & Water Branch (B)	AusAID Civil Society WASH Fund Management Facility (Global)
42	Indonesia Program Delivery and Timor-Leste Branch (B)	Tertiary Irrigation Technical Assistance (Indonesia)
43	Indonesia Program Delivery and Timor-Leste Branch (B)	Management of the Australia Awards Program (Timor-Leste)
44	Solomon Islands Section	Education Sector Program: Skills for Economic Growth Program
45	Southeast Asia Mainland Branch (B)	3i Investing In Infrastructure (Cambodia)
46	Indonesia Program Delivery and Timor-Leste Branch (B)	Management of a Program Providing Innovation for Indonesia's School Children (Indonesia)
47	Fiji Section	Access to Quality Education Program Fiji
48	Africa Branch (B)	Australia Awards (Africa)
49	Indonesia Program Delivery and Timor-Leste Branch (B)	Management of a Program Promoting Rural Income through Support for Markets in Agriculture (Indonesia)
50	Papua New Guinea Branch (B)	Education Capacity Development Facility (Papua New Guinea)
51	Solomon Islands Section	Technical Assistance Support to the Ministry of Health and Medical Services (Solomon Islands)
52	Sri Lanka/Maldives Section	Skills for Inclusive Economic Growth Program (Sri-Lanka)
53	New Zealand Polynesia and Micronesia Branch (B)	The Kiribati Facility
54	South Asia Regional Development	Australia Awards in South and West Asia (Global)
55	Vanuatu Section	Managing Contractor (VTSSP Phase 2)
56	Indonesia Program Delivery and Timor-Leste Branch (B)	Australia Indonesia Partnership for Economic Governance Facility (AIPEG Facility)
57	Papua New Guinea Branch (B)	Management of the Transport Sector Support Program - Phase 2 (Papua New Guinea)

Annex 5: Terms of Reference

Reference No: Review of 2018 Partner Performance Assessment

The Requirement

Partner Performance Assessments (PPA's) are key agreement management tools for the Australian Aid Program. DFAT is seeking a suitable consultant to conduct quality assurance of a sample of approximately 60 PPA's for commercial suppliers (Template at Attachment A). The objective of the quality assurance is to "assess whether the PPA's are a useful tool in their current format".

The consultant will be required to assess the extent to which the 2018 scores are supported by evidence, and the extent to which these are similar to or different from the 2017 PPA scores, and what DFAT and/or the supplier have done to improve performance from 2017 in 2018.

The consultant will analyse the selected samples of 2017 and 2018 reports in order to make a provisional determination as to whether the ratings awarded against the criteria are considered robust or are too high or too low. The PPA ratings matrix will be used as the basis for making these provisional determinations.

In addition, the consultant will comment upon whether the overall rating appears reasonable (i.e. aligns with the ratings awarded across the six criteria) and if not, why not. An evidence spreadsheet will be developed for recording the assessment data on each PPA report, this will clearly indicate the reasons where a "not robust" assessment is made in each case, providing clear evidence, assessing the extent to which the PPA is considered to be based on evidence for any changes in scores between the two years, and whether there are reasonably consistent views on performance from both DFAT and the supplier. The evidence spreadsheet will incorporate a set of characteristics of quality related to each of the quality criteria. The characteristics of quality will be developed based upon relevant DFAT guidance.

The consultant will then interview the relevant DFAT and supplier officer(s) to gather additional evidence in order to make a final assessment as to whether or not ratings are adequately supported and considered reasonable by both parties. The interviews should gauge the adequacy and effectiveness of support and guidance DFAT officers required and received in completing their PPAs, and gather supplier's perceptions particularly about the reasonableness of the assessments and judgements made. This assessment will be recorded in the evidence spreadsheet, together will the record of the key points from the interview which justified the final assessment.

The consultant will carry out the statistical analysis of the findings to identify trends and patterns in the numbers/percentages of ratings found to be robust, too high, or too low, as well as in comparison to previous years' PPA. The consultant will prepare content analysis which will identify the characteristics associated with good practice reporting and common weaknesses. These will be summarised, by criterion, for presentation to the Findings Workshop and for inclusion in the draft and final reports. The completed spreadsheet and draft summary report will be submitted to DFAT at least one week prior to the findings workshop. The consultant will produce an overall draft summary report of the findings, summarise the evidence collected and the implications for DFAT, including any recommendations for DFAT to strengthen the PPA process.

The consultant will be required to conduct a half/one (1) day workshop in Canberra on the draft results, and incorporate any feedback resulting from the workshop into the final report. The sections of the draft summary report dealing with factors affecting the robustness of ratings will be based upon content analysis of the evidence spreadsheet.

Upon approval of the final report, two single page Infographic Summaries of key results will be prepared and submitted on dates to be agreed with DFAT and include details to be agreed with DFAT.

Milestone	Due Date
Review Plan with detailed breakdown of quality assurance methodology (including limitations), responsibilities and timing.	14/09/2018
Possible inception workshop	17/09/2018
Excel spreadsheet with PPA review results on robustness of 2018 ratings. The Supplier will provide DFAT with an Excel spreadsheet detailing the results of the PPA assessments of the robustness of ratings. The spreadsheet will include the percentage of ratings assessed as robust for each quality criteria i.e. the quality of the evidence presented; management responses identified and the extent to which these are similar to or different from the 2017 PPA scores, and what DFAT and/or the supplier have done to improve performance from 2017 in 2018.	16/10/2018
Draft report (preliminary findings). The draft report will summarise the evidence collected, analysis and findings and make recommendations. The sections of the draft summary report dealing with factors affecting the robustness of ratings will be based upon content analysis of the evidence spreadsheet. In written form. The report will be up to 6 pages, excluding any annexes, and will follow a format to be agreed with DFAT.	16/11/2018
Presentation of Findings Workshop to DFAT. The consultant will provide an electronic copy of the materials to be presented 48 hours prior to the Findings Workshop. The consultant will be required to run a half/one day workshop in Canberra on the Draft Report, one week after submission of the preliminary findings. The consultant will summarise, analyse and present the results of the initial assessment of the robustness of ratings, by criteria. The sections of the draft summary report dealing with factors affecting the robustness of ratings will be based upon content analysis of the evidence spreadsheet.	23/11/2018
Final Report and Summary. In written form. The consultant will be required to incorporate any feedback resulting from the workshop into the final report. The consultant will provide DFAT with a high-quality 2018 PPA review report, using DFAT word templates and following the DFAT Style Guide. The report will summarise the evidence collected through the PPA review, incorporating advanced data visualisation techniques. It will present the analysis and findings, and make recommendations and will follow a format to be agreed with DFAT. The report will be up to 20 pages, excluding the executive summary and annexes. Upon approval of the final report, two single page Infographic Summaries of key results will be prepared and submitted on dates to be agreed with DFAT and include details to be agreed with DFAT.	29/11/2018
Records Of Evidence. The consultant will submit detailed records of all the evidence collected, analysis conducted and associated data visualisation in clear and logical Excel spreadsheets. These will be submitted to DFAT, and will provide a level of detail which would allow DFAT to replicate all analysis conducted as part of the PPA review.	30/11/2018

Annex 6: The Review Team

Ninti brought together a team with extensive expertise in this area, particularly understanding and experience in assessing investment-level aid performance management systems. Rod Reeve as Lead Reviewer was formerly the CEO of one of DFAT's major contractors (Coffey) where he was the executive responsible for over \$1 billion of aid contracts in more than 80 countries, over 25 years. Most contracts were with DFAT. He has also been involved in each of the DFAT procurement assignments described above. He worked closely with Kristen Collins as the Quality Assurance Specialist who has extensive experience in all facets of international development. For 20 years she provided technical, project management and business development advice on a range of different projects in a variety of sectors. Kristen Collins managed the Asia Pacific operations of another large managing contractor (Cardno), in addition to being a Director of that entity and their overseas operations in Indonesia, PNG, Myanmar and the Philippines. She oversaw the international development portfolio, which included contracts totalling \$1 billion – primarily for DFAT. Since leaving this organisation, Kristen has established her own consultancy and has undertaken work for a range of clients, including DFAT (as an Evaluation Panel Member), NGOs, private sector organisations and the Victorian Public service.

To avoid any sensitivities, Rod interviewed the Cardno managers and Kristen interviewed the Coffey managers.

Ninti also provided Tom Reid as the Data Analyst and Anthony Rologas as the Project Manager. All four review team members signed Confidentiality Deeds with DFAT.
