# Coalitions for change PHASE 2 (Cfc) 2021 independent progress review management response

### Summary of management response

DFAT welcomes the findings and agrees with the recommendations of the independent evaluator. More immediately, DFAT and TAF can commence negotiations for a possible program extension. DFAT also notes that several internally-led processes and consultations within DFAT and with TAF should take place to better articulate the purpose and continuing relevance of the program. The results from these discussions are expected to make the program more responsive to the shared strategic objectives of Australia and the Philippines.

### Individual management response to the recommendations

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| Recommendation | Response | Explanation | Action plan | Timeframe |
| Recommendation 1:  *Extend the program to 2024* | Agree with clarifications | The Coalitions for Change (CfC) program remains highly relevant and valued by DFAT and should be extended until 2024. There is merit in extending the program beyond the upcoming 2022 elections so it can reassess conditions under a new administration. This helps determine the work required for continuing reforms or if there are opportunities to pursue other significant and timely reforms.  DFAT also recognises that the review identified areas of improvement in the current agreement provisions, which will be acted upon. | DFAT will commence contract negotiations with TAF with a view to incorporating review recommendations. | Action already taken by DFAT in coordination with TAF |

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| Recommendation 2:  *As a condition of extension, institutionalise contribution analysis within CfC’s approach to monitoring, learning and evaluation. This may require external advice, but it should be an internal (but independently critiqued) and ongoing function.* | Agree | CfC has undergone regular evaluation and while much has been learned from them, we agree that CfC can further demonstrate the program’s value in policy engagement by looking at its actual contribution to observed development outcomes. These processes should also align with DFAT’s articulated clarity of purpose from Recommendation 3. | TAF and DFAT to jointly design a process that can determine CfC’s contribution to higher-level goals. DFAT and TAF, if necessary, could seek external advice on the contribution analysis method and customise it for CfC. | Action already taken by DFAT in coordination with TAF |

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| Recommendation 3:  *Conduct a Post-led internal dialogue that can broaden and deepen discussion on CfC’s clarity of purpose. It should aim to answer the following questions:*   * *How does CfC fit in DFAT’s modern agenda?* * *How can CfC contribute to that agenda?* * *What does success look like for CfC?* | Agree | The review has prompted and encouraged DFAT stakeholders to discuss the program’s strategic relevance to Australia’s priorities in the region and in middle-income countries.  The IPR has also highlighted that CfC is not just a program, but a mechanism for policy engagement. Thus, it is contingent on DFAT to update CfC’s clarity of purpose. | Post to develop a note that communicates DFAT stakeholders’ clear consensus on CfC’s purpose and picture of success as expressed and gathered during the IPR process. This will be shared to the implementing partner for their own guidance and will be reflected in the provisions of the amendment to the partnership agreement. | Action already taken by DFAT in coordination with TAF and its Partnership Strategic Panel |

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| Recommendation 4:  *Review how Post communicates CfC’s place in and utility to DFAT’s most strategic agendas, what success looks like beyond short-term ‘results’ and how such a program should be imagined as an element of a modern aid-integrated country presence.* | Agree | CfC is a different way of working. It could provide a model for wider use by the Australian aid program. We intend to increase CfC’s visibility and utility especially within DFAT. | Post will report on CfC’s contribution to Australia’s objectives more frequently. Occasional brown bag sessions will be held with DFAT stakeholders such as officers in the Philippine Desk, and other relevant DFAT units that implement programs similar to CfC; programs that CfC can complement, or units that find CfC, and its ways of working, relevant to their patches. | October – December 2021 |

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| Recommendation 5:  *Consider whether CfC should be reimagined as a longer-term feature of the country program (with appropriate in-built checks and balances), and how, with continuity being determined not by dates but by demonstrating its continuing relevance and contribution to change in evolving contexts.* | Agree | CfC is recognised as both a program, and a tool to achieve mutual goals of the Philippines and Australia. The reforms achieved through the program are enduring and therefore can be reimagined as a more embedded feature in Post’s country strategy. | DFAT to consider this during the internal process to be carried out for Recommendation 3, and after the initial implementation of Component 2 activities until June 2022. | October 2021 – June 2022 |

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| Recommendation 6:  *Consider how (including through membership and members’ roles) CfC’s joint governance arrangements can capture the continuing relevance of the program as a whole to wider, higher-level objectives, both retrospectively and prospectively.* | Agree | The Joint Steering Committee (JSC) and Partnership Strategic Panel (PSP) are important components of the CfC program governance. DFAT’s membership in these should be fully maximised to provide strategic advice that can align with its objectives. | DFAT to conduct an internal discussion on the most strategic composition and appointments that can be made to the PSP. Initiate handover of DFAT’s PSP representation from Governance Section to Philippine Desk. | Action already taken by DFAT in coordination with TAF |

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| Recommendation 7:  *Review the codification of CfC’s ‘visibility’ in the light of the internal discussion suggested in Recommendation 3.* | Agree | CfC is highly relevant to Australia but there is a case for CfC to have greater visibility to government stakeholders and the public. | DFAT to consider this during the internal process to be carried out for Recommendation 3.  Ensure engagement with external stakeholders on CfC’s value and utility while observing risk management and visibility protocols. | October 2021 – December 2021 |

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| Recommendation 8:  *Review, in the light of decisions above, whether Component 2 should be maintained as a core CfC function, or treated as a standalone TAF training and capacity-building initiative.* | Agree | Component 2 is still a feature of the program where many of its assumptions and operations are being tested and validated. We agree that a review of its relevance to CfC’s objectives should be undertaken | A review of its relevance to CfC’s objectives can be done after the initial four-year program which ends in 2022. | October 2021 – June 2022 |