

Pacific Women Shaping Pacific
Development
Six-Year Evaluation Report

February 2020

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Executive Summary

Introduction and rationale

Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development (*Pacific Women*) is an Australian Government funded, 10-year program operating in 14 Pacific Island countries, designed to improve opportunities for the political, economic and social advancement of women in the Pacific. *Pacific Women* is managed by Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and works with a wide range of implementing partners, including the 14 partner governments, multilateral organisations, international and national NGOs and civil society organisations. The *Pacific Women* Support Unit provides the program with logistical, technical and administrative support and is in Suva, Fiji, with a sub-office in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea.

Pacific Women is intended to be a long term, multidimensional response to the complexity of gender equality and women's empowerment in the Pacific region. Currently approaching the end of seven years of implementation, the program is due for its second whole of program evaluation.

Context

The unique and rapidly changing Pacific context has seen improvements in the development opportunities for women and girls, but several challenges remain. These include the need to address harmful social and cultural norms and the ongoing problem of widespread and systematic violence against women and girls. Alongside gaps in women's participation in leadership and decision making and the constrained opportunities for women's economic development, development agencies need to adopt a multidimensional and longer term view of projects to address women's empowerment. National governments in the Pacific have largely put in place enabling policy and legislation but now need to resource and implement corresponding programs.

There is growing evidence that when women's collective voice is amplified, they are able to demand services and engage in the design and planning of investments that influence their lives. Further support for such effort is likely to contribute to increased impact and more sustainable solutions.

The 2017 Foreign Policy White Paper and DFAT's Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Strategy provide the Australian aid policy context for *Pacific Women*.¹ Pacific Government leaders established their commitment to gender equality through the Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration, 2012

The Evaluation

The terms of reference for this evaluation direct it to examine the effectiveness of the *Pacific Women* program with particular attention to impact and sustainability. Overall objectives of the evaluation are to:

- review program achievements, outcomes and areas for program improvement; and
- examine women's lived experience in the Pacific and establish the core focus areas for future investments in gender equality.

The evaluation was designed to be undertaken in two stages. The first stage, which is the focus of this report, focuses on review and evaluation of progress to date of the *Pacific Women* program.

The overall approach for this evaluation draws from a critical epistemology, which gives priority to women's lives and lived experiences. A database of over 200 documents, in-country and distance consultations in four countries (Fiji, Kiribati, Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu), and interviews with partners and other program stakeholders have informed the analysis.

¹ See: Commonwealth of Australia. (2017). *2017 Foreign Policy White Paper*. Canberra, ACT. Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. (2014). *Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Strategy*. Canberra, ACT.

Data collection was guided by two core strategies. While a very large amount of information was made available to the evaluation team, findings were drawn only from data which was either verified by previous independent evaluation or was able to be triangulated from more than one source. This has limited the range and types of examples utilised in this report but ensures that the findings are robust, and evidence based. In addition, within this verification process, the views and experiences of women in the Pacific have been prioritised.

The major challenge experienced was that of limited time. The investigation would have benefitted from more time to investigate more country programs; and verify more of the partner reporting across all 14 program countries.

As part of the team's commitment to participatory approaches, analysis and feedback has been shared iteratively with program partners and other stakeholders. A summary of key findings and the finalised report will be shared more broadly.

Pacific Women

Pacific Women was designed to support countries to meet the commitments by their Governments made in the Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration in 2012. It has four outcomes:

- Women and women's interests are increasingly and effectively represented and visible through leadership at all levels of decision-making (Leadership and Decision Making).
- Women have expanded economic opportunities to earn an income and accumulate economic assets (Economic Empowerment).
- Violence against women is reduced and survivors of violence have access to support services and to justice (Ending Violence against Women).
- Women in the Pacific will have a strong sense of their own agency, supported by changing legal and social environment and through increased access to services they need (Enhancing Agency).

The original program design was premised on the central importance of Pacific women and men, as individuals, groups and coalitions, driving indigenous change, in order to address the deep seated, entrenched and multi-faceted nature of gender inequality in the Pacific. It assumed that Australia and other external actors could catalyse change through support for Pacific actors. Also central to the *Pacific Women* design, was the idea that in contrast to previous programs, the Australian government should focus on vulnerable women and girls (those with disabilities, indigenous women and disadvantaged women).

The overall program budget of \$320 million was allocated over a 10 year period from 2012 – 2022. Total program expenditure from July 2012 to June 2019, which covers seven years of program operation is \$218,572,456. Over this period, *Pacific Women* has funded 168 initiatives. Of these 87 have been completed and 81 are ongoing.²

An important element of *Pacific Women* is the delivery of support through individual country plans for the 14 countries involved in the program. *Pacific Women* also funds regional activities, designed to address common issues across the region and to complement and build on country specific activities, and in this way extend the geographical coverage of activities funded through the bilateral aid program.

A *Pacific Women* Advisory Board, comprised of eminent Pacific women and men, provides advice on the strategic direction of the program and assists in connecting the program with other influential leaders in the Pacific.³ *Pacific Women* is managed by DFAT in Canberra, in cooperation with DFAT Pacific Regional Program in Fiji and nine other DFAT Pacific Country Posts. The *Pacific Women* Support Unit was established in Fiji in 2015, with a national sub-office in Papua New Guinea, to

² Source: *Pacific Women* Support Unit

³ For further details see: <https://pacificwomen.org/about-us/advisory-board/>

provide technical, administrative and logistical support to DFAT Posts and *Pacific Women's* bilateral and regional *Pacific Women* activities and partners.

To what extent has *Pacific Women* achieved its intermediate outcomes and contributed to longer term change?

Reach

The evaluation finds that Australian support through *Pacific Women* has resulted in an increase in Australian government programming on gender equality in the region. This has been achieved through the volume of *Pacific Women* funding, and its delivery through a diverse range of partners in countries. As a result, more individual women and girls are being assisted and there is engagement in new areas and themes. For example, in its seven years to June 2019, the program supported 116,341 women and children to access crisis support services, 881,549 people to participate in awareness and education about ending violence against women and children, 25,765 women to utilise financial information and services and 25,658 women to take on leadership roles at the community, provincial and national level.

In several of the program countries where in-country consultations were undertaken, efforts are being made to address the needs of vulnerable groups in project design, outreach and delivery. In Fiji and Papua New Guinea for example, the human rights focus of some *Pacific Women* partners has improved outreach and strengthened the program response to the needs of marginalised groups.⁴ Development of multiple strategies by partners has increased program reach, particularly in marginalised communities. A good example of this is the work of the We Rise Coalition in Fiji where program support has enabled the Coalition to adopt and sustain a 'twin-focus' on coalition-building and community-based programming.

In both Fiji and Vanuatu, there are good examples where *Pacific Women* support has enabled partners to extend the geographical reach of existing activities. In Fiji, support to partners such as Rise Beyond the Reef and the Women in Fisheries Network has enabled these programs to extend the reach of economic empowerment programs to rural areas and coastal communities. In Vanuatu, the Vanuatu Skills Partnership continues to support rural women to access economic opportunities.

Examples of Ending Violence against Women services expanding in remote and rural areas can also be seen in Fiji, Kiribati, Tonga, Vanuatu and Papua New Guinea. In other cases, a broader reach is being achieved through partners operating at several levels from individual and community level activities, to activities that are national, regional and cross-country in scope. Examples include the work of several Papua New Guinea partners, the We Rise Coalition in Fiji, the Fiji Women's Crises Centre, the Tonga Women and Children's Crises Centre, Vanuatu Women's Centre and regional projects such as Uniting World's GET-IT Project.

The Young Women's Leadership project in Papua New Guinea, which is implemented by the International Women Development Agency in partnership with the Bougainville Women's Federation, is a good example of building partner capacity to address the needs of specific vulnerable groups. The project aims to increase young women's leadership effectiveness through training and mentoring and providing a safe space for these women to support each other. The project has contributed to the establishment of Young Women's Associations that have developed a support network for young women's leadership across Bougainville. A project evaluation conducted in 2019 highlighted the expanding effect of this successful initiative, as young women leaders and alumnae expand the membership by training other young women.⁵

Outcomes against objectives

In investment terms, the bulk of *Pacific Women* investment has gone to Ending Violence against Women (EVAW) initiatives. However, since the Three-Year Evaluation, there has been an increase in

⁴ See Country Program Reviews and annual reporting by partners such as the Fiji Women's Fund and We Rise Coalition (Fiji) and Oxfam International (Papua New Guinea).

⁵ Cousins, J. (2019). *Young Women's Leadership Project End of Project Evaluation*. Bougainville Women's Federation and International Women's Development Agency. Melbourne, Victoria.

the proportion of projects focused on Leadership and Decision Making and Economic Empowerment. (Enhancing Agency has remained consistent at approximately 25% of all activities).

Leadership and decision making

Over the seven year period, the investment focus on Leadership and Decision Making has largely been on training and workshops, building the confidence of individual women, but giving less attention to changing gender norms in family and community. There are exceptions to this such as the CARE International Coffee Industry Support Project in Papua New Guinea, which is working to promote women's leadership by encouraging families to consider gender and social norms and then reallocate current family workloads.⁶ The Fiji Women's Fund and Markets for Change Program in some countries, are also working on intentional strategies to address household and community support as women show an interest in participating in decision making processes.⁷ These programs provide important strategies which might be adapted more widely through the program.

Further there are some emerging promising practices to support women's political participation. In Fiji, the We Rise Coalition has contributed to several policy and practice changes in government organisations. Across several *Pacific Women* countries, faith-based partners such as House of Sarah in Fiji, the Presbyterian Churches Union in Vanuatu and the Uniting Church in Solomon Islands, are contributing to strengthening women's leadership in the church. In Papua New Guinea, the Business Coalition for Women project and the Women in Mining project, have contributed to policy change in private sector organisations, resulting in more women applying and being selected for leadership positions. At the regional level, Pacific Girl, a newly commenced \$4.5 million program supported by *Pacific Women* is focusing on the sub-group of adolescent girls. In the short time since its commencement, the program has been able to provide a space for Pacific girls to articulate their vision for the future.⁸

Economic Empowerment

Pacific Women has funded financial literacy training and skills development for individual women and also supported promising practices that are shifting the focus to household and community-level enablers for economic empowerment. In FSM (*Pacific Women* Growing Business), Papua New Guinea (CARE Coffee Industry Support Project, University of Canberra's Family Farm Teams) and Vanuatu (Vanuatu Skills Partnership), partners are linking women to skills providers, businesses or government systems as their confidence and skills grow.

The ongoing challenge, highlighted in the program documentation as well as during in-country consultations, is that entrenched social norms and cultural practices tend to thwart efforts towards women's economic advancement.⁹ Encouragingly, the investigation finds that some local organisations supported by *Pacific Women* are making breakthroughs in this area. The evidence suggests that 'what works' is local organisations driving change, utilising a multi-pronged approach with knowledge and training inputs linked to other activities to expand the economic options for women. Smaller partners such as the Fiji Women's Fund and ACTIV in Vanuatu are enabling industry linkages by value-adding to the produce of smallholders and women. Funding and building the capacity of local organisations to establish linkages with government and industry, is a high impact strategy and should be part of further development for the program.

Ending Violence against Women

As noted, projects aimed at Ending Violence against Women make up a large proportion of the program portfolio, with the bulk of funding provided to community awareness and outreach activities. In addition, support provided by *Pacific Women* to organisations such as Femili Papua New Guinea and the Nazareth Centre in Papua New Guinea, the Kiribati Women and Children's Support Centre,

⁶ Reference CARE Reports

⁷ Reference SMPR

⁸ See <https://pacificwomen.org/resources/pacific-girls-speak/>

⁹ See for example: *Pacific Women* Support Unit. (2017). *Women's Economic Empowerment Synthesis Report. Pacific Women* Shaping Pacific Development, Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

the Tonga Women and Children's Centre, the Vanuatu Women's Centre and WUTMI in RMI provides opportunities for strengthened partnerships with duty bearers to implement legislative and policy reform in addition to supporting survivors of violence. At a regional level, the Regional Rights Resources Team of the Pacific Community is supporting the implementation of legislative reforms.

Male advocacy training has also received some more support since the last evaluation. A good example is the work of FHI 360's Kisim Femili Plenin Strongim Kommuniti (strengthening the community through family planning) project in Papua New Guinea. It complements the Kommuniti Lukautim Oi Meri (communities looking out for women) project and adopts similar approaches to use community mobilisers to educate the community, family and individuals.

Pacific Women has supported further capacity development of governments in the Pacific. Over the past six years, the program has funded gender advisers and Ending Violence against Women specialists to supplement the work plans of government ministries and Women in Development units in Fiji, Samoa, Papua New Guinea, Cook Islands, FSM, Nauru, Tonga Tuvalu and Kiribati.

Evidence of more vulnerable women and girls reporting violence and accessing services can be attributed to organisations and activities funded by *Pacific Women*. Program partners are playing key roles at the country level, in service provision as well as linking survivors to existing services. For instance, progress reporting by the Vanuatu Women's Centre shows that the number of domestic violence cases handled by the Centre almost doubled in the second year of program funding.¹⁰ The evidence confirms the finding of the ODE evaluation that the number of comprehensive services for survivors of violence has improved considerably and that the long-term support provided by the Australian government including through *Pacific Women* has been instrumental in this improvement.¹¹

Finally, disability inclusion strategies are improving and there has been some progress among *Pacific Women* partners, especially in Papua New Guinea, in terms of understanding child protection legislation and the implications of this for violence against women programming.

For these services, and indeed all areas of work supported by *Pacific Women*, there remain challenges around geographical reach, especially to more remote island and rural locations. Further, as demand grows, the gaps and weaknesses in program delivery by other service providers become more apparent. Respondents also noted that while there has been an observable increase in awareness about violence, it is less clear that this has translated into sustained behaviour change.

Enhancing Agency

Enhancing Agency activities include building stronger coalitions to promote gender equality, targeting legislative reform, mainstreaming gender, and organisational strengthening and research. The major trend since 2015-16 has been the growth in support to building stronger coalitions, owing to the establishment of the Fiji Women's Fund and continuation of support to the We Rise Coalition, also in Fiji. The Australian government through *Pacific Women* is one of the donors supporting the Shifting the Power Coalition, to support women to lead emergency response and take power back into their own hands – ensuring disaster response addresses women's needs.¹² Progress reporting suggests there is some movement-building activity occurring in the North Pacific, including civil society organisations working with government.

The strong message that came through the evaluation was that *Pacific Women* should continue to support activity to increase women's agency as part of work towards the areas of leadership and decision making, economic empowerment and ending violence against women.

Lessons and challenges

Across the outcomes, the evaluation confirms that channelling of support through local organisations including women's organisations, is an effective strategy. This ensures the program is responding to

¹⁰ Vanuatu Women's Centre. (2019). Vanuatu Women's Centre Program Against Violence Against Women Progress Report 3. July 2017 – October 2018. Port Vila, Vanuatu.

¹¹ Office of Development Effectiveness (2019), *Ending violence against women and girls: Evaluating a decade of Australian's development assistance*, DFAT October.

¹² For further details see: <https://actionaid.org.au/programs/shifting-the-power-coalition/>

diverse and culturally specific needs of women. Program mechanisms such as the *Pacific Women* Advisory Board and Advisory Group on Research also provide opportunities for Pacific women leadership of the program. Over time the program is giving voice and mobilising support for a Pacific perspective on several fronts. Pacific women value and rely on the many 'spaces' created and supported by *Pacific Women*, for their safety and well-being, and these results highlight the potential for *Pacific Women* to strategically influence gender equality programming by drawing on localised knowledge and experience.

The program capacity to address several outcome areas, share learning and provide long term consistent support for partners is a strength of the investment and the modality. However, the program management complexity has grown over several years of operation and needs to be rationalised going forward. In many countries *Pacific Women* is not sufficiently linked into national-level dialogue on gender equality and women's empowerment. While *Pacific Women* Country Plans provide a useful operational framework for the program, their strategic potential to surface solutions, encourage local ownership, with buy in and support of national governments is underutilised

How can the program maximise progress and sustainability in the last three years of implementation?

Capacity development

Since the Three-Year evaluation, a capacity building strategy has been developed and mainstreamed into all activities managed by the Support Unit. At the activity level, the program is working through partners to build the capacity of individual women leaders, including younger women. Core funding of women's organisations to address organisational strengthening as well as gaps in program management and service delivery is another important program mechanism. The best example here is the program's support to Women United Together Marshall Islands (WUTMI)- a civil society organisation that has been a key champion of women's rights and empowerment over the last 20 years. An additional strategy widely employed by the program is the deployment of short and long term specialist advisers.

One evident outcome of program mechanisms and strategies to invest in capacity building and strengthen women's organisations and networks in the Pacific, is the impact on program reach. In addition to the expansion in the program's outreach to younger women and girls, program partners are engaging with people living with disabilities and disabled people's organisations. Most recently, *Pacific Women* through the Fiji Women's Fund has contacted three new network organisations Ageing with Empowerment and Dignity, the Deaf Women's Association of FDPF and Survival Advocacy Network.

There has also been definite progress in terms of the organisational capacity and standing of key civil society institutions such as AMAK in Kiribati, the Business Coalition for Women in Papua New Guinea, the Tonga Women and Children's Crisis Centre, We Rise Coalition in Fiji, and WUTMI in RMI. In addition, there has been particular progress in support to capacity development of faith-based groups and enabling these groups to connect across countries and with other organisations. For example, in Vanuatu, the Vanuatu Women's Centre is partnering with faith-based organisations including the Seventh-day Adventist Church and Adventist Development Relief Agency. This has resulted in a new training partnership. At the regional level, support to the Gender Equality Theology – Institutional Transformation project has led to recruiting gender equality ministers in Fiji, Kiribati, Vanuatu and Solomon Islands and action on child protection.

The issue that was raised in validation workshops in Kiribati and Vanuatu, is that there is a role for *Pacific Women* in terms of building the capacity of individuals and groups to engage with national governments, industry and other services providers. While there are some examples where *Pacific Women* support is enabling this engagement, local organisations are looking for more support to engage with private and public institutions and push for reform.

Wider program influence

There are some examples of positive influence by *Pacific Women* on DFAT programming. In Papua New Guinea, the *Pacific Women* Support Unit works closely with other Australian government programs. There is also regular communication and coordination between the Papua New Guinea sub-office and DFAT staff involved in gender. In Tonga, all the staff at Post meet as a whole staff once a week which provides an opportunity for the Gender Focal Point to support mainstreaming of gender into all activities. At the regional level, *Pacific Women* has invested in advisory support to DFAT economic programs across the region, seeing a subsequent increase in the quality of those programs. However, there was consistent feedback that increased technical support from *Pacific Women*, managed through the Support Unit, is valued by DFAT Posts and is an area of work which could be expanded to ensure increased attention to gender in all DFAT activities.

Pacific Women influence on other donors and Pacific island governments was a core assumption in the original design, but the program implementation structure has not always supported this ambition. For example, existing Country Plans lack the flexibility and action focus to respond to the rapidly changing policy and funding context for gender in Pacific Island countries. An implicit strategy, which has worked to influence national governments is the fact that *Pacific Women* is working with a diverse range of organisations. In the area of economic empowerment for example, the program can advocate for policy change from the experience and results produced through multi-level initiatives. In Vanuatu for instance, there is evidence of the Government taking over a program funded by the Australian Government, including funding through *Pacific Women*. The Vanuatu Skills Partnership is now a partnership between the governments of Australia and Vanuatu. A further pathway to wider influencing of Pacific governments is through resourcing of the Pacific Community (SPC). SPC is the only organisation that counts 22 Pacific island countries in its membership. Moreover, SPC is the sole organisation aiding gender mainstreaming and gender statistics in program countries. A formative evaluation of the program conducted in 2017 found that the project was achieving positive and demonstrable gains in gender mainstreaming and gender statistics in seven countries.

Finally, there was support for the way in which *Pacific Women* has built a significant evidence base about the nature and scope of challenges for the development of women and girls in the Pacific, which is now available to inform the work of other donors. In the current funding environment with some new programs by other donors being introduced in the Pacific, linking to this evidence base will be critical for impact and sustainability of these and other new programs.

Regional programs

Up until June 2019, 39.4% of the total program budget for *Pacific Women* has been spent through 34 completed and ongoing regional activities. The organisations that manage these activities are quite varied, ranging from Pacific regional organisation to large scale external INGOs and multi-lateral partners.

Regional activities are an important part of a comprehensive portfolio of activities. For example, the Uniting World's Gender Equality Theology - Institutional Transformation Project, operates at multiple levels from the individual and community to country and regional level. SPC's PGEP project is extending the reach of the program through its activity at the government level.

Regional activities have offered *Pacific Women* additional strategies through which to achieve its outcomes. They provide opportunities for learning between countries and across different contexts promoting the take-up of best practice from one location to the next. *Pacific Women* has utilised regional funding to address new and emerging challenges and to support work that is innovative and in some situations beyond the experience of existing partners. For example, SPC is implementing POETCom. This project involves identifying and supporting organic value chains that benefit women as producers, suppliers, processors and entrepreneurs, while also enhancing their capacity for inter-regional organic trade within the RMI, FSM, Palau and Kiribati.

Finally, regional programs make important contributions to capacity development. The UN Markets for Change program is contributing to the capacity of rural market vendors to claim their rights. The Shifting the Power Coalition has a deliberate focus on bringing together diverse groups of Pacific women including women with disabilities, young women, rural women and LGBT communities to strengthen their collective power influence and leadership to respond to disasters and climate change.

On the other hand, there are strongly held views from country respondents that regional activities are likely to be more costly and provide less value for money than resources directed through national entities. Further that regional programs are at risk of failing to sufficiently adapt their external approaches to local Pacific contexts. It will be important to address these concerns going forward.

Sustainability

The program approach to addressing sustainability is to work on immediate and tangible changes while also building capacity, interest and motivation among a range of stakeholders to support wider and more sustaining change strategies. In practice, the evaluation finds mixed experience in terms of some of the program results and outcomes being sustained, and others requiring further support or reorientation.

The funding of integrated approaches and partners that work across several outcomes and population sub-groups (young women, adolescents, men and women, etc.) supports sustainability. For example, in the case of Economic Empowerment projects, partners are adopting more multi-pronged approaches to address power over assets and are expanding activities to include men and families. Likewise, a growing number of partners working on economic empowerment, are looking at the inclusions of Do No Harm strategies in their programming to address the complex inter-relationships between these issues in Pacific women's lives. The evidence from these and other activities suggests that they are more likely to succeed and be sustainable if they are flexible, and able to address multiple factors that contribute to gender inequality.

The resourcing of capacity building at multiple levels also helps to sustain gender equality gains. In Fiji for instance, several positive gains have been made in terms of the capacity of women's organisations and women's movement.

Investing in knowledge is another important part of achieving sustainability. The *Pacific Women* Research Strategy supports high quality, locally appropriate and sustainable research. A good example of this is the recent Do No Harm research project, which was undertaken in Bougainville, Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands. The project addresses the question of how to improve women's economic agency and the security of their livelihoods without compromising their safety, a focus which speaks directly to how to achieve sustained and comprehensive impact for women.

Finally, the program's contribution to policy and legislative change is an important element in terms of Pacific women achieving on-going benefits from the program and should continue to be supported.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The overall conclusion of this evaluation is that *Pacific Women* has broadened the reach of the Australian aid program to vulnerable women and girls and is supporting key civil society and women's organisations in the Pacific. The long-term nature of funding has raised public awareness on gender equality and women's empowerment; and the program is an asset to Australia's partnership with Pacific governments. The work should be continued and further developed going forward.

Recommendation 1

The Australian support for women's empowerment and gender equality, particularly those activities implemented through Pacific organisations, should be maintained.

The evaluation has found that program impact has been undermined by a complex operating framework and insufficient engagement within some country contexts. There is room for some redevelopment of the program, and the overall approach to management and implementation of this support. There is also some work required to update the program, to ensure that it remains relevant to the current and future context of women's lives.

Finally, the Australian aid policy framework is presently under review, providing an opportunity to reconsider the programming approach for Australia's support to gender equality and women's empowerment.

Recommendation II

Redesign Australia's support for women's empowerment and gender equality in the Pacific, making use of a co-design process that identifies and addresses the interests and objectives of the Australian Government and National governments and women's organisations in the Pacific.

Pacific Women has demonstrated effective approaches for change for women in the Pacific. In particular it has shown that a comprehensive approach - that addresses the interconnected challenges for women and girls (including safety, participation in decision-making, economic security and the capability to direct one's life) - supports more effective and sustainable impact.

Recommendation III

Australia's future support to gender equality and women's empowerment in the Pacific should continue to include a comprehensive approach including women's leadership, economic empowerment, ending violence against women and increasing agency as outcomes.

The long-term support to organisations addressing violence against women and girls has allowed those organisations to mature and provide more comprehensive services. These services, located in different Pacific countries, are critical to women's safety and support and ought to be maintained going forward. Work to prevent violence should remain part of the core strategy.

Recommendation IV

The ongoing program of support should continue to support local organisations providing holistic care for survivors of violence; ramp up efforts to address disability issues and maintain attention to violence prevention.

Pacific Women has also supported innovation and demonstrated the interconnectedness between the areas of Economic Empowerment and Leadership and Decision-Making and violence against Pacific women and girls. These innovations plus the lessons about what does not work, ought to be the basis for ongoing program support in these areas.

Recommendation V

The ongoing program of support should build on the evidence base of promising practices in women's economic empowerment and leadership, through sharing of evidence and further development of these approaches.

Pacific Women has also shown how increased impact can be leveraged. Where national women's organisations and local groups are supported to work with each other, and to work with and advocate to National governments, more extended and sustained change can be achieved. Where the technical expertise, including the learning and experience from regional programs, is integrated into DFAT bilateral programs, gender is mainstreamed and more substantial change for women is supported. Where evidence and experience is documented and made available to women's organisations, DFAT and others, it can support mature approaches being integrated and adopted throughout programs including the work of new donors in the region.

Recommendation VI

Pacific Women's convening role in countries with national governments, donors, civil society organisation and donor programs should be developed further. Work should be undertaken to ensure that core program lessons are integrated into DFAT Pacific bilateral programs and are positioned to influence the work of other donors in-country.

Through a redesign, the program modality can be crafted to fit the evolving purposes and needs of future programming. These needs will be best identified through the co-design process, which includes frank exploration of interests, commitments and shared responsibility. The *Pacific Women* Country Plans, or alternative planning modalities, should be updated through a mature discussion about Australia's objectives and accountability requirements, alongside the objectives and interests of Pacific National governments and women's organisations. Policies, procedures and systems of support can then be designed to align with diverse country contexts.

Recommendation VII

The redevelopment of the modality for future support should give explicit attention to the mutual and different interests and objectives of Australia and other stakeholders. The systems and procedures underpinning any future support should be transparent and well communicated to all stakeholders.

Australia has been identified as a committed and strategic donor in the area of women's empowerment and gender equality. In order to maximise strategic and policy engagement with National governments, women's organisations and other donors, consideration should be given to shifting overall program responsibility to the Pacific region.

Recommendation VIII

Strengthen the strategic leadership of the program by transitioning program management and oversight from DFAT in Canberra to the Pacific Regional office in Fiji.

Pacific Women has demonstrated the importance of building the capacity of women's organisations, National governments and other local organisations, in order to sustain and further develop outcomes for women and girls.

Recommendation IX

Capacity building work should be strengthened and extended during the last phase of the program and in any future program of support, with a view to better enabling DFAT Posts, *Pacific Women* partners and government departments to both understand and address the challenges for gender equality and women's empowerment in the Pacific.

Throughout this evaluation a recurring theme identified by respondents is the desire for increased leadership by women in the Pacific and a strong expectation that Pacific National governments ought to be providing leadership within countries and across the region for gender equality. While it is understood that Australia brings its own interests and requirements, people pointed to the need to build Pacific capability and responsibility for leading change over the long-term.

Recommendation X

The *Pacific Women* Advisory Board and leaders of Pacific women's organisations including faith-based organisations, should provide strategic oversight for the proposed redesign process. The roles for these leaders within any future program of support should be explicitly identified in the new design.

In line with further development of the current capacity building strategy, future programming should continue to focus on building the capacity of Pacific women leaders at multiple levels, in government, community and the private sector.

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Abbreviations

ACTIV	Alternative Communities Trade in Vanuatu
AMAK	Aia Mwaea Ainen Kiribati
BCFW	Business Coalition for Women
BWF	Bougainville Women's Federation
CEDAW	Convention on Ending all Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CIPE	The Center for International Private Enterprise
DFAT	Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
EVAW	Ending Violence against Women
FSM	Federated States of Micronesia
FWCC	Fiji Women's Crisis Centre
FWRM	Fiji Women's Right's Movement
GET-IT	Uniting World's Gender Equality Theology – Institutional Transformation Project
IWDA	International Women's Development Agency
KWCSC	Kiribati Women and Children's Support Centre
LGBT	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transsexual
MELF	Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Framework
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NCfR	Nazareth Centre for Rehabilitation
NGO	Non-government organisation
ODE	Office for Development Effectiveness
PGEP	Pacific Community's Pacific Gender Equality Program
PLGED	Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration
POETCom	Pacific Organic and Ethical Trading Community
PNG	Papua New Guinea
PSI	Population Services International
PWPP	<i>Pacific Women's</i> Parliamentary Partnerships Project
RMI	Republic of the Marshall Islands
RRRT	Regional Rights Resource Team
SIWIBA	Solomon Islands Women in Business Association
SPC	The Pacific Community
UN	United Nations
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
VAW	Violence against women
VfM	Value for Money
VWC	Vanuatu Women's Centre
WBRC	Women's Business Resource Centre

WCCC	Women and Children's Crisis Centre
WEE	Women's Economic Empowerment
WiM	Weto in Mour
WHRDs	Women Human Rights Defenders
WUTMI	Women United Together Marshall Islands

1 Context

1.1 Introduction

Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development (Pacific Women) is an Australian Government funded, 10-year program, operating in 14 Pacific Island countries. The program aims to improve opportunities for the political, economic and social advancement of Pacific women.

Pacific Women is managed by Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and works with a wide range of implementing partners, including the 14 partner governments, multilateral organisations, international and national NGOs and civil society organisations. The *Pacific Women* Support Unit provides the program with logistical, technical and administrative support and is in Suva, Fiji, with a sub-office in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea.

Pacific Women is intended to be a long term, multidimensional response to the complexity of gender equality and women's empowerment in the Pacific region.

At the end of seven years of implementation, *Pacific Women* is due for a second whole of program evaluation. The terms of reference for this evaluation direct it to examine the effectiveness of the program with particular attention to impact and sustainability. In addition, the original program design gave considerable attention to context and the issues most likely to influence gender equality and women's empowerment within the Pacific context. DFAT also intends therefore to use this evaluation to re-examine the context for this program and ensure the continued relevance of the work into the future.

To this end, the Six-Year Evaluation is being undertaken in two stages. The first stage, which is the focus of this report, focuses on review and evaluation of progress to date. The second stage will consider the program's ongoing relevance and likely impact from the perspective of Pacific women going forward.

1.2 Pacific gender equality context

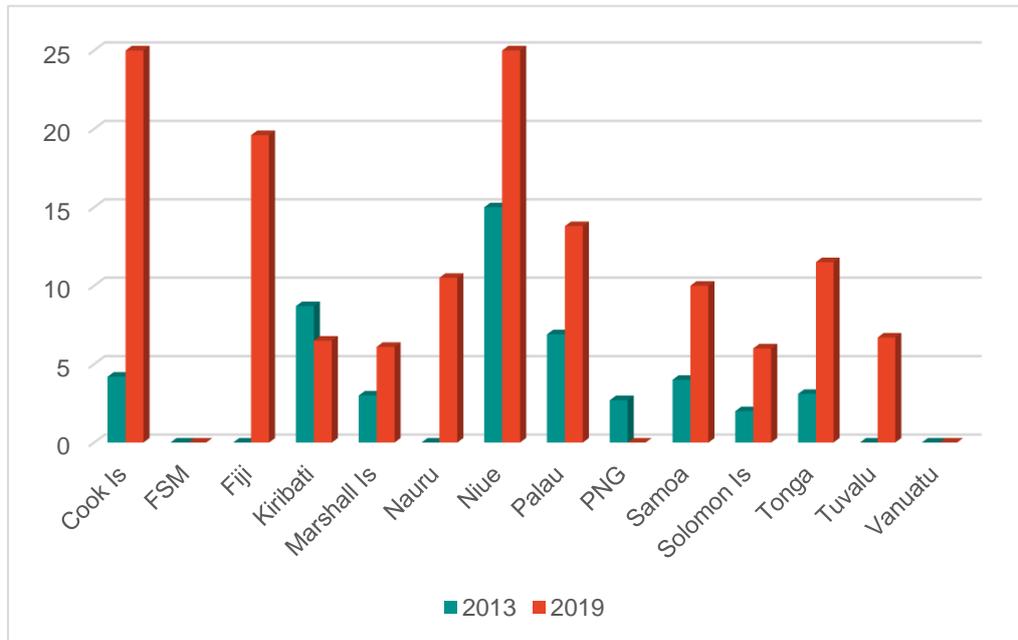
The Pacific context is unique, comprising 22 Pacific island countries or territories, of which 14 benefit from Australian government support. The region is highly diverse and home to a wide range of indigenous cultures, languages and histories. It is home to sovereign nations and territories, each with unique strengths and challenges. Pacific island countries experience challenges in areas of economic and social development and most recently, have been at the frontline of the impact of climate change and increasing natural disasters. The region has an increasing percentage of people under the age of 25.¹³ It is poised to experience considerable improvements in communications and access to information and communication technologies.

Within this diverse and dynamic context, the development opportunities for women and girls are improving but remain constricted by several factors. The most recent comprehensive report on gender equality in the region¹⁴ indicates some improvements in the overall health and education opportunities for women and girls. It notes that there are an increased number of Pacific countries with legislation that addresses the safety of women and girls and protects their human rights. It also points to increased participation by women in local leadership and decision making, including some positive trends in women's participation in political decision making (see Figure One).

¹³ Secretariat of the Pacific Community. (2015). *The Pacific Youth Development Framework 2014–2023: a coordinated approach to youth-centred development in the Pacific*. Prepared by the Social Development Division of SPC.

¹⁴ Pacific Community. (2019). *Pacific Regional Beijing +25*. Final Draft, October.

Figure 1. Percentage of seats in Parliament held by women



From the perspective of women's organisations that *Pacific Women* supports in the region¹⁵ however, there are several challenges which continue to limit gender equality and women's empowerment.

Foremost among these, is that development interventions aimed at addressing gender equality and women's empowerment need to do more to address harmful social and cultural norms. For instance, research by the International Women's Development Agency and the Australian National University found that transforming harmful gender norms is a critical component of successful women's empowerment programming, and a failure to do so can lead to unintended negative consequences for women, including in the form of increases in gender-based violence.¹⁶

Additionally, *Pacific Women* partners emphasize that the unintended outcomes of aid investments must be considered to fully understand how the investment will impact on women. For example, research and capacity building interventions to support women's leadership and political decision making has exposed deep-rooted structural barriers in the form of discriminatory laws and institutions that limit women's options to run for office. Supply side interventions have had limited impact on the number of women in parliament despite an increase in the number of women participating as candidates. In some situations, results achieved by female candidates have been publicly questioned. These complexities underscore the need for development agencies to adopt a multidimensional and longer term view of projects that address women's empowerment.

The widespread and systemic nature of violence against women and girls is also raised as a key issue of concern by Pacific women's organisations, irrespective of their geographical or operational focus. The shared view is that the quality and number of comprehensive services for survivors of violence has improved, and there is evidence that more women and girls are accessing these services. However, those working at the frontline note there are gaps in coverage of services for survivors; and continued external support is needed to sustain impact.

A further challenge is that national government machinery to address gender issues is under resourced. Thirteen of the fourteen Pacific Island countries supported by *Pacific Women* have signed the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) (see Table

¹⁵ A systematic literature review was not included in the scope of this evaluation. Analysis of the regional and country level context and literature on gender equality is covered in the Roadmap studies commissioned by *Pacific Women*. For further details see: <https://pacificwomen.org/key-pacific-women-resources/pacific-women-roadmap/>

¹⁶ International Women's Development Agency. (2018). *Do No Harm Research Project Report: Women in Formal Employment Survey*. Melbourne, Victoria.

One). And most have in place legislation in place to protect women and children experiencing family and domestic violence. Policies such as the Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration (PLGED) have put in place guidelines for countries to address gender equality.¹⁷ However, government departments in charge of women's affairs or gender equality often do not have the capacity to effectively implement their mandate, especially that of working across the whole of government to integrate gender perspectives. The Pacific Community's (SPC) stocktake of government capacity to mainstream gender found that despite political commitments made to gender equality, a gender perspective is not always integrated in national and sectoral policies and programs.¹⁸ As problems such as youth unemployment, labour migration and climate change intensify, there is a risk that government resources and attention to gender will further diminish.

Table 1. Countries which have ratified and/or signed CEDAW¹⁹

State Party	Year of Ratification	Periodic reports submitted
Cook Is	1985*	2006, 2017
Fiji	1995	2000, 2009, 2016
FSM	2004	2015
Kiribati	2004	2019
Nauru	2011	2016
Niue	1985*	
Palau	Signed 2011**	
Papua New Guinea	1995	2009
RMI	2006	2016
Samoa	1992	2003, 2010, 2017
Solomon Is	2002	2013
Tuvalu	1999	2008, 2012
Vanuatu	1995	2005, 2014
*Note that Cook Is and Niue are committed to CEDAW through their association with New Zealand, which ratified in 1985. Cook Is began submitting independent reports in 2006.		
** Palau is a signatory to CEDAW but has not yet ratified the convention.		

To this end there is growing evidence from *Pacific Women* partners in countries such as Fiji, Vanuatu and Papua New Guinea, that when women's collective voice is amplified, they are able to demand services and engage in the design and planning of investments that influence their lives. Australian government investments through *Pacific Women* to revitalise existing women's organisations, work with churches through ecumenical-based approaches to gender equality and support the civil society response to violence against women, offer useful lessons in program impact and sustainability for the future (This report will highlight some of these).

Consideration of these factors and the way in which context informs development programming provides the background to this report. Specific issues are also revisited as part of the recommendations developed later in this report.

¹⁷ The Pacific Island Forum Secretariat. (2016). *Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration Trend Assessment Report 2012-2016*. Suva, Fiji.

¹⁸ Gender Unit. Social Development Programme. (2016). *Stocktake of the capacity of the Governments to Mainstream Gender across Policies, Programmes and Services*. Pacific Community. Noumea., New Caledonia.

¹⁹ Source: UNOHCHR website:

https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/TreatyBodyExternal/Treaty.aspx?CountryID=181&Lang=EN

1.3 Australian aid context

The Australian Government has a long history of diplomatic and development partnerships with Pacific island countries.

The 2017 Foreign Policy White Paper and DFAT's Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Strategy provide the aid policy context for *Pacific Women*.²⁰ The White Paper commits to prioritising Australia's relationships in the Indo-Pacific region and recognises that closer cooperation among Pacific countries is essential to the region's long-term economic and security prospects. The Pacific Step-up was first announced at the Pacific Island Forum Leaders' Meeting in September 2016 and then on 8 November 2018, the Australian Prime Minister launched a "new chapter in relations with our Pacific family", including support to promote healthy, educated, inclusive populations. Total Australian development assistance to the Pacific in 2019-20 is estimated at \$1.4 billion.²¹

The Office of the Pacific was established in DFAT to support Australia's deepening engagement with the Pacific, to enhance whole-of-government coordination and to drive implementation of regional activities, consistent with the priorities of Pacific countries. For example, as part of its cooperation with other donors, the Australian Government along with the European Union and UN Women funds the new Pacific Partnership to End Violence against Women and Girls (Pacific Partnership). This program is jointly implemented by the Pacific Community (SPC) Regional Rights Resource Team (RRRT), the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat and UN Women Fiji Multi-Country Office.

DFAT's Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Strategy highlights DFAT's commitment to supporting Pacific countries to meet the commitments by Pacific leaders to work for gender equality.²² This strategy makes it clear that gender equality and women's empowerment are a core part of Australia's foreign policy, economic diplomacy and development work. One of the ten performance targets for Australia's aid program is to ensure that more than 80 per cent of investments, regardless of their primary objectives, must also effectively address gender issues in their implementation.

²⁰ See: Commonwealth of Australia. (2017). *2017 Foreign Policy White Paper*. Canberra, ACT. Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. (2014). *Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Strategy*. Canberra, ACT.

²¹ Papua New Guinea remains the largest bilateral program in 2018-19 at \$572.2 million, followed by Solomon Islands (\$187 million), Vanuatu (\$62.3 million) and Fiji (58.1 million). The Australian government also has substantial bilateral programs with Samoa, Tonga, Kiribati, Nauru and other Pacific island countries.

²² This includes the Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration, 2012.

2 The Evaluation

2.1 Purpose and objectives

The terms of reference for this evaluation direct it to examine the effectiveness of the *Pacific Women* program with particular attention to impact and sustainability. Overall objectives of the evaluation are to:

- Review program achievements, outcomes and areas for program improvement; and
- Examine women's lived experience in the Pacific and establish the core focus areas for future investments in gender equality.

The focus of this evaluation is on the progress of *Pacific Women* from Year 4 when the Three Year Evaluation took place, to the end of program year seven (June 2019). The evaluation was designed to be implemented in two stages²³, with four overarching evaluation questions:

1. To what extent has *Pacific Women* achieved its intermediate outcomes and contributed to longer term change? (mainly addressed in stage one of the evaluation)
2. How can the program maximise progress and sustainability in the last three years of implementation? (to be addressed through both stages of the evaluation)
3. To what extent have recommendations from the three-year *Pacific Women* evaluation been addressed? (mainly addressed in stage one)
4. To what extent has the context for women in the Pacific changed and what are the implications for future Australian government support? (to be addressed in stage two and likely to be revised based on the findings from stage one)

This report is structured around the first two questions – on program effectiveness, and impact and sustainability. The third question on the Three-Year Evaluation is also addressed through this report.

2.2 Approach and methodology

The overall approach for this evaluation draws from a critical epistemology, which involves understanding and answering the following questions:

- What is happening now?
- What has occurred in the context and past to bring about this current situation?
- What should be further developed and improved?

A critical epistemology is well suited to the evaluation of programs that support women. It supports the utilisation of data collection and analysis tools that give priority to women's lives and lived experiences. It gives explicit attention to power and other structural constraints, and is able to uncover social, cultural, political and other dimensions which shape women's experience.

In this evaluation, a realist methodology has been used to uncover the key issues for women in the Pacific. Realist evaluation methodology focuses on the causal mechanisms that underpin change - the real influences or processes that link cause and effect. By identifying these mechanisms in their social settings and then investigating the same or similar mechanisms in other settings, realist evaluation is able to explain causal links in different situations. Realist evaluation methodology likewise recognises that context matters. In a complex, multi-country program such as *Pacific Women*, through realist evaluation it is possible to explore the extent to which there are positive or less than positive outcomes for different women, men and communities. The focus of the evaluation, therefore, is on the change being experienced by women and girls, and the way in which *Pacific Women* contributed to this change.

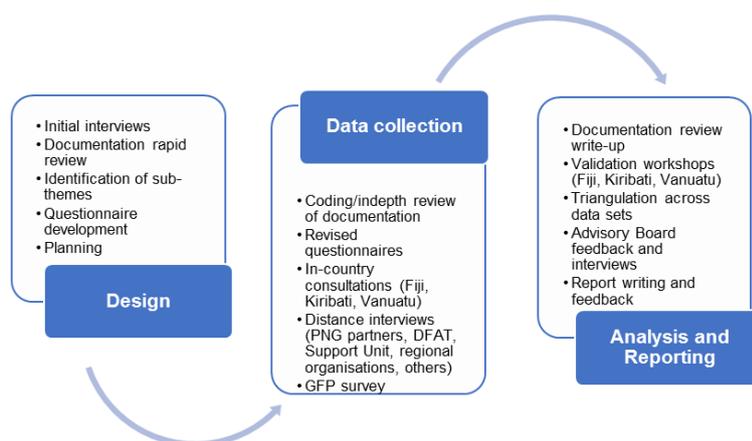
²³ A detailed evaluation plan which outlines the purpose of the whole evaluation, the division of focus between the two stages and detailed data collection plans, was prepared and submitted to DFAT in October 2019.

In line with the focus on maximising impact and sustainability, emphasis was given to identifying the most promising practices and/or those programs supporting the best outcomes for women. Particular attention was given to why things worked and how to replicate such success.

2.3 Data collection and analysis

The realist methodology was implemented through an iterative process of data collection²⁴, analysis and reporting.

Figure 2 Evaluation design



Data collection was guided by two core strategies.

- **Verification:** a very large amount of information was provided to the evaluation team and was collected by the team through extensive interviews, focus groups and other sources. Findings were drawn only from that information which was either verified by previous independent evaluation or was able to be triangulated from more than one source. This has limited the range and types of examples utilised in this report but ensures that the findings are robust, and evidence based.
- **Privileging women's voice:** within the verification process, the views and experiences of women in the Pacific were prioritised. Where different views were expressed, especially in the various analysis processes, most attention was given to the views of women from the Pacific. This has further limited the information which was utilised in the final report. However, it is in line with good practice in gender evaluation²⁵ and with the intent of *Pacific Women* - to support the agency of women in the region.

Evaluation design and data collection occurred through the following processes.

- **Program documentation review:** Over 200 documents were reviewed by the evaluation team. This included: planning and design documents, operational plans, evaluations, learning and communications material, research reports and background aid program documentation (see

²⁴ The qualitative data utilised in the report is cumulative across the entire seven years. The qualitative data focuses on the post Three-Year Evaluation time period.

²⁵ Good practice for gender program evaluation suggests that in order to understand what has been achieved, data collection tools should give priority to women's lives and experience in detail, and in the ways they have been shaped to this point in time. Utilising participatory data collection the voice of women, especially marginalised women, should be a major source of evaluative information. Data collection tools should be able to understand women's experience in context, giving explicit attention to power and other structural constraints, and be able to uncover social, cultural, political and other dimensions which shape women's experience. (Battiwala, S & Pittman, A (2010) Capturing Change in Women's Realities A Critical Overview of Current Monitoring & Evaluation Frameworks and Approaches, Association for Women's Rights in Development.)

Annex One). Initial rapid review of the documentation enabled the team to identify sub-themes and questions for investigation (see Annex One).

- In-country consultations: The evaluation team visited Kiribati, Fiji and Vanuatu for consultations with *Pacific Women* partners, DFAT Posts, government agencies and other gender and technical experts. Community discussions and multi-stakeholder validation workshops were also undertaken during these visits. Some additional discussions were also undertaken with a limited number of *Pacific Women* partners in Tuvalu and Tonga (see Annex One).
- Distance interviews: Telephone interviews were held with partners and other program stakeholders including DFAT, the Papua New Guinea Country Program, the *Pacific Women* Support Unit, and representatives of regional organisations and multi-country programs that *Pacific Women* funds (see Annex One).
- Other opportunities: a survey was distributed to DFAT gender focal points at all Pacific Posts, in particular to provide opportunity for those staff where the evaluation team did not visit or undertake telephone interviews. Information about the evaluation was communicated on the *Pacific Women* website, inviting confidential submissions direct to the evaluation team.²⁶

Data analysis and reporting was undertaken iteratively through the following processes.

- Content analysis: Using realist principles, program documentation was mapped against the evaluation questions, with results recorded in an excel workbook and text in the documents annotated for 'outcomes' 'mechanisms' and 'context'. Following this, further content analysis of the documentation was undertaken alongside the interviews and in-country consultations. In this way emergent issues from the documentation were used to develop interviews schedules, and the documentation was used to further appraise and validate the data collected during interviews. A summary of the program documentation review was prepared in November 2019 and circulated to the evaluation management committee.
- Validation workshops: In-country level validation workshops were used as a means for *Pacific Women* partners and representatives from DFAT Posts, to feedback on the evaluation team's headline findings in each country. A presentation on progress to outcomes, promising practices, challenges and opportunities was made in each country.
- Advisory Board analysis: initial findings from the evaluation were collated and shared with the *Pacific Women* Advisory Board. This step was included in order to draw on the experience and long term knowledge of women's development in the Pacific available through the Advisor Board members. Their perspectives on the implications of the findings have been utilised for this report.

Annex One includes the data sources for each evaluation question.

2.4 Strengths and limitations

Pacific Women documentation is varied and rich in detail and the perspectives of DFAT, the Support Unit, partners and Pacific women. This has contributed to the depth of the analysis. In particular, the evaluation has benefitted from previous high quality evaluations and mid-term reviews of *Pacific Women* country programs, and regular progress reporting by over 50% of the partners. The scope of consultations conducted as part of the evaluation, including with Pacific women and a range of small and larger partners, has strengthened the participatory component of the evaluation. Realist methodology has also worked well to encourage consideration of the rapidly changing funding environment and context for gender equality programming in the Pacific.

²⁶ In six countries the evaluation team spoke directly to DFAT staff, either by telephone or in person, thus completing the survey with them directly, one additional survey was received from the remaining locations. A small number of people from the region took the opportunity to make a confidential submission to the evaluation team.

The major challenge experienced was that of limited time. The investigation would have benefitted from time to investigate more country programs and further verify the large amount of information available in reports. Due to the commitment to verification of all data, the current report is largely informed by the four countries of focus (Papua New Guinea, Fiji, Vanuatu and Kiribati). It would have also been improved by more engagement with DFAT Posts and the opportunity to explore the overlap with other Australian support for gender equality in the Pacific.

The depth of investigation possible has also been constrained in countries receiving less funding through *Pacific Women* such as the Cook Islands, FSM, Nauru, Palau and RMI. The experience of small island states is clearly different to that of larger Pacific countries and as far as the evidence was available this evaluation has sought to understand these differences and reflect this in findings and recommendations. However, a localised presence of the *Pacific Women* Support Unit has contributed to more program documentation and reporting in Fiji and Papua New Guinea than in other program countries, and the team was unable to directly visit any of the countries mentioned above.

Hence, the first stage findings need to be considered as partial and not fully representative of all *Pacific Women* partner countries. The evaluation team intended to address these limitations in stage two.

2.5 Report audience and timelines

The primary audience for this evaluation is DFAT. To that end all reports have been reviewed in the first instance by a management committee established for the review which includes senior representatives from DFAT, the Office of Development Effectiveness, and the *Pacific Women* Support Unit. The evaluation is also accountable to the Advisory Board of *Pacific Women* and reports will be forwarded to them. Finally, there is interest about the findings from this evaluation more broadly, therefore reports will in their final form will be made publicly available through the DFAT website.

3 Pacific Women

3.1 History and objectives

Pacific Women was designed to support countries to meet the commitments by their Governments made in the Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration (PLGED) in 2012. With funding of up to \$320 million over 10 years, *Pacific Women* is the Australian government's largest commitment to gender equality. The overarching goal of the program is that:

Women in the Pacific (regardless of income, ethnicity, disability, age or geography) participate fully, freely and safely in political, economic and social life.

Intended program outcomes include:

- Women and women's interests are increasingly and effectively represented and visible through leadership at all levels of decision-making (Leadership and Decision Making).
- Women have expanded economic opportunities to earn an income and accumulate economic assets (Economic Empowerment).
- Violence against women is reduced and survivors of violence have access to support services and to justice (Ending Violence against Women).
- Women in the Pacific will have a strong sense of their own agency, supported by changing legal and social environment and through increased access to services they need (Enhancing Agency).

Pacific Women also has objectives for the progress expected after three and six years of program implementation.

- By the end of the first three years of the program the capacity, resources and relationships 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 action, independent of but informed by *Pacific Women*, will be evident in all 14 countries.

3.2 Program design

3.2.1 Underlying assumptions

A delivery strategy for *Pacific Women* was developed in 2012-13, and a design document was finalised in July 2013.²⁷ In its design, *Pacific Women* was premised on the following factors - which will be revisited through this evaluation.

- The deep seated, entrenched and multi-faceted nature of gender inequality in the Pacific.
- The central importance of Pacific women and men, as individuals, groups and coalitions, driving indigenous change.
- The potential for Australia and other external partners to play a catalytic role in supporting Pacific actors to create positive changes towards gender equality.

In addition to the proposed outcome framework, *Pacific Women* was originally designed with a very large ambition. A core theme in the design was that country and regional approaches to change would develop over the life of the program. It was envisaged that the program would move towards more sophisticated and joined up approaches (with different government, civil society and other actors working together, beyond activities directly funded by the program), which would more effectively address the many interrelated factors that impact on gender equality and women's empowerment in the Pacific. *Pacific Women* was thus never intended to be the whole response to women's equality in the Pacific. It was meant to contribute to and support women and Governments, in various ways, to create their own solutions.

²⁷ See: Australian Government, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. (2012). *Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development Delivery Strategy 2012 – 2022*. Canberra, ACT; and Australian Government, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. (2014). *Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development Design Document*, Canberra, ACT.

3.2.2 Theory of change

In 2014, building on the *Pacific Women* program design, a ‘program theory’ and ‘program logic’ was developed to address the connections between diverse regional and country level initiatives. The *Pacific Women* program theory identifies strategy options and assumptions to meet the outcome and high-level goals outlined above (see [Annex Two](#)). The program logic includes a series of short-term, medium-term and long-term outcomes related to the overarching outcomes of the program (see [Annex Two](#)).

The program is also informed by the Rao and Kelleher Framework²⁸, a conceptual framework which identifies where change is needed to achieve increased gender equality and empowerment of women (see [Annex Two](#)). This framework points to the interconnected areas of individual, family and community change; changes in informal and formal systems; and changes to organisational and societal systems. Its central logic, adopted by the program, is that strategies are needed across these different dimensions for longer term, sustainable impact in women’s lives.

3.2.3 Partnerships and coalitions

Also central to the *Pacific Women* design, was the idea that the Australian government needs to focus on vulnerable women and girls (those with disabilities, indigenous women and disadvantaged women). The delivery strategy noted that the previous Australian government gender equality related activities in the Pacific had not focussed in a systematic or comprehensive manner on the priorities needed to redress entrenched disadvantage. In line with DFAT policy²⁹, the design advocated that DFAT broaden the range of local stakeholders involved in the program to better address this disadvantage. The intent was to include a focus on partnerships and coalitions as well as leveraging from the Australia government’s work with National governments and working with Pacific men. Over time the program scope has grown to include strengthening women’s organisations and supporting movement-building activities of local organisations through *Pacific Women* Country Plans.³⁰

This program narrative (assumptions, theory of change and implementation approach), drawing directly from the original design document, is revisited through this evaluation, in order to understand the concepts, tools or mechanisms that have proved useful and worthy of continued application in future iterations of the program.

3.3 Program scope

Pacific Women is implemented through activities and partnerships at country and regional levels. *Pacific Women* partners include governments, Pacific and international NGOs, regional organisations, United Nations agencies, development banks and the private sector alongside women’s organisations and representative groups within countries.

3.3.1 Expenditure by outcome and partner

The overall program budget of \$320 million is allocated over a 10 year period from 2012 – 2022. Country allocations occur through DFAT budgeting processes, with program country plans then developed around the pre-determined budget envelope. Regional allocations are made directly by DFAT. Total program expenditure from July 2012 to June 2019, which covers seven years of program operation is \$218,572,456.³¹

Over this period, *Pacific Women* has funded 168 initiatives. Of these 87 have been completed and 81 are ongoing.³²

The program has supported projects across each of *Pacific Women*’s four outcomes:

²⁸ Aruna Rao & David Kelleher (2005) *Is there life after gender mainstreaming?*, *Gender & Development*, 13:2, 57-69, DOI: 10.1080/13552070512331332287

²⁹ The DFAT (2016) *Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment Strategy*, directs DFAT activities to pay particular attention to girls, those with disabilities, indigenous women and disadvantaged women

³⁰ See for example *Pacific Women* Annual Program Progress reporting at <https://pacificwomen.org/key-pacific-women-resources>

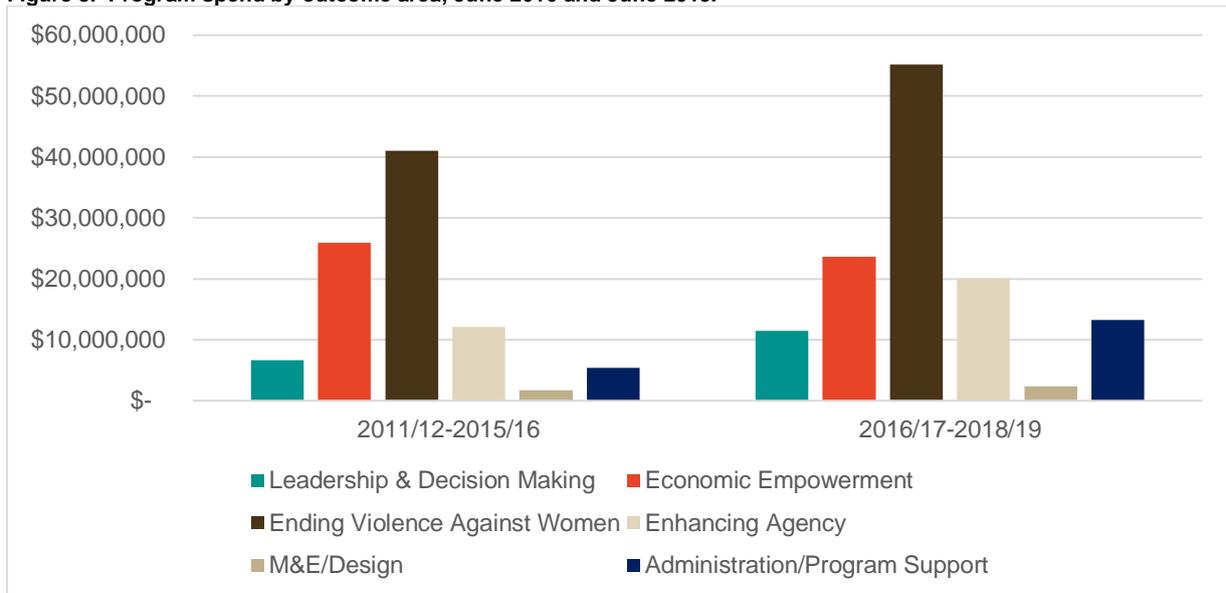
³¹ Figures provided by DFAT. Expenditure is expressed in Australian dollars and for the Australian financial year, which runs from July to June.

³² Source: *Pacific Women* Support Unit

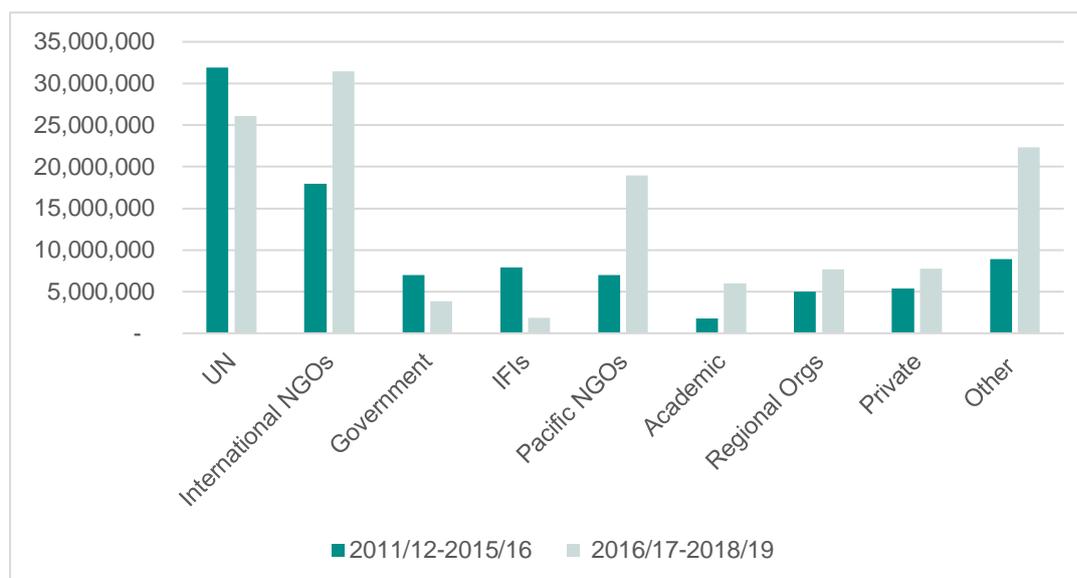
- 24 toward Leadership and Decision Making
- 31 toward Economic Empowerment
- 73 toward Ending Violence against Women
- 40 toward Enhancing Agency.

Table Three shows the expenditure by outcome area, comparing the situation at June 2016 and June 2019. It shows funding for activities between the two periods, with activities directed at Ending Violence against Women receiving the largest proportion in both periods.

Figure 3. Program spend by outcome area, June 2016 and June 2019.



Pacific Women works through a wide range of partner organisations to implement these activities, as illustrated in Figure Four.

Figure 4. Funding by partner, June 2016 and June 2019³³

It is important to note that funding to the UN and to international NGOs is most often passed onto local organisations and to Pacific Governments for activity implementation. Therefore this table summarises the funding to the *managing* but not necessarily the *implementing* partner.

Since the previous evaluation, the amount of funds to UN agencies has dropped slightly with more funding being directed through Pacific and international NGOs and Pacific Regional Organizations. There has also been an increase in funding to academic institutions and private sector organisations over the second phase of the program.

3.3.2 Country-level scope

An important element of *Pacific Women* is the delivery of support through individual country plans for the 14 countries involved in the program. Country planning is flexible but generally occurs in three-year cycles.

The first country plan was developed for Papua New Guinea in 2012. In 2013 as the program expanded, country plans were developed for Solomon Islands, the Cook Islands, Kiribati, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Tonga, and Fiji (draft). 2014 saw country plans developed for Vanuatu, Nauru and a second plan for Papua New Guinea. Then in 2015, country plans were finalised for Samoa, Tuvalu, Fiji (final) and Palau. Finally, in 2016 a country plan was developed for the Federated States of Micronesia

The Papua New Guinea and Tonga Country Programs have completed three country planning cycles. Other countries with the exception of the Cook Islands and FSM have completed two. Country Plan summaries provide an overview of bilateral as well as regionally funded activities in each country.³⁴

In terms of bilateral program expenditure (see Figure Five), the Papua New Guinea Country Program receives the largest allocation of *Pacific Women* funding at over \$69.7 million since 2012. This is followed by Solomon Islands (\$22.9 million), Fiji (\$15.9 million) and Vanuatu (\$7.1 million).

³³ 'IFIs' refer to International Finance institutions (World Bank, Asia Development Bank, etc.). 'Other' refers to individual company or consultant partners who provided small-scale, one-off services such as design, advisory communications and program support

³⁴ For County Plan summaries see: <https://pacificwomen.org/key-pacific-women-resources/>

Figure 5. Bilateral program funding



Country programs in The Cook Islands, Palau, RMI, Nauru and Tuvalu fairly small with program expenditure since 2012-13 around or less than \$1 million. There has been no bi-lateral investment in Niue through *Pacific Women*, support is provided through the Pacific Community's Pacific Gender Equality Program (PGE), the Pacific Community Regional Rights Resource Team and the UNICEF Pacific Child Protection Program.

In terms of expenditure by program outcomes, four country programs (Fiji, Samoa, Papua New Guinea³⁵ and Solomon Islands) include activities across all four outcomes. Palau only receives support for Enhancing Agency. *Pacific Women's* footprint, in terms of the number of ongoing projects as at June 2019, is smallest in Palau (0 projects underway at that time), RMI (one project underway) the Cook Islands³⁶, and Tuvalu (with two projects each).

3.3.3 Regional activities

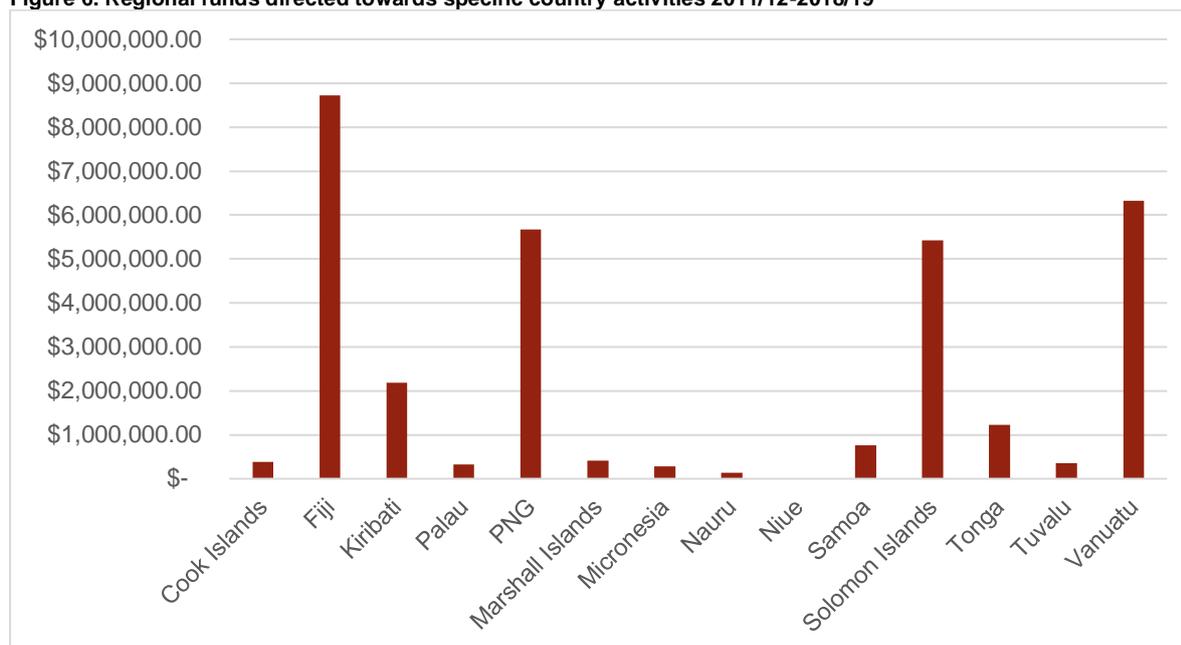
Pacific Women also funds regional activities, designed to address common issues across the region and to complement and build on country specific activities, and in this way extend the geographical coverage of activities funded through the bilateral aid program.

Total expenditure on regional activities was at \$67.1 million, to June 2019.³⁷ A significant amount of this money (47%) is directed towards country specific activities as shown in Figure Six.

³⁵ The PNG Country Program also works across four outcomes but the framing of these is different because of the country context (Women's Leadership and Influence, Women's Economic Empowerment, Violence Response and Services, Enhanced Knowledge and Understanding)

³⁶ The Cook Islands graduated in status to a higher income country in July 2019, so projects have not continued there.

³⁷ This figure excludes funding for program support, management and M&E costs.

Figure 6. Regional funds directed towards specific country activities 2011/12-2018/19

3.4 Management arrangements

A *Pacific Women* Advisory Board, comprised of eminent Pacific women and men, provides advice on the strategic direction of the program and assists in connecting the program with other influential leaders in the Pacific.³⁸ Australia's Ambassador for Women and Girls attends Advisory Board meetings as an observer.

Pacific Women is managed by DFAT in Canberra, in cooperation with DFAT Pacific Regional Program in Fiji and nine other DFAT Pacific Country Posts. To support program management, an interim management unit was established in 2013. The *Pacific Women* Support Unit established in Fiji in 2015, with a national sub-office in Papua New Guinea. The stated role of the Support Unit is to provide technical, administrative and logistical support to DFAT Posts and *Pacific Women's* bilateral and regional *Pacific Women* activities and partners.

Since its establishment, the structure and remit of the Support Unit has grown, from an initial complement of three staff. At present, there are 14 staff in Suva (plus three ongoing short-term advisers), and five staff in the Papua New Guinea sub-office (plus one ongoing long-term adviser).

Of the 153 implementing and other partners of *Pacific Women*, 43% of those relationships are directly managed by the Support Units in Papua New Guinea and Fiji. The remaining 57% of relationships are managed or maintained through a mixture of DFAT Canberra, Fiji regional Post and country Posts.

3.5 Monitoring and evaluation

A monitoring, evaluation and learning framework (MELF) was developed after the program commenced and was redesigned in 2016.³⁹ The *Pacific Women* MELF is set up to track progress by outcome area, including a framework of short-term (three year), intermediate (six year) and longer term outcomes for tracking progress towards the four program outcomes.⁴⁰

The *Pacific Women* MELF also provides guidance to support the development of *Pacific Women* Country Plan MELFs. These country plan MELFs are intended to provide guidance to *Pacific Women* implementing partners to develop their project M&E plans. The intention was for the *Pacific Women*

³⁸ For further details see <https://pacificwomen.org/about-us/advisory-board/>

³⁹ Cardno Emerging Markets. (2017). *Pacific Women Program Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Framework, Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development*, Australian Government Department for Foreign Aid and Trade.

⁴⁰ Funded activities are allocated a 'primary and 'secondary' program outcome, which is intended to aid in monitoring and tracking progress across the portfolio. Additionally, partners are required to report against the short-term, intermediate and longer term outcomes in the program logic; and the Support Unit uses this in progress reporting to DFAT as well.

MELF to be revised on a yearly basis to ensure that the program is adapting to context and considering program learning.

A defining feature of the *Pacific Women* MELF is its 'question-led' approach, to give prominence to learning, reflection and improvement. At the country level, the MELF encourages the use of this approach to review progress against *Pacific Women* country program objectives. In practice this has involved a mix of in-country missions by the Support Unit and external consultants; along with annual review and learning workshops held in Fiji, Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu.⁴¹

A monitoring system, including the *Pacific Women* database, was developed during the initial years of program implementation to enable grantees to share disaggregated data on the scope and reach of activities; and enable the program to track its reach across the countries and outcomes. -

Additionally, a *Pacific Women* Value for Money (VfM) rubric was developed following program design, with a revised version published in 2018. This rubric includes principles and standards for assessing VfM in funded activities, across the four DFAT VfM areas- efficiency, effectiveness, economy and ethics.

3.5.1 Three Year Evaluation

The *Pacific Women* Three-Year Evaluation took place after approximately four years of program implementation.⁴² It was a formative evaluation that focused on assessing whether *Pacific Women* has achieved its first interim objective and to establish the extent to which the program is tracking towards achieving intended outcomes. Evaluation questions, data collection and analysis were organised into four domains, based on the logic of a continuum from 'context' to 'strategy' to 'process' and 'outcome'. Data collection took place at two levels – at the program level, to capture the broad story, and at the project level, to allow the data to speak from the 'ground up'.⁴³ The evaluation did not assess the impact of individual activities in the 14 countries, nor did it attempt to gauge change in gender equality across the region as a result of the program's first three years of implementation.

The major finding of the evaluation was that the program had responded flexibly to cultural variations across the region, and to the different levels of engagement with Pacific governments. Good examples of active coordination across the program were found and *Pacific Women's* Theory of Change was found to be lending coherence to gender equality work by implementing partners and others. Additionally, there was evidence that the capacity support undertaken by *Pacific Women* was appreciated and that funded activities were generating knowledge and understanding of gender inequalities in the Pacific.

The evaluation noted however, that the program model including the emphasis on Pacific women and Pacific organisations driving change, was not fully understood by implementing partners. Moreover, the evaluation found that whilst *Pacific Women's* Theory of Change is premised on the need to work across all four intended outcomes to achieve meaningful change to gender equality; the majority of funding and action has been targeted to Ending Violence against Women initiatives. Hence a scaling up of support towards other program outcomes was recommended. Finally, the evaluation recommended that the next phase required program implementation more consistent with the internal logic of *Pacific Women*. This included the logic of the Theory of Change and *Pacific Women's* overall aspirations of building momentum and Pacific leadership for the program. Further details on the recommendations of the Three-Year Evaluation are at included in Annex 3.

⁴¹ See for example: https://pacificwomen.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/2018-Annual-Learning-Workshop-Report_FINAL.pdf

⁴² Intermediate Technology and Development. (2017). *Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development 3 Year Evaluation – Final Report*. London, United Kingdom.

⁴³ *Pacific Women* Support Unit. (2017). *Progressing Pacific Women following the Three Year Evaluation – a guide for stakeholders on the findings and recommendations arising from the Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development Three-Year Evaluation*. *Pacific Women* Shaping Pacific Development. Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. Canberra, ACT.

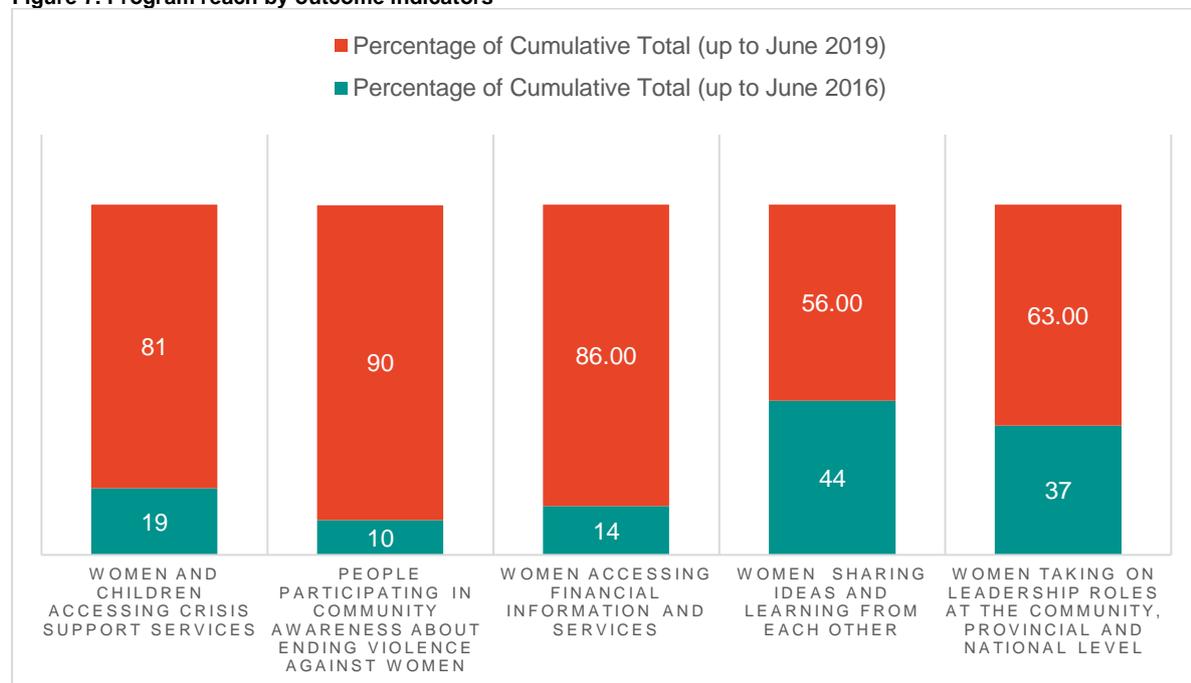
4 Findings: To what extent has *Pacific Women* achieved its intermediate outcomes and contributed to longer term change?

4.1 Program reach

The evaluation has found that *Pacific Women* has resulted in an increase in Australian government programming on gender equality in the region. This has been achieved through the volume of *Pacific Women* funding, and its delivery through a diverse range of partners in countries.

As a result, more individual women and girls are being assisted and there is engagement in new areas and themes. For example, in its seven years to June 2019, the program supported 116,341 women and children to access crisis support services, 881,549 people to participate in awareness and education about ending violence against women and children, 25,765 women to utilise financial information and services and 25,658 women to take on leadership roles at the community, provincial and national level. This reach has escalated since the Three-Year Evaluation (see Figure Seven).

Figure 7. Program reach by outcome indicators



In terms of significant themes, at the regional level, the increase in Australian government funding for gender equality through *Pacific Women*, has enabled knowledge and capacity building work on the important issue of gender mainstreaming across 14 Pacific island countries through the Pacific Community's (SPC's) Progressing Gender Equality in the Pacific Project.⁴⁴ The Australian government through *Pacific Women* was also the primary donor for UNICEF's Pacific Child Protection Program, which was found to have made a significant contribution to strengthening the legal framework for child protection in several Pacific island countries.⁴⁵

At the country level, the Australian government, through *Pacific Women*, has been able to fund smaller, civil society organisations and build their capacity for gender equality programming. The Fiji Women's Fund for instance, was set up and is funded through *Pacific Women*. In its first year of operation, the Fund supported a number of civil society organisations which are receiving Australian government funding for the first time.⁴⁶ All these organisations are delivering on empowerment-related outcomes at the community level. In Vanuatu, sustained funding of Alternative Communities Trade in

⁴⁴ Widmer, S., & Sharp, E. (2017). *Progressing Gender Equality in the Pacific Project Mid-term Evaluation Report*. Suva, Fiji.

⁴⁵ Szamier, M., & Attenborough, J. (2017). *Review of UNICEF Pacific Child Protection Programme*. Suva, Fiji.

⁴⁶ Fiji Women's Fund. (2018). *Fiji Women's Fund Annual Progress Report: January-December 2018*. Suva, Fiji.

Vanuatu (ACTIV) has the potential to deliver similar outcomes on a smaller scale. In Papua New Guinea, programming work of local organisations such as the Bougainville Women's Foundation have received a boost with outstanding results in terms of outreach (see Box 1).

Box 1: Bougainville Women's Federation - Voter Education Project Outreach

The Voter Education Project was a 20 month project implemented by the Bougainville Women's Federation (BWF) in partnership with the International Women's Development Agency (IWDA), in the lead up to the 2017 Papua New Guinea national elections. The goal of the project was to provide education about voting rights and responsibilities to people across Bougainville, focusing on a historically disenfranchised cohort of people (aged between 35-45 years) with limited education. The project promoted gender equality by ensuring that at least 50 per cent of Voter Education Community Trainers were women. The trainers were role models to other women in the communities where voter education workshops were delivered, and this set the backdrop for discussions on the value of women as leaders, decision makers and parliamentarians. The visible role of women as Voter Education Community Trainers and the discussions served both to support an enabling environment for women candidates, and to empower women to feel confident to vote freely. This community-based model along with the BWF's marriage of technical expertise (BRIDGE training and partnership with the Office of the Bougainville Electoral Commission) meant that project exceeded all expectations in terms of outreach. The project design required training to be delivered in 320 communities across 43 Councils of Elders (COEs), reaching 6,400 people. This would have meant an average of 20 people reached in each community. However, an end-of-project evaluation found that the Project actually conducted more than 740 trainings, reaching 43,884 people, averaging 59 people per training.⁴⁷ Based on the Project's own data, there was an approximately 50/50 split between male and female voters engaged by the Project. Partner reporting also suggests the project provided the opportunity for BWF to increase its profile throughout Bougainville, informing communities of BWF's role and projects. This is important as BWF has a key role in the Policy for Women's Empowerment, Gender Equality, Peace and Security and The Bougainville Action Plan for Women, Peace and Security.

KEY FINDING: *Pacific Women has broadened the reach of the Australian aid program in terms of the number of individual men and women the program is reaching; and enabling engagement in new geographical areas and themes.*

The evaluation also finds that the program is supporting activities that target vulnerable women and girls, which was a central idea in the program design. In several of the program countries where in-country consultations were undertaken, efforts are being made to address the needs of vulnerable groups in project design, outreach and delivery. In Fiji and Papua New Guinea for example, the human rights focus of some *Pacific Women* partners has improved outreach and strengthened the program response to the needs of marginalised groups.⁴⁸ In Fiji, *Pacific Women* funds the We Rise Coalition, involving four women's organisations implementing programs based on feminist principles. Progress has been made through the We Rise Coalition in addressing Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transsexual (LGBT) issues through Coalition partners; as well as extending the reach of women's organisations to rural areas and influencing work across the region. In Papua New Guinea, support to Oxfam International, which adopts a rights-based and advocacy focus in much of its work, has encouraged existing local organisations to build their capacity in these areas and network with a wider range of civil society organisations.⁴⁹ The Support Unit has expanded the focus on vulnerable women and girls since the Three-Year Evaluation, through expanded directions to partners, and revised terms of references for advisers and consultants supporting the program.

Beyond this, the evaluation found that development of multiple strategies by partners has increased program reach, particularly in marginalised communities. A good example of this is the work of the We Rise Coalition in Fiji. Program support has enabled the Coalition to adopt and sustain a 'twin-focus' on coalition-building and community-based programming. The Coalition established a Memorandum of Understanding to guide coalition partners as well as a range of other decision-making, reporting and evaluation processes. At the same time, individual Coalition members (Diverse Voices and Action, FemLINK Pacific, Fiji Women's Rights Movement and International Women's Development Agency), have engaged in substantial community level, national and regional advocacy work and programming.

In both Fiji and Vanuatu, there are good examples of *Pacific Women* support enabling partners to extend the geographical reach of existing activities. In Fiji, support to partners such as Rise Beyond the Reef and the Women in Fisheries Network has enabled these programs to extend the reach of

⁴⁷ Rodrigues, C., (2018). *Bougainville Women's Federation Voter Education Project – Final Evaluation Report*. International Women's Development Agency. Melbourne, Victoria.

⁴⁸ See Country Program Reviews and annual reporting by partners such as the Fiji Women's Fund and We Rise Coalition (Fiji) and Oxfam International (Papua New Guinea).

⁴⁹ Interview data and progress reporting by Oxfam International, Papua New Guinea.

economic empowerment programs to rural areas and coastal communities. In Vanuatu, the Vanuatu Skills Partnership continues to support rural women to access economic opportunities.

Examples of Ending Violence against Women services expanding in remote and rural areas can also be seen in Fiji, Kiribati, Tonga, Vanuatu and Papua New Guinea. In other cases, a broader reach is being achieved through partners operating at several levels from individual and community level activities, to activities that are national, regional and cross-country in scope. Examples include the work of several Papua New Guinea partners, the We Rise Coalition in Fiji, the Fiji Women's Crises Centre, the Tonga Women and Children's Crises Centre, Vanuatu Women's Centre and regional projects such as Uniting World's GET-IT Project.

The Young Women's Leadership project in Papua New Guinea, which is implemented by the International Women Development Agency in partnership with the Bougainville Women's Federation, is a good example of building partner capacity to address the needs of specific vulnerable groups. The project aimed to increase young women's leadership effectiveness through training and mentoring and providing a safe space for these women to support each other. The project has contributed to the establishment of Young Women's Associations that have developed a support network for young women's leadership across Bougainville. A project evaluation conducted in 2019 highlighted the expanding effect of the successful initiative, as young women leaders and alumnae expand the membership by training other young women.⁵⁰

Other *Pacific Women* partners that are working to address the needs of young women and girls include CARE Vanuatu, Kommuniti Lukautim Meri in Papua New Guinea, and Fiji Women's Fund grantees such as the Fiji Women's Rights Movement and Fiji Girl Guides Association. As these successful approaches gain ground, partners are beginning to address the interests of population sub-groups and fine tune their strategies further. The recently launched multi-country, Pacific Girl initiative is an example of program support to adolescent girls. In the short time since its commencement, the program has been able to provide a space for Pacific girls to articulate their vision for the future.⁵¹ Crises centres (discussed in more detail later in the report) are also turning their attention to working with adolescent and young girls.

In the area of disability inclusion, either informed by *Pacific Women* or their own community development practice, many partners are adopting inclusive practices. The Papua New Guinea sub-office has hosted training and showcased the work of partners that are adopting inclusive practices.⁵² Recent reporting from Papua New Guinea suggests that close to two-thirds of partners are reporting on inclusive practices and 66 per cent of partners reported reaching people with disability. Elsewhere, partners such as Fiji Women's Fund have decided to allocate 10 percent of its annual grant funding budget to organisations supporting people with disabilities. This has enabled the Fund to connect with groups such as the Pacific Disability Forum and the Fiji Disabled People's Federation. In Tuvalu support from *Pacific Women* has supported the Disabled Peoples Organisation, Fusi Alofa in their role as the country's only community-based organisation focused on addressing the rights of persons with disabilities. This work included: strengthening institutional structures; improving strategic and operational planning capacity; facilitating and supporting engagement with government and increasing their presence in policy making processes.

KEY FINDING: *The program is fulfilling its intent to focus on vulnerable women and girls. Capacity building support to local organisations, multiple strategies by partners, and the scaling up of successful activities, has enabled the needs of vulnerable groups to be better addressed in project design, outreach and delivery.*

When asked to comment on the factors that have enabled partners to better understand and address the needs of vulnerable women, interviewees from government, Pacific organisations, research institutions and international NGOs commented on the value of a long-term funding mechanism. The shared view is that access to long-term funding enables development organisations to work incrementally in different areas and on complex themes. As one interviewee from Papua New Guinea put it: "While 10 years is not enough to address inequalities which have been going on for decades, it

⁵⁰ Cousins, J. (2019). *Young Women's Leadership Project End of Project Evaluation*. Bougainville Women's Federation and International Women's Development Agency. Melbourne, Victoria.

⁵¹ See <https://pacificwomen.org/resources/pacific-girls-speak/>

⁵² Interview data and progress reporting by PNG Sub-office.

helps usto work with these women, build their capacity, try out new ways, take a few small steps every year". The potential for long-term funding has encouraged partners to tackle situations where entrenched and institutionalised forms for gender inequality exist.

4.2 Progress to outcomes

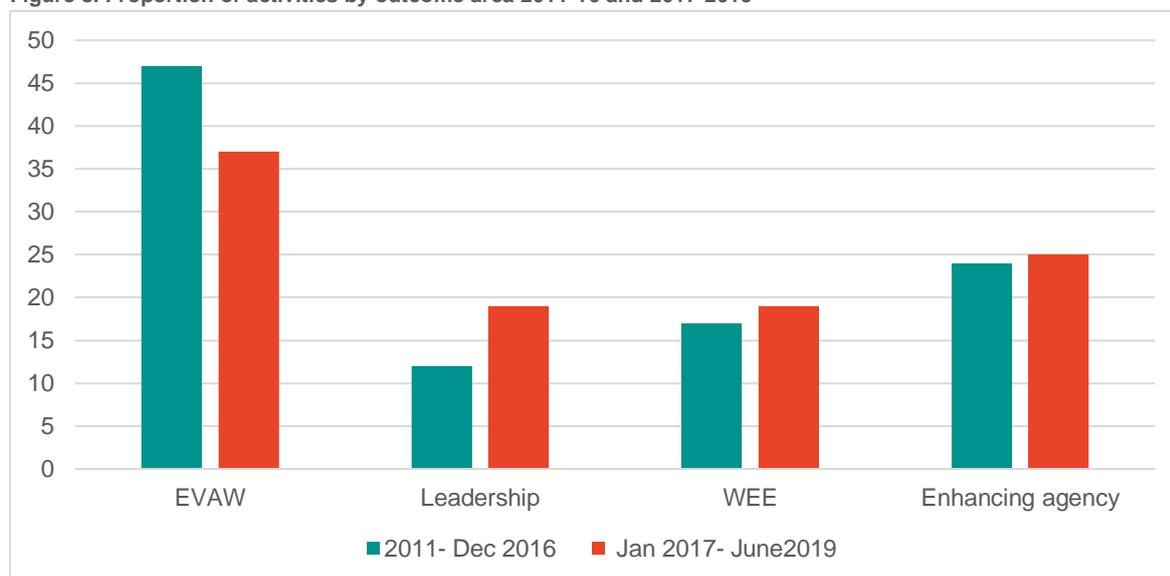
The evaluation finds that progress is being made in all of the four *Pacific Women* outcomes, with variations by country, level of funding, challenges encountered and level at which change is occurring. It is useful to contextualise these variations by examining first, the extent of investment in each outcome; and then the progress made, and challenges faced.

4.2.1 Scope of investment in outcome areas

In investment terms, the bulk of *Pacific Women* investment goes to Ending Violence against Women (EVAW) initiatives. This is appropriate given the pervasive nature of violence against women in Pacific island communities and its impact on all aspects of women's lives. A recent Office of Development Effectiveness evaluation of a decade of Australia's development assistance to EVAW found for instance, that Australia's annual aid funding allocation for Ending Violence against Women increased more than 10-fold from 2007-08 to 2017-18. This increase largely stemmed from increased expenditure in Pacific island countries, primarily through *Pacific Women*.⁵³

Since the Three-Year Evaluation, there have been changes to the program attention to other outcomes. As shown in Figure 8, the percentage of new activities since the beginning of 2017 shows an increase in the proportion of projects focused on Leadership and Decision Making and Economic Empowerment. Enhancing Agency has remained consistent at approximately 25% of all activities both since program commencement and as a proportion of new activities started after the Three-Year Evaluation.

Figure 8. Proportion of activities by outcome area 2011-16 and 2017-2019



KEY FINDING: Positive improvements are evident in the project portfolio since the Three- Year Evaluation. While the bulk of *Pacific Women* investment goes to Ending Violence against Women initiatives, the program is supporting new partners and scaled-up initiatives on women's leadership and economic empowerment.

However, the extent to which country programs are working on all four outcomes and are thus able to more comprehensively address barriers to women's empowerment (a high-level assumption in the

⁵³ Office of Development Effectiveness. (2019). *Ending Violence Against Women and Girls: Evaluating a Decade of Australia's Development Assistance Report*. Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. Canberra, ACT.

MELF), varies. The in-country consultations and comparative review of Country Plans suggest this spread is easier for the larger countries, with better resourced programs, to achieve. In smaller country programs, program spread across outcomes has been sought through a mixture of bilateral and regionally funded activities, with mixed results. For example, activities such as the *Pacific Women* Parliamentary Project (PWPP), which is listed as the main Leadership and Decision Making activity in *Pacific Women* Country Plans for Palau, RMI and Tuvalu appears to have made a limited contribution to driving women's leadership activities at a country level.⁵⁴ In other examples, the limited collaboration between bilateral and regional programs has constrained the opportunity to leverage a comprehensive approach. For example, Progressing Gender Equality in the Pacific (PGE) is a five-year project working with 14 Pacific Island countries to strengthen governments' capacity to mainstream gender and improve gender statistics to better monitor progress towards gender equality.⁵⁵ With *Pacific Women* support the program is showing short-term and medium-term gains in some Pacific Island countries, but in-country consultations suggest this is not operating in close collaboration with bilateral activities.

A further challenge which emerged from the investigation of progress to outcomes, has to do with the program logic and framing of the entire monitoring and reporting system around the outcomes in the program logic. The evaluation finds that with the exception of the Papua New Guinea Country Program, the outcomes listed in the program logic have not been used to determine funding decisions in-country, and there is limited strategic discussion or planning between stakeholders to progress the work towards these goals at the country level. Partners in Kiribati for example, found it hard to report against the short-term outcomes as they only received funding in the third year of *Pacific Women* program implementation. Discussions with partners in Vanuatu suggested the program logic was being interpreted as linear framework. Many partners emphasized that raising the consciousness of men, women and communities, which was captured in several short-term outcomes in the program logic (see [Annex Two](#)), was an ongoing change process and central to their work. Thus, the evaluation finds that while aspects of program logic and *Pacific Women* MELF such as the questioned approach, have had a good take up in partner reporting, the value of the program logic as a tool to drive effective yet flexible and sustainable programming is being questioned.

KEY FINDING: *There is mixed evidence of a comprehensive response, with collaborative activity across all four outcome areas, as was envisaged in the Pacific Women design. The linkages between regional and bilaterally-funded initiatives are not apparent in all countries and this undermines program effectiveness.*

Moving forward, it is possible that more recently designed multi country initiatives such as Balance of Power and POETCom offer a different model to achieve progress to outcomes on multiple fronts. Supported by *Pacific Women*, Balance of Power aims to increase women's participation and voice in the political process and is intended to be delivered intensively in three countries Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu. POETCom is looking to address women's economic empowerment in Kiribati, RMI, FSM and Palau through identifying organic value chains that benefit women farmers. Both programs are funded by the regional program and have regional elements but select strategies that are framed to respond to the values and drivers of the culture and context in the country where the program is implemented. Further analysis of the challenges and opportunities that regional programs present is covered later in this report.

Also worthy of note, is country level research, advocacy and learning work, which is contributing to joined up action, albeit at the partner level. The recently conducted Women's Economic Empowerment Feasibility Study in Kiribati and Do No Harm research in Papua New Guinea are good examples of *Pacific Women* support enabling partners to understand and work across the connected challenges that Pacific women face.

⁵⁴ Moxham, N. (2017). *Mid-Term Evaluation of the Pacific Women Parliamentary Partnerships Project 2013-2018*. Leanganook Yarn. Australia.

⁵⁵ References: PGE Document Widmer, S. and Sharp, E. (2017). *Progressing Gender Equality in the Pacific Project Mid-Term Evaluation Report*. Australian Government Department for Foreign Affairs and Trade. Canberra, ACT. Interview with PGE representatives.

At the partner level, there is also evidence of good practice in terms of joined up action across outcomes where advocacy campaigns and learning initiatives are gaining momentum. For instance, most *Pacific Women* partners in Papua New Guinea organise activities to mark the country's 20 Days of Activism. In both Fiji and Papua New Guinea, there is evidence of the Support Unit (and Papua New Guinea sub-office) playing a convening role – creating opportunities for partners to share experiences and learn from each other's practice.

As programs like Balance of Power, POETCom and the research and learning work continues to gather momentum, it is likely that more flexible and integrated ways of working will emerge. A key task for the program, supported by Pacific women and DFAT Posts, will be to build on the learning and momentum of these new programs, reorienting the program logic towards a more contextualised description of change, and one that is rooted in the action in countries.

KEY FINDING: *The long-term nature of funding has encouraged research institutions and local organisations to tackle situations where entrenched and institutionalised forms for gender inequality exist. In this way, Pacific Women is supporting development of knowledge and approaches that are locally driven and relevant to Pacific island culture and context.*

The rest of this section outlines in more detail the outcome-specific achievements and challenges identified in the evaluation. In each of the four outcomes, the evaluation examined: the scope of funding; salient changes from 2015-16 to 2018-19, achievement and challenges; and lessons or ways of working which might shape the next phase of the program. Relevant outcomes in the program logic were used as question prompts rather than as an organising frame for this report.

4.2.2 Leadership and Decision Making

As at June 2019, *Pacific Women* had funded 24 projects that have a primary focus on Leadership and Decision Making, accounting for approximately 14 per cent of all funded projects. Of these 24 projects, nine focus on national level leadership, nine on local level leadership and six on community level leadership. As noted previously, this part of the portfolio has grown over the second phase of *Pacific Women*, as some initiatives have been scaled-up and new initiatives have commenced.

Over the seven year period the investment focus has largely been on leadership training and workshopping activities.⁵⁶ This is because of large investments in candidate training (mainly in Papua New Guinea) and capacity building and training of rural and urban market vendors through the Markets for Change Program. This investment focus contributes mainly to impacts at an individual level. Program documentation reviewed for this evaluation suggests that there is strong evidence of leadership training activities contributing to building the confidence of individual women in addition to their knowledge and skills. However, there is less evidence of changed family and community attitudes and perceptions towards women's leadership (although this is a short-term outcome in the program logic).

There are exceptions to this such as the CARE International Coffee Industry Support Project in Papua New Guinea, which is working to promote women's leadership by encouraging families to consider gender and social norms and then reallocate current family workloads.⁵⁷ The Fiji Women's Fund and Markets for Change Program in some countries, are also working on intentional strategies to address household and community support as women show an interest in participating in decision making processes.⁵⁸ These programs provide important strategies which might be adapted more widely through the program. However, across the range of initiatives that *Pacific Women* supports, the emphasis on behavioural change in the program design, outreach and delivery, has been less than originally intended in the program design.

KEY FINDING: *The program is supporting activities that contribute to building the confidence of women leaders in addition to their knowledge and skills. However, there is less evidence of changed family and community attitudes and perceptions towards women's leadership.*

⁵⁶ SMPR December 2018: Since the start of the program, *Pacific Women* has supported approximately 1,390 activities targeting women's leadership, including: leadership trainings and workshops (468); civic and voter education activities (888); 4 candidate trainings (18); and strengthening the capacity of rural and urban market vendors to claim rights through participation and leadership in market vendor associations.

⁵⁷ Reference CARE Reports

⁵⁸ Reference SMPR

A particular challenge that partners highlighted during in-country consultations, was the fact that training and capacity building interventions are not sufficient to lead to an increasing number of women applying for or being selected to leadership positions. The view shared was that while women are becoming more visible and motivated to participate in decision making processes at the local level, this does not always result in more women holding positions of authority. For example, the Australian National University's Women in Leadership Support Program, has demonstrated that female candidates need knowledge and resourcing to build linkages and political linkages at the local level.⁵⁹

In addition, the experience from this program and others, shows that support to women candidates or to policies which promote women's political participation, if not contextualised and locally driven, can be stymied. In Vanuatu for example, while there are several women in parliament and in the public service, there is limited engagement between these leaders and the Department of Women in Vanuatu and civil society organisations.

To this end, the program has supported some promising practices, which are contributing to an enabling environment and institutional change in support of women's leadership. In Fiji, the We Rise Coalition has contributed to several policy and practice changes in government organisations. Coalition members have provided recommendations which the Fijian Government has adopted in its National Gender Policy. Collective coalition action has also activated the multi-sector gender taskforces of the National Women's Plan of Action. Across several *Pacific Women* countries, faith-based partners such as House of Sarah in Fiji (see Box 2), the Presbyterian Churches Union in Vanuatu and the Uniting Church in Solomon Islands, are contributing to strengthening women's leadership in the church. In Papua New Guinea, the Business Coalition for Women project and the Women in Mining project, have contributed to policy change in private sector organisations, resulting in more women applying and being selected for leadership positions. As contributing to policy and practice change in support of women's leadership is a longer-term outcome in the program logic, these activities are important examples for the program overall. The underlying approach of each should be shared more widely, supporting the adaptation of those strategies to other program locations.

Box 2: House of Sarah's contribution to strengthening women's leadership in Fiji

The House of Sarah was established in 2009 in response to calls from the Association of Anglican Women in 2007 for a service to address gender inequality, discrimination and the elimination of violence against women and children. Since then, the work has grown to the provision of counselling support and referral by Sarah Carers in the parishes, and awareness raising among women, men, and clergy on gender based violence and human rights.

Funding from *Pacific Women* since 2015, has provided a boost to training on gender and ending violence against women issues for women, young people, men, clergy and lay leaders. It has also contributed to the production of church resources for workshops, prayers and 'Break the Silence' programs planned by House of Sarah and ecumenical partners. House of Sarah staff resourced by the program, coordinate a monthly meeting (Christian Churches Talanoa Network) where representatives from nine member churches discuss strategies to integrate gender within the churches.

The result of this support has been increased collaboration between church leaders and the clergy on advocacy for ending violence against women. Progress reporting by the Fiji Women's Fund, which manages the grant to House of Sarah suggests that resourcing has facilitated a strong movement to amplify discussions on gender equality in the Anglican Church. House of Sarah contributed to a significant legislation change ensuring that the two representatives elected to the Synod (from parishes) included one male and one female. The inclusion of women at the Synod decision-making level then created further opportunities for sensitisation of male pastors and support for community-level activism. Furthermore, the House of Sarah is expanding its reach and coverage through an emerging faith-based network the program supports, including the House of Sarah, South Pacific Association of Theological Schools and Pacific Conference of Churches.

This experience highlights the value of program support to faith-based organisations and the importance of working through formal structures of power and decision-making spaces within Churches in the Pacific context.

KEY FINDING: *The program has supported some promising practices, which are contributing to an enabling environment and institutional change in support of women's leadership. In particular, coalition action and the work of faith-based organisations is contributing to strengthening women's leadership at multiple levels. The strategies utilised by these activities now need to be scaled up, with lessons informing Pacific Women programming in contexts, which are proving challenging.*

⁵⁹ Source: interviews and partner progress reporting

Another area where the program has made progress is in building the leadership potential of young women and girls. Young women's leadership activities in Fiji, Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu are reporting positive results in terms of funded activities contributing to more young women being engaged and visible in leadership spaces. Many of these activities build on the work of the Fiji Women's Rights Movement with young women and girls in the Pacific, and to that extent demonstrate the value of *Pacific Women* supporting the scale up and adaptation of locally driven approaches and initiatives between contexts.

In Papua New Guinea, the Bougainville Women's Federation implements the Young Women's Leadership Project in partnership with International Women's Development Agency. Participants in the project's leadership training have demonstrated confidence in the application of leadership skills and have established small businesses at the community level. A Young Women's Leadership Forum on the theme 'Break the Silence! Hear Our Voice' attracted 145 young women from across Bougainville. They were joined by 14 young women from partner organisations in Papua New Guinea, Fiji and Solomon Islands.⁶⁰

At the regional level, Pacific Girl, a newly commenced \$4.5 million program supported by *Pacific Women* is focussing on the sub-group of adolescent girls. In the short time since its commencement, the program has been able to provide a space for Pacific girls to articulate their vision for the future.⁶¹

Alongside these promising developments, some respondents to the review identified a wide cohort of young women who were yet to be engaged by the program. It was the view of these respondents, from both regional organisations and local organisations in some countries that any future development of the program ought to give particular emphasis to the concerns and issues relevant to young women and to their emerging roles as the future leaders and decision makers in the Pacific.

KEY FINDING: The program has supported some promising practices, which are contributing to an enabling environment and institutional change in support of young women's leadership. However, this area continues to be one where further engagement and investment is required.

A final key lesson from the investigation into the Leadership and Decision Making portfolio of projects, is the value of *Pacific Women* supporting diverse platforms for the advancement of women leaders in the Pacific. In Fiji, support for FemLINKpacific for example, is strengthening a media platform for women leaders, including rural women leaders. Whereas the convening of small civil society organisations through Fiji Women's Fund is providing opportunities for networking and advancement for women from diverse sections of the Fijian population. In Vanuatu, the alumni and mentor networks created through Gender Equality Together (GET): Strengthening Women's Rights in Vanuatu Project, which is being implemented by CARE Vanuatu, are creating pathways to advance women's leadership in government and civil society organisations.⁶² In the context of *Pacific Women's* overall program logic, these results highlight the importance of capacity building support to partners, particularly at design stages of activities, to enable them to work for change at multiple levels and through diverse platforms to advance women's leadership.

4.2.3 Economic Empowerment

As at June 2019, *Pacific Women* had funded a cumulative total of 30 projects that have a primary focus on Economic Empowerment, accounting for approximately 19 per cent of all funded projects and approximately 23% of all funding. As noted previously, the Economic Empowerment area of work has grown over the second phase of the program. At present, *Pacific Women* is funding financial literacy training and skills development for individual women but also supporting promising practices that are shifting the focus to household and community-level enablers for economic empowerment. This is a shift since the Three-Year Evaluation when the majority of funded activities were focused on training individual women.

As was evident at the time of the Three-Year Evaluation, partners in several countries continue to show progress in terms of building women's confidence as well as knowledge and skills in business development. The Markets for Change project provides cross-country evidence of women developing

⁶⁰ Source: interviews and partner progress reporting

⁶¹ See <https://pacificwomen.org/resources/pacific-girls-speak/>

⁶² Country program review documentation and in-country consultations

increased knowledge, skills and confidence in market contexts. In Fiji, Fiji Women's Fund is supporting women's groups to engage in commercially viable economic activities. In FSM (*Pacific Women Growing Business*), Papua New Guinea (CARE Coffee Industry Support Project, University of Canberra's Family Farm Teams) and Vanuatu (Vanuatu Skills Partnership), partners are linking women to skills providers, businesses or government systems as their confidence and skills grow.

Some partners in Fiji, Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu are able to show results in terms of increases in women's income and assets, and this is an improvement over 2015-16, when the Three-Year Evaluation took place. For instance, Fiji Women's Fund grantees use individual and household income and asset-based monitoring data. The Fund's reporting provides strong evidence of an increase in income and assets for beneficiary groups, with some cases of income doubling over one calendar year. CARE in Papua New Guinea has developed a women's economic empowerment metric. This is a composite indicator that measures empowerment across five equally weighted domains of income, resources, relations, decision making and workloads. The metric is being used to determine the extent to which CARE's Coffee Industry Support Project is affecting women's empowerment. In Vanuatu, the Vanuatu Skills Partnership program is trialling a new prosperity data collection tool, which is administered as part of a coaching activity, and provides information on a range of business growth and quality indicators. Women from all of the sector work streams report income increases. Evidence such as this, along with the improvements to partner monitoring of income and asset, increase provides a good foundation for progressing work in the Economic Empowerment area in the future.

KEY FINDING: *Partners in Fiji, Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu are able to show results in terms of increase in women's income and assets. This evidence, along with improvements to partner monitoring of women's economic empowerment, provides a good foundation to progress work in this area.*

The ongoing challenge, highlighted in the program documentation as well as during in-country consultations, is that entrenched social norms and cultural practices tend to thwart efforts towards women's economic advancement. This issue was also flagged as a concern in the *Pacific Women* design and Roadmap studies.⁶³ Encouragingly, the investigation finds that some local organisations supported by *Pacific Women* are making breakthroughs in this area. The evidence suggests that 'what works' is local organisations driving change, utilising a multi-pronged approach with knowledge and training inputs linked to other activities to expand the economic options for women. The Business Coalition for Women (BCFW) in Papua New Guinea for instance, sells services to private sector companies to help them make their workplaces safer and better, including for women. An evaluation of BCFW showed that by the end of 2018, businesses or organisations had implemented at least one substantive change based on the coalition's services or products.⁴⁷ There were 68 separate procedures, policies, practices or standards being improved across those companies.⁶⁴

Another example of a project that takes a multi-pronged approach to developing women's knowledge and skills is the *Pacific Women Growing Business* project in FSM. This project focuses on supporting existing and aspiring women entrepreneurs to develop their businesses through a combination of training and industry-level networking activities. The project has been recognised by the FSM Association of Chambers of Commerce and has established a partnership with the College of Micronesia's Centre for Entrepreneurship, to increase the quantity and range of entrepreneurship and business development training available to women beneficiaries.⁶⁵

A second lesson is about approaches to economic empowerment that are relevant in Pacific contexts. For some time now, the program has supported women in both the formal and informal economy.

⁶³ See for example: *Pacific Women* Support Unit. (2017). *Women's Economic Empowerment Synthesis Report*. *Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development*, Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

⁶⁴ Business Coalition for Women (2018) *Pacific Women Six-Monthly Progress report July – December 2018*. *Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development*, Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Six-Monthly Progress Report

⁶⁵ *Pacific Women* Support Unit. (2018). *Pacific Women Six-Monthly Progress report January – June 2018*. *Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development*, Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

This is highly relevant to the Pacific context. For example, in Papua New Guinea the Kirapim Kaikai na Maket project is enabling Tsak women to increase income by marketing their surplus production through a network of women's associations. The Creating an Entrepreneurial Ecosystem for Women project run by the Centre for International Private Enterprise, established a women's business centre in partnership with *Pacific Women* and other development partners. As a result, 514 women were trained over 2018.⁶⁶

Pacific Women has also supported research on women in formal employment, through the Do No Harm research project carried out by the Australian National University and International Women's Development Agency⁶⁷, highlighting the interconnected factors that influence control over income, balancing work and household responsibilities, and conflict and violence in the household.

An emerging area linked to economic empowerment relevant to Pacific contexts is the application of family and community-oriented approaches. A number of *Pacific Women* funded projects in Papua New Guinea, including the University of Canberra's Increasing Economic Opportunities for Women Smallholders project (see Box 3) and CARE's Coffee Industry Support Project, work with husbands and wives to change how they relate to each other, allowing women to have more control over decisions in the household. This approach is showing that norms can be changed over a short period of time and that these changes are improving livelihoods and income for the entire family. Moreover, the benefit of *Pacific Women* support to this approach is that it has enabled the sharing of information across the region and beyond. The Family Farms Teams training has expanded to new areas and encouraged other program partners and other DFAT programs in countries such as Timor-Leste to adopt similar approaches.⁶⁸

Box 3: Family Farms Team approach to economic empowerment

The Family Farm Teams project (also referred to as Family Teams) is an action research and development project. It aims to increase income through better farm business practices in which women have a significant role as decision makers. There are two complementary facets to the training delivered through the project. The 'family farm team' activities focus on encouraging women and men to take a gender equitable and planned approach to farming as a small family business. The University of Canberra team delivers this training in partnership with the local agency in each province. Additionally, 'business of farming' activities introduce farming families to a livelihoods approach, better practice agriculture, foundational business practices and financial literacy. Local Papua New Guinean agencies deliver this, to ensure that communities are connected to the resources available in their own region.

Support from *Pacific Women* has enabled a scale-up of a previous project funded by ACIAR. These included Highlands (Eastern Highlands, Janaki, and Western Highlands) from July 2015–December 2016; and Islands (Bougainville, New Ireland) from January 2017–December 2018. The areas provide contrasting settings that enabled the project team to identify solutions to local problems. These settings enable a wide range of women to be involved, including those who sell in central markets, peri-urban markets and roadside markets.

Evaluation of the Highlands project sites found most families increased their usual income by selling food and diversifying their incomes. Moreover, since participating in the project, 90 per cent reported regularly budgeting and 15.2 per cent reported saving. The evaluation of the Highlands sites also found that before participating in the training, most farmers said they did 'very little' decision making about money with their partners. Afterwards, a majority reported that they 'always' made joint decisions.

In addition to the benefits to local communities, the Family Farms Team approach is being adopted by other agencies such as in CARE Papua New Guinea and ACIAR. The University of Canberra is also undertaking research and 'ripple effect' mapping to ensure the continued scalability and sustainability of the project. In this way, the project has made significant contribution of the *Pacific Women* Country Program as well as the Australian government's support of economic empowerment in Papua New Guinea.

Finally, highly successfully initiatives funded by *Pacific Women* in Papua New Guinea (Business Coalition for Women and CARE's Coffee Industry Support Project) and Vanuatu (Vanuatu Skills Partnership), have demonstrated the value of working with industry partners and government extension workers to support improved economic outcomes for women. The UN Women Markets of Change is also adapting to working with town councils, although with variable results across the country programs. Smaller partners such as the Fiji Women's Fund and ACTIV in Vanuatu are enabling industry linkages by value-adding to the produce of smallholders and women. Funding and building the capacity of local organisations to establish linkages with government and industry, is a high impact strategy and should be part of further development for the program going forward.

⁶⁶ *Pacific Women* Support Unit. (2018). *Pacific Women in Papua New Guinea Performance Report 2018-2019*. *Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development*, Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

⁶⁷ International Women's Development Agency. (2018). *DO NO HARM Research Project Report: Women in Formal Employment Survey*. Melbourne, Victoria.

⁶⁸ Interviews with partners and Support Unit

KEY FINDING: *Pacific Women as a program and through these diverse funding modalities has made a significant contribution to knowledge and practice on economic empowerment in the Pacific context which should be a starting point for any further Australian Government support in this sector*

4.2.4 Ending Violence against Women

As noted, projects aimed at Ending Violence against Women make up most of the program portfolio. This area of support includes human rights trainings and workshops; community awareness and outreach activities; advocacy training; training for duty bearers; and male advocacy training. Of these categories, the bulk of funding is provided to community awareness and outreach activities. The program has supported diverse approaches to awareness raising and community education. For instance, the Safe Families Project in Solomon Islands is using civil society networking and community education activities to contribute to strengthened implementation of an ending family violence campaign. In Papua New Guinea, FHI 360 is using community-level mobilisers to address violence against women. At the regional level, the Uniting World's Gender Equality Theology – Institutional Transformation (GET-IT) project works through ministers in Fiji, Kiribati, Vanuatu and Solomon Islands.

Program monitoring data suggests there has been an increase in funding for partners working with duty bearers and male advocacy training. Both of these areas are a medium-term focus in the program logic.

Support provided by *Pacific Women* to Femili Papua New Guinea and the Nazareth Centre in Papua New Guinea, the Kiribati Women and Children's Support Centre (KWCS), the Tonga Women and Children's Centre, the Vanuatu Women's Centre and WUTMI in RMI provides opportunities for strengthened partnerships with duty bearers to implement legislative and policy reform (see Box 6) in addition to supporting survivors of violence. At a regional level, the Regional Rights Resources Team (RRRT) of the Pacific Community is supporting the implementation of legislative reforms. RRRT have initiated a regional working group on domestic violence legislation (11 countries have enacted relevant legislation), which meets annually to share practice around implementation of that legislation and connects people with new initiatives in the region related to ending violence against women. RRRT also works to strengthen existing national human rights policies in all Pacific island countries, with a particular focus in seven countries though support from *Pacific Women*.

Male advocacy training has also received some more support since the last evaluation. A good example is the work of FHI 360's Kisim Femili Plenin Strongim Kommuniti (strengthening the community through family planning) project in Papua New Guinea. It complements the Kommuniti Lukautim Oi Meri (communities looking out for women) project and adopts similar approaches to use community mobilisers to educate the community, family and individuals. FHI 360 facilitates men's discussion forums as part of education for families and communities. Men who are influential community leaders attend forums, which use a rights-based discussion guide to address issues such as male sexual and reproductive health, masculinity and working as equal partners with women.

An important component of the program is the support provided to build the capacity of organisations in the Pacific. Over the past six years, the program has funded gender advisers and Ending Violence against Women specialists to supplement the work plans of government ministries and Women in Development units in Fiji, Samoa, Papua New Guinea, Cook Islands, FSM, Nauru, Tonga Tuvalu and Kiribati enabling closer engagement with Pacific governments. This is discussed in further detail later in this report.

Through these different areas of support, *Pacific Women* is enabling partners to respond to the problem of violence against women on many fronts.

One obvious result is that the program is making many more individual men and women, communities and duty bearers aware of the need to prevent violence and protect survivors. The number of men and women who have directly participated in some form of violence prevention activities has grown to 792,238 since the program commenced. Part of this success is through supporting partners such as House of Sarah in Fiji, the roll out of the SASA! Faith initiative and Uniting World's GET-IT Program, in faith-based communities. The Fiji Council of Churches and House of Sarah hosted the inaugural Break the Silence initiative. Church leaders shared messages condemning violence against women on television and radio, as well as sermons that focused on ending violence against women throughout November 2016. Uniting World's Gender Equality Theology seeks to address gender

inequality through a faith-based lens at all levels of the church. This is driving engagement with male leaders, young people and mainstream institutions as church leaders often hold other positions of authority.⁶⁹ These projects address the core drivers of violence against women through community mobilisation and prevention activities and offer a more contextualised and culturally appropriate approach to behaviour change.

Evidence of more vulnerable women and girls reporting violence and accessing services can also be attributed to organisations and activities funded by *Pacific Women*. Program partners are playing key roles at the country level, in service provision as well as linking survivors to existing services (see Box 4). Partner reporting on activities at the women's centres provides evidence of women valuing the Centres for their safety and well-being. For instance, progress reporting by the Vanuatu Women's Centre shows that the number of domestic violence cases handled by the Centre almost doubled in the second year of program funding. New clients made up 61% of the cases in 2018; whereas 39% were existing clients.⁷⁰ The evidence confirms the finding of the ODE evaluation that the number of comprehensive services for survivors of violence has improved considerably and that the long-term support provided by the Australian government including through *Pacific Women* has been instrumental in this improvement.

Box 4: Crises centre and local organisations providing holistic care for survivors across the Pacific - the Nazareth Centre

The Nazareth Centre for Rehabilitation's (the Nazareth Centre) work in Bougainville is a good example of *Pacific Women* support to local organisations, which has enabled holistic care for survivors of violence against women.

The 'From Gender-Based Violence to Gender Justice and Healing Project' builds on work funded under the Government of the Netherlands' Funding Leadership and Opportunities for Women program from 2013–2015. The project is implemented by the Nazareth Centre in partnership with International Women's Development Agency. From 2015 it has been funded by *Pacific Women*.

The project aims to reduce family and sexual violence in Bougainville by addressing the root causes of gender inequality. It does this through supporting Bougainville women's human rights defenders (WHRD) to lead responses to, and prevention of, family and sexual violence with government and communities. It enables men and women to prevent family and sexual violence at community level by promoting shared power and decision making between women and men. The Nazareth Centre also runs prevention programs and raises awareness among communities, which are mainly located in rural areas. Safe house staff, women human rights defenders and male advocates have conducted 155 public awareness events and community engagement activities in 76 communities. In December 2017, the men's hub hosted the first male advocates forum for 111 male advocates in Chabai, North Bougainville. In total, the project has reached over 10,000 people.

An evaluation undertaken in 2019 found the project had exceeded almost all of its targets.⁷¹ The work of women human rights defenders and male advocates, supported by the Nazareth Centre services and programs, has led to important positive changes in several communities in the districts of Bana, Siwai, Buin, Kieta, Selau, Haku and Buka. For example, in 2017, 34 communities in North and South Bougainville elected WHRDs as community government ward members. This means that almost three quarters of the 47 community governments in North and South Bougainville now include WHRDs. In addition, 16 male advocates became ward members. This suggests that training as WHRDs and male advocates helps enable women and men to move into other spaces where they can be proactive leaders, participate in decision making and act as change agents to address family and sexual violence and other forms of violence.

Owing to the success of the project, it has been extended to 2022.

The in-country consultations also revealed partners' increased ability to respond rapidly to protect women and children during natural disasters. The Vanuatu Women's Centre for instance, was at the forefront of the provision of services during the Ambae Volcano.

Finally, disability inclusion strategies are improving and there has been some progress among *Pacific Women* partners, especially in Papua New Guinea, in terms of address understanding child protection legislation and the implications of this for VAW programming.

KEY FINDING: *The long-term support provided by Pacific Women has contributed an increase in comprehensive services for survivors of violence*

In reflecting on the gains that are being made and results achieved by *Pacific Women* partners, the following challenges were identified in the program reports and through in country consultations.

⁶⁹ For instance, the Presbyterian Churches Union in Vanuatu which receives support through GET-IT has set up a youth desks which is working to promote gender equality to young people in the congregations.

⁷⁰ Vanuatu Women's Centre. (2019). Vanuatu Women's Centre Program Against Violence Against Women Progress Report 3. July 2017 – October 2018. Port Vila, Vanuatu.

⁷¹ Braun, A. (2018). *From Gender Based Violence to Gender Justice Healing – Phase 1 Evaluation Report*. Nazareth Centre for Rehabilitation and International Women's Development Agency.

Firstly, there are challenges around geographical reach. Respondents in both Tuvalu and Kiribati reported on the challenges of providing sustained protection and outreach services for women and children on outer islands. Kiribati has explored several creative options, including training and capacity development for 200+ outer island police officers, special constables and village wardens, but partners continue to identify the need for more outreach to isolated communities and locations.

Secondly, it is evident that as demand grows, the gaps and weaknesses in policy and program delivery by other service providers become more apparent. Several partner reports note the lack of resourcing – for instance, among police forces, to enforce laws and health services to identify and support women at risk of violence. Partners are navigating these challenges by building an increasing number of male advocates within the service providers. However, the evaluation finds that to have a sustained impact, more collaboration between NGOs, government departments and service providers is required. Support of the private sector would also be beneficial.

Respondents also noted that while there has been an observable increase in awareness about violence, it is less clear what further steps are required to translate this into behaviour change. The change pathway for this process is being built by a few of the *Pacific Women* supported activities and this should be more widely promoted and shared.

KEY FINDING: *As demand grows the gaps and weaknesses in policy and program delivery by service providers become more apparent. Local knowledge, expertise and strengthened partnerships need to be harnessed to address these gaps.*

Finally, there is scope to build on the work of partners addressing violence against children. Several countries have made progress on child protection legislation and policy implementation through the UNICEF Child Protection Program. However, program progress reporting suggests that progress on implementing legislative reforms can be exceedingly slow. The ODE Evaluation also found Australia's support for violence against children programming could take a more coordinated, evidence-based approach to identify areas of intersection with child protection at local, national and regional levels. The view of *Pacific Women* partners is that this is due to a lack of ownership and accountability for gender mainstreaming and child rights in most Pacific island countries. By collaborating with senior public servants and gradually building networks of informed and gender-sensitive bureaucrats, some *Pacific Women* partners are making a slow progress.

Looking to the future, based on the views of respondents and the evidence of progress for change, the work to address violence against women and children should remain central to Australia's support for gender equality in the Pacific. Moreover, there are opportunities to further build an evidence base about the prevalence, types and drivers for violence against women and girls and evidence about the value of local knowledge and expertise to create contextually relevant solutions. In the current funding environment with the Pacific Partnership to End Violence against Women and the Spotlight Initiative, poised for take-off, linking to this evidence base will be critical for impact and sustainability.

KEY FINDING: *Pacific Women has supported the development of considerable evidence about prevalence and drivers for violence against women and girls alongside important experience in supporting the growth of local solutions. This evidence is important to promote sustainable and relevant programs being developed into the future.*

4.2.5 Enhancing agency

Forty one projects or 24 percent of the total number of projects funded through *Pacific Women* specifically address Enhancing Agency. In addition, many *Pacific Women* activities address women's agency as part of their work, rather than as a stand-alone activity or component of an activity. Moreover, the Papua New Guinea Country Program as noted earlier, measures progress in terms of the sharing of knowledge and information rather than enhancing agency.

Enhancing Agency activities include building stronger coalitions to promote gender equality, targeting legislative reform, mainstreaming gender, and organisational strengthening and research. The major trend since 2015-16 has been the growth in support to building stronger coalitions, owing to the establishment of the Fiji Women's Fund and continuation of support to the We Rise Coalition, also in Fiji. The Australian government through *Pacific Women* is one of the donors supporting the Shifting

the Power Coalition, to support women to lead emergency response and take power back into their own hands – ensuring disaster response addresses women’s needs.⁷²

The impacts of Enhancing Agency work are best documented in Fiji where partners are recording progress towards this outcome. Evaluative reporting produced by the Fiji Women’s Fund and We Rise Coalition suggest that these mechanisms do drive Pacific ownership. The We Rise Mid-term Evaluation Report for instance, suggests that the We Rise Coalition has contributed to increased engagement between civil society and women’s human rights groups and governments at the national level. The Coalition also enables women at the local level to link with national and international level policy dialogue.⁷³ The implementation of the first round of Fiji Women’s Fund grants was also a significant milestone for enhancing agency in the Fijian national context (see Box 5).

Box 5: Fiji Women’s Fund

The Fiji Women’s Fund (The Fund) is an innovative activity under *Pacific Women*, which provides targeted grants and capacity building support to women’s groups in Fiji in order to enhance and expand their work on women’s empowerment and gender equality. One of the outcomes of The Fund is to transition to an independent local entity with secured resourcing from other donors, the private sector and local philanthropy by June 2022.

Set against growing evidence that supporting women’s organisations and the women’s movement is the most effective way to achieve gender equality, the Fund provides an opportunity for the Australian government to support smaller civil society organisations directly. Moreover, through different mechanisms of support, the Fund has extended program reach considerably in rural and remote areas.

The Fund uses two mechanisms to reach women. The first is through partnerships with organisations that work in rural and remote areas or support networks of otherwise hard to reach women. The second is direct financial and non-financial assistance to women’s groups, organisations and networks in Fiji to expand and enhance their work on women’s empowerment and gender equality. Alongside this, the Fund contributes to key Fiji Government strategies on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, including the National Women’s Plan of Action and the National Gender Policy. In 2018, the Fund began supporting the work of women living in rural and remote locations and those that are marginalised. An important initiative in 2018 was the Steering Committee decision that the Fund would allocate 10 per cent of its annual grant funding to organisations supporting people with disabilities.

In 2018, through these activities, the Fund reached 7,869 people including 5,321 women, 2,481 men, and 67 representatives of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning, and intersex (LGBTQI) community. Of the total people reached, 25 women and 14 men are living with disabilities.

Pacific Women is also contributing to movement building activity and the strengthening of networks and coalitions in other countries (as explored later in this report). Progress reporting suggests there is some movement-building activity occurring in the North Pacific, including civil society organisations working with government.⁷⁴ *Pacific Women* supports key civil society institutions such as Aia Mwaea Ainen Kiribati (AMAK) in Kiribati. The program funded a review of AMAK and enabled the recruitment of volunteer support to revitalise the organisation. AMAK has since regained its status as a coordinating body for gender equality and women’s groups. AMAK staff have had input into the draft Kiribati Gender Equality and Women’s Development Policy and the Kiribati Country Plan 2020-2022.

At the same time, progress reporting suggests that translating legislative changes into concrete actions remains challenging. The extent to which partners are equipped to engage with public and private institutions and push for legislative reform varies across countries. *Pacific Women* does support key civil society institutions such as AMAK in Kiribati, Women and Children Crises Center in Tonga and the We Rise Coalition in Fiji, which are well positioned to advocate for change. *Pacific Women* is also supporting key civil society organisations, working on ending violence against women and these organisations, as discussed earlier, are hold important relationships with governments. However, recent analysis suggests that government capacity to implement legislative reform continues to be a major barrier to progress.⁷⁵

Moving forward, dialogue at the MEL Review Workshop, some of the country level learning events and more recently during the in-country consultations for the evaluation, suggest that program partners are more likely to understand and work towards promoting women’s agency as a cross-cutting theme rather than a definite goal or activity. The strong message that came through the evaluation feedback sessions was that *Pacific Women* should continue to support activity to increase

⁷² For further details see: <https://actionaid.org.au/programs/shifting-the-power-coalition/>

⁷³ Winterford, K. and Laqeretabua, A. (2019). *Mid-term evaluation of the Strengthening Feminist Coalitions and Partnership for Gender Equality: We Rise Phase 2 Project*. UTS. Sydney, NSW.

⁷⁴ Dwyer, M. (2018). *End of service report to Pacific Women: Social Development Program North Pacific Gender Equality Adviser*. Pacific Women Support Unit. Suva, Fiji.

⁷⁵ Pacific Community (2019), *Pacific Regional Beijing +25*, Final Draft, October

women's agency as part of work towards the areas of leadership and decision making, economic empowerment and ending violence against women.

KEY FINDING: *In the Pacific context, enhancing agency is understood as a long-term process within a wider approach to change. It requires multiple strategies for change including coalition building and political engagement, but these should be woven through other work.*

4.3 Pacific Island context and culture

The *Pacific Women* design has a strong focus on context and culture. A core program assumption is that for the long term sustainability of program outcomes, activities should align as far as possible with local context and build on the strengths of local culture and local knowledge.

When the program commenced, this translated into the use of local expertise where possible in the design, monitoring and evaluation of funded activities. It was also behind the establishment of the *Pacific Women* Advisory Board which is comprised of eminent leaders from the Pacific islands. The program also mobilises specialist expertise through its gender, monitoring and evaluation, communications and research panels, many of whom are Pacific women. The initial program MELF lay emphasis on the key principles which would drive Pacific development by Pacific women and the subsequent revision emphasizes contextually relevant Ending Violence against Women strategies. An accompanying document the *Pacific Women* Toolkit for Monitoring and Evaluation Data Collection⁷⁶ includes participatory methods to encourage program stakeholders to involve Pacific women in the design, monitoring and reporting of funded activities.

Initially, these mechanisms, along with the broad remit of the program, meant that the program resources could be flexibly deployed. The Three-Year Evaluation report found that the program was “responding flexibly to cultural variation in the region and different levels of engagement by government”.⁷⁷ Conversely, the country planning process, a core mechanism for encouraging local ownership, is, as discussed later in this report, falling short of expectations.

More recently, other program mechanisms such as the *Pacific Women* Advisory Board, *Pacific Women* Advisory Group on Research, funding modalities such as the Fiji Women's Fund, and convening roles played by program stakeholders, have provided more opportunities for Pacific women leadership of the program. The *Pacific Women* Research Strategy 2017–2022 is informed by ongoing research at regional and country levels and by a foundational scoping study on gender research in the Pacific. A key objective of the Strategy is to: “support gender research that is considered, contextually relevant and informs *Pacific Women* programming”.⁷⁸ Research priorities are developed in collaboration with Pacific gender researchers and research partners.

Funding modalities such as the Fiji Women's Fund have contributed to program flexibility and its response to local priorities, by enabling support to smaller, local organisations. In addition to catering to diverse cohorts and population sub-groups, many of these organisations have organisational structures that enable rapid response. For instance, *Pacific Women* partners in Fiji, Tonga and Vanuatu were at the forefront of disaster relief and recovery efforts during Cyclone Gita, Cyclone Pam and the Ambae volcano eruption in Vanuatu. Moreover, as noted elsewhere in this report, this support has enabled the reinstatement and organisational strengthening of women's organisations that are able to communicate culturally appropriate approaches to women's empowerment. WUTMI's advocacy work in RMI for instance, is about using the values of traditional Marshallese culture as a prevention tool and engaging both men and women in this conversation.⁷⁹ House of Sarah engages men in conversations on household division of labour and domestic violence through Bible study activities. Elsewhere, support has enabled smaller civil society organisations to extend their reach and have a voice in larger networks for gender equality and social inclusion. Thus, the evaluation confirms

⁷⁶ Cardno Emerging Markets. (2017). *Toolkit for Monitoring and Evaluation Data Collection. Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development*. Australian Government Department for Foreign Affairs and Trade. Canberra, ACT.

⁷⁷ *Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development, Three-Year Evaluation*, p. 7.

⁷⁸ *Pacific Women* Support Unit. (2018). *Research Strategy Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development*. Australian Government Department for Foreign Affairs and Trade. Canberra, ACT. p. 3.

⁷⁹ Partner progress reporting

that channelling of support through local organisations including women's organisations, has enabled the program to respond to diverse and culturally specific needs of women.

KEY FINDING: *The evaluation confirms that channelling of support through local organisations including women's organisations, has enabled the program to respond to diverse and culturally specific needs of women. Program mechanisms such as the Pacific Women Advisory Council and Pacific Women Research Strategy also provide opportunities for Pacific women leadership of the program.*

As a result of these efforts, the evaluation finds that over time the program is giving voice and mobilising support for a Pacific perspective on several fronts. This is evidenced in partners sending local women and women leaders to represent their interests in national, regional and even international fora. Young women leaders from CARE Vanuatu's Gender Equality Together project attended a regional event – the Pacific Feminist Forum. Women leaders from the We Rise Coalition have previously attended national and international meetings on gender equality. Added to this are the numerous informal and issue-based learning and networking groups forming through *Pacific Women*. As discussed earlier, the Support Unit is playing a convenor role in the area of women's economic empowerment. Evidence of issue-based learning and networking on the need of adolescent Pacific girls is also emerging through the recently commenced Pacific Girl project.⁸⁰

The Papua New Guinea Annual Learning Forum is an outstanding example of the program playing a convenor role by bringing together the full range of donor, government and civil society stakeholders involved in the program itself (see Box 7). The Forum is now attended by a range of civil society organisation, including those that do not receive Australian aid support, making actors more aware of each other's work, and creating additional synergies.⁸¹ Given the Papua New Guinea Country Program is large, and comparatively well-resourced, the challenge now for *Pacific Women* is to develop convening spaces and modalities that work in smaller country program contexts.

Also significant is growing evidence in program documentation that Pacific women value and rely on the many 'spaces' created and supported by *Pacific Women*, for their safety and well-being. This includes for example, the support provided to the women's centres in Fiji, Kiribati, Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu; and the revitalisation of network organisations such as AMAK. Ongoing training and capacity building support by *Pacific Women* also has a similar result. For example, several civil society participants in CARE Vanuatu's Gender Seminar Series found the sessions provided a safe space to discuss challenging issues.⁸²

Looking to the future, these results highlight the potential for *Pacific Women* to strategically influence gender equality programming that is based in localised knowledge and experience. With developments such as The Spotlight Initiative, new donor programs are being introduced into the Pacific, especially focused on addressing violence against women and children and support to women's leadership. *Pacific Women* is able to bring its experience of work with and through local organisations and local systems into the implementation of these new programs. It can also point to the need for external programs to be adapted to and shaped by local context and conditions. These and other lessons ought to be widely shared in order to maximize the value of the new resources being leveraged for women in the Pacific.

KEY FINDING: *Over time the program is giving voice and mobilising support for a Pacific perspective on several fronts. Pacific women value and rely on the many 'spaces' created and supported by Pacific Women, for their safety and well-being. These results highlight the potential for Pacific Women to strategically influence new gender equality programming by drawing on localised knowledge and experience.*

⁸⁰ In-country consultations (Vanuatu) and interviews with the Support Unit.

⁸¹ Without exception, PNG partners interviewed spoke of the benefits of the Annual Learning Forum.

⁸² Partner progress reporting

4.4 Pacific Women Modality

Alongside assessment of achievements, this evaluation was directed to consider how the modality of *Pacific Women* has supported the progress towards program outcomes.

Feedback from the respondent interviews suggests that a core consideration for the program modality is its size and name.

The large scale of the program is both a major strength and creates various challenges. The program capacity to address several outcome areas which impact on the development opportunities for women and girls is a particular strength. Although there is need for more work to join up regional and bilateral activities in some locations, where programs have expanded to work on several outcome areas, or where different programs and actors have collaborated across outcome areas, the impact for women and girls has increased and is more likely to be sustained. This would not have been possible through a program which focused only on one outcome or a fewer number of countries.

The size of the program has also enabled learning, which in turn has been adapted into new activities and new locations. This adaptive and responsive approach is one which has enabled evolution of the program over time, enabling it to respond to some of the new challenges in the Pacific context.

Finally, the long term nature of the program has ensured consistent support to partner organisations, enabling them to develop appropriate and effective services, as identified in earlier sections of this report. Overall the size of the program has allowed for a multifaceted response to what is a complex set of development issues.

Conversely the size of the program makes it hard for people in the region to either fully understand its operations or to fully appreciate its range of activities. The name also confuses some people. While virtually all respondents to this evaluation were clear their funding support came from Australia, some respondents had no idea that *Pacific Women* was the program providing the resources to their organisation or department. Respondents to this review variously identified DFAT Canberra, DFAT at Posts, DFAT in Fiji and the Support Unit as managing the program. The size of the program therefore mitigates against engagement with some program recipients and makes it hard for external groups such as women's organisations to understand how they can engage with and shape the program.

The other related feature of the modality which impacts its support for program outcomes, is the complexity of its management structure. While the Support Unit is the most visible part of the *Pacific Women* structure and one which has been subject to review and considerable examination⁸³, its main role is to provide technical and logistical support to DFAT and to program partners. *Pacific Women* is managed by DFAT in Canberra, in cooperation with DFAT Pacific Regional Program in Fiji and nine other DFAT Pacific Country Posts. In some situations, large external organisations such as the UN agencies, International Finance Institutions and other donors, introduce their own management structures and processes through their specific but often large-scale activities. This complexity creates certain challenges. In practice there are often several levels of approval and relationships to negotiate. The most common complaint from evaluation respondents was that they were not sure who they should talk to, in order to ensure ongoing understanding of and support for their particular activity.

The complex management structure also makes it difficult to identify who has the power to make decisions and support change or new ideas within program. The program has worked best in contexts such as Papua New Guinea, where the Papua New Guinea sub-office staff are responsible for support to technical aspects of program delivery and there is close engagement of the DFAT Post

⁸³ An evaluation of the Support Unit found that operational services provided have largely either met or exceeded the items listed in the Head Contract and Annual Work Plans, albeit the quality of the services provided have not always met expectations. Operational Support is a key strength being provided by the Support Unit, but strategic policy advice has yet to be seen by DFAT as similarly effective. (Smith, M. & Tabualevu, M. (2017), *Final Report Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development Evaluation*, Strategic Development Group Pty Ltd.)

A gender focal point survey was conducted in July 2018 and several countries requested more in-country support, which the Support Unit has responded to. Two annual workshops for Gender Focal Points have been held. The Support Unit is supporting the County Planning and review processes in several countries. Recent review by the Gender Focal Points indicates they are satisfied with the level of support received from the Support Unit.

including the Gender Focal Points and other sectoral programs, on gender policy and mainstreaming approaches. As with the Annual Learning Forum in Papua New Guinea (discussed earlier in the report), this provides an opportunity for DFAT to utilise program networks as a source of learning for the aid program, and to advance gender equality at a national level, engaging with a range of stakeholders including those that do not receive *Pacific Women* funding.

It appears that the program management complexity has grown over several years of operation and needs to be updated going forward. The program approach is an important strength - working across several dimensions of women's lives with a wide range of organisations over the long term provides for effective responses to complex development issues. If the Australian Government intends to maintain this high quality response to women's empowerment and gender equality in the Pacific it will continue to require a comprehensive investment that provides for connection and learning across work areas. On the other hand, management structures and implementation arrangements should be as efficient and streamlined as possible and designed to support the further evolution of program. DFAT's experience with other regional programs in the Pacific and elsewhere, provides possible models from such development.⁸⁴ There is likely a need for some new development of the investment to draw on the best of these new practices.

KEY FINDING: The program capacity to address several outcome areas, share learning and provide long term consistent support for partners is a strength of the investment and the modality and should be maintained going forward. However, the current management and implementation arrangements are confusing to some people and to some degree mitigate against partner engagement. Management structures have grown with the program and it is now time to reconsider these and evolve new approaches to program management.

The country planning process, devised to support local ownership and ensure *Pacific Women* supported work in countries reflects local context and the needs of local stakeholders, has been widely criticised by respondents. In-country consultation and distance interviews suggested that there is a lack of clarity about the audience of country plans, the degree of independence of the review and planning process and the long-term changes sought. For example, in Kiribati, *Pacific Women* partners indicated they had limited opportunities to meet and share information, and so lacked an understanding of how the different activities in the plan related to each other. Several regional organisations reported that they had not been consulted about country plans, despite significant activities within a particular country, leading to a sometimes incorrect understanding of the way their activities could integrate with bilateral funded projects. Other partners report being consulted, but saw little reflection of their work, and that of other organisations in their country, in the final plans.

It was reported to the evaluation team that not all country plans are endorsed by Pacific island governments, and few are fully endorsed by women's organisations in countries.

In the larger, better resourced program countries (for example, Fiji and Papua New Guinea), there have been improvements in terms of the level of consultation; and the extent to which plans build on the perspective of local stakeholders.⁸⁵ However, in the countries under focus for this evaluation at least, these processes have not always engaged the national women's machinery. For example, senior women in the Fiji Government indicated familiarity with the Fiji Women's Fund goals but limited knowledge of *Pacific Women*.

In the smaller *Pacific Women* countries, the extent of consultation through country program planning or the country plan review processes has been much less. Many of the country program reviews have

⁸⁴ The Australia Pacific Climate Partnership and the Australian support for disability are DFAT regional programs that utilise different but effective models of technical and logistical support for change in complex development issues across the Pacific region. The Australia Pacific Training Coalition program provides a model of cooperation between Australia and Pacific country and regional contexts where responsibility for program mentation and accountability is increasingly shared. Further away the DFAT support for gender equality in Indonesia is currently being redesigned in a co design process with women's organisations and the Government of Indonesia. It is expected to promote a shared sense of control over the program direction and is expected to increase the accountability of all stakeholders for program outcomes.

⁸⁵ For instance, the PNG Country Program recently undertook a two-phase workshop process to consult with stakeholders in Port Moresby as well as Bougainville, and then validate the scope and direction of its Third Country Program Plan with a group of key stakeholders, including government.

In Fiji, a consultative Country Program Review followed by two consecutive Annual Program Reviews have been held, which engage a wide range of program partners to share and reflect on learning from program implementation.

been conducted by *Pacific Women* Support Unit staff and consultants and the extent of involvement by gender advisers at DFAT Posts, potential new partners, other donors and country level gender equality advocates is variable. In some countries, factors such as limited resourcing (for example, in Kiribati) or the lack of new funding (in Vanuatu) have further constrained the process. As a result, while the country plans provide a useful operational framework for the program, their strategic potential to surface solutions encourage local ownership, with buy in and support of national governments, is underutilised.

Respondents suggested that ideally country plans should align with national development and gender equality plans and also reflect the vision and strategic intent of major women's organisations and their members. They could be utilised to reflect a joint strategic intent for development of women and girls in that location and identify the various contributions from all stakeholders. This way the plans would provide a basis for accountability and for regular and public assessment of progress towards changing condition for women and girls. This approach would lift the country plans from being simply documents for DFAT funding arrangements, to reflect wider intent or shared responsibility for change as envisaged by the original *Pacific Women* design. This approach would be in line with that adopted by other large, DFAT Pacific regional programs that are seeking a shared or partnership approach to change around major issues in the Pacific.⁸⁶ It may also be the basis for redevelopment of the program management and operations structure as suggested above.

Moreover, with the exception of the Papua New Guinea Country Plan, existing country plans do not address potential opportunities and synergies required between DFAT and other donors including the UN agencies. In the current rapidly changing funding environment, with programs like the Pacific Partnership to End Violence against Women and Girls and the Spotlight Initiative rolling out in the Pacific, the evidence suggests the timing is right for some rationalization of support provided by *Pacific Women*. As put to the evaluation team by one stakeholder: "as DFAT's flagship program for gender equality, the program really needs to be 'out there' identifying gaps, working towards synergies..."

KEY FINDING: *In many countries Pacific Women is not sufficiently linked into national-level dialogue on gender equality and women's empowerment. While Pacific Women Country Plans provide a useful operational framework for the program, their strategic potential to surface solutions, encourage local ownership, with buy in and support of national governments is underutilised.*

⁸⁶ The Australia Pacific Training Coalition program utilises a country planning model where all stakeholders (from government, private sector, educational institutions, civil society and training institutions) come together to identify strategic direction and intent, building mutual accountability for change.

5 Findings: How can the program maximise progress and sustainability in the last three years of implementation?

5.1 Capacity building of women, women's organisations and networks

As noted previously, a central theme in the *Pacific Women* design is the idea that gender equality and women's empowerment programs need to support Pacific women to direct their own development. The design consultations and design document highlighted the considerable diversity in women's lives across the Pacific; and noted that some Pacific women's networks had struggled to work cooperatively. Building on this, the design suggested there was a role for *Pacific Women* to convene networks in the Pacific and promote cooperation between existing and new networks. As a result, several of the initial Country Plans such as in Fiji, allocated resourcing to women's organisations and networks, and this type of support has grown steadily through the second phase of the program.

The Three-Year Evaluation found that while the capacity support through *Pacific Women* was appreciated by partners, more precision was required in terms of the kind of support that was required in different contexts. This prompted development of a Capacity Building Strategy in 2016, which addressed the capacity needs of key target groups to build the country and regional level capacity required to achieve program goals and objectives.⁸⁷ The Capacity Building Strategy has now been mainstreamed into all Support Unit managed activities and plans. A capacity building fund that was originally intended to support new and innovative ideas (but had not been widely drawn upon) has been absorbed into the broader programming to support attention to capacity development in all areas of work. Interviews with programs stakeholders suggest that while the Capacity Development Strategy needs to be further resourced and operationalised, some progress has been made. There is a positive move towards contracting local advisers and building in capacity development and institutional strengthening to adviser terms of reference.

At the activity level, the program is working through partners to build the capacity of individual women leaders, including younger women. These activities cut across the program outcomes discussed earlier. Examples include the financial literacy and leadership skills training occurring across the program, and young women's leadership projects in Fiji, Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu.

Core funding of women's organisations to address organisational strengthening as well as gaps in program management and service delivery is another important program mechanism. The best example here is the program's support to Women United Together (WUTMI) in RMI - a civil society organisation that has been a key champion of women's rights and empowerment over the last 20 years (see Box 6). The program's contribution to the set up and implementation of the Fiji Women's Fund is another example of core funding progressing gender equality in the Pacific.

Box 6: Core funding to Women United Together (WUTMI)

In the Republic of the Marshall Islands, *Pacific Women* partners with Women United Together Marshall Islands (WUTMI) to support and strengthen Marshallese women and families. WUTMI is an established women's non-government organisation that works across domestic violence, legislative change, women's economic empowerment and women's leadership.

The 2018 review of the country program found that the program's support to WUTMI had helped to fill a gap in services to women and girls in RMI. This included support to establish *Weto in Mour* (meaning 'a place for life') in 2016, the county's first centre to support women and children survivors of violence. *Weto in Mour* provides psychosocial support for survivors of violence and works to improve referral systems between service providers. As well as supporting women in the capital Majuro, WUTMI staff have delivered numerous community education workshops in the atolls of Arno, Ebeye and Jaluit. They also facilitated a session on the impact of violence against women for community judges; and hosted events during the 16 Days of Activism in 2017.

Partners and Support Unit reflections suggest that a key factor in WUTMI's success has been the investment by *Pacific Women* in organisational strengthening for WUTMI. This includes supporting a staff study tour, assisting WUTMI staff to review and assess their strategic plan and financial training for the Finance Officer and the *Weto in Mour* Coordinator.

A more recent strategy to build the capacity of Pacific women and women's organisation is the specialist advice and technical support provided by the Support Unit and Papua New Guinea sub-office. This includes for example, Support Unit staff working with partners to design activities in line

⁸⁷Information taken from Support Unit interviews.

with program objectives, or the funding for Monitoring and Evaluation Advisers for the larger country programs in Fiji and Papua New Guinea. The Papua New Guinea sub-office provides design, monitoring and evaluation assistance to partners. This team also supports partners through a three day Annual Learning Workshop, and Lunch and Learn Sessions.

Respondents noted that, notwithstanding the progress being made in the larger Pacific countries, it is far more challenging to understand how to extend capacity development opportunities to women's groups in smaller atoll countries. Few large organisations such as International NGOs and regional organisations choose to work in these countries and communication and contact with women's groups is more difficult, especially in outer islands and remote communities. Respondents also noted however that in many of these societies there are systems of communication and passing of wisdom and information between women and different groups which could be harnessed for further development of those groups. This suggests the need for ongoing development of the capacity building approach of *Pacific Women* with much more attention to approaches which suit small island contexts.

One evident outcome of program mechanisms and strategies to invest in capacity building and strengthen women's organisations and networks in the Pacific, is the impact on program reach. The diversification in relationships and potential for *Pacific Women* to play a convenor role in gender equality programming and advocacy efforts continues to grow. In addition to the expansion in the program's outreach to younger women and girls (noted at the time of the Three Year Evaluation), program partners are engaging with people living with disabilities and disabled people's organisations. Most recently, *Pacific Women* through the Fiji Women's Fund has contacted three new network organisations Ageing with Empowerment and Dignity, the Deaf Women's Association of FDPF and Survival Advocacy Network.

There has also been definite progress in terms of the organisational capacity and standing of key civil society institutions such as AMAK in Kiribati, the Business Coalition for Women in Papua New Guinea, the Tonga Women and Children's Crisis centre, We Rise Coalition in Fiji, and WUTMI in RMI. As noted elsewhere in this report, in Kiribati, AMAK was recognised in the national Gender Policy. In Papua New Guinea, the Business Coalition for Women has influenced private sector workplace policies. Partner reporting suggests that the core funding and capacity building assistance is appreciated by partners and lessons and technical expertise gained from *Pacific Women* funded activities are often applied more broadly across the organisations.

An emerging impact of the capacity building support – specifically to faith-based groups, is that it has contributed to further capacity building and organisational strengthening within those communities. This is most evident in Fiji, Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu. In Fiji, the program supports House of Sarah, which is delivering an adaptation of the SASA! Faith project, focusing on mobilising faith communities. Resourcing and capacity building support to House of Sarah has enabled delivery of the first phase of SASA! Faith in three Anglican communities in Fiji. In Papua New Guinea, a SASA! Faith pilot is being undertaken by Population Services International in the National Capital District and West Sepik, Papua New Guinea. In Vanuatu, the Vanuatu Women's Centre is partnering with faith-based organisations including the Seventh-day Adventist Church and Adventist Development Relief Agency. This has resulted in a new training partnership. At the regional level, support to the Gender Equality Theology – Institutional Transformation (GET-IT) project has led to recruiting gender equality ministers in Fiji, Kiribati, Vanuatu and Solomon Islands and action on child protection. The combined experience of faith-based partners suggests that capacity building support along with targeted approaches is working well to communicate and engage with both women and men. This involves working through pilots or targeting specific communities where there is an enabling environment or there are existing advocates for change.

KEY FINDING: *The program is contributing to building the capacity of individual women and men, and some progress has been made in terms of the organisational capacity and standing of key civil society institutions, including faith-based institutions in Fiji, Kiribati, Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu and RMI.*

The program is also indirectly supporting the advocacy activities of existing and emergent networks of women's organisations and other civil society actors. At the country level, in RMI, WUTMI has played a coordinating role in the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence campaign, including

hosting meetings with participating public and private organisations at WUTMI's counselling centre. In Vanuatu, CARE has continued to strengthen relationships with organisations working on violence prevention at the national level. CARE coordinated the 16 Days of Activism campaign in Vanuatu.

The issue that is unclear in the documentation and was raised in validation workshops in Kiribati and Vanuatu, is the role for *Pacific Women* in terms of building the capacity of individuals and groups to engage with national governments, industry and other services providers. In-country consultations in Kiribati suggested that there are entrenched views around women's roles which are limiting engagement from authorities. Respondents commented on the perception amongst both men and women in the main islands, that Family Peace Act 2014 is for women, and initiatives such as Respectful Relationships, Strengthening Peaceful Villages are 'changing their culture'. They suggested that these attitudes pose further challenges for engagement and outreach (of Judiciary, police, health, social welfare, education) to remote communities and outer islands. Tonga respondents report decreasing space for public discussion about development for women. The recent review of the Solomon Islands country plan indicated that more support was required to enable women's organisations to effectively engage with and influence government.

Partners feel there is a role for the program and Support Unit to convene dialogue across government and civil society. During in-country consultation in Vanuatu, partners commented on the challenges involved in translating legislative changes into concrete actions. They noted that there is limited support from donor funded programs to fund this. Conversely in Fiji, the location of the Support Unit and regional programs has meant that there are more opportunities for dialogue, sharing of experiences and informal capacity building, although upward accountability and reporting channels some resources away from the Pacific level dialogue. Thus, the extent to which partners are equipped to engage with public and private institutions and push for legislative reform varies across countries and capacities and this needs to be addressed in the final phase of the program.

KEY FINDING: *The role for Pacific Women in terms of building the capacity of individuals and groups to engage with national governments, industry and other services providers is expanding, but needs strategic leadership in Pacific contexts.*

5.2 Influence on DFAT policy and programs

At the time of the Three-Year Evaluation, *Pacific Women's* high profile and flagship status were perceived by several stakeholders to generate support within DFAT for gender equality programming. Subsequently, *Pacific Women's* main modality has been to fund or co-fund bilateral and regional Australian aid initiatives. The extent to which this translates into the program influencing or leveraging Australian government support for gender equality and women's empowerment, varies across countries and regional programs.

There are some clear examples of positive influence in some countries. In Papua New Guinea, *Pacific Women* Support Unit works closely with other Australian government programs. There is also regular communication and coordination between the Papua New Guinea sub-office and DFAT staff involved in gender. Learning initiatives supported by the *Pacific Women* Support Unit sub-office in Papua New Guinea have demonstrated the convening potential of the program, engaging with an audience beyond the program's funded partners (see Box 7).

Box 7: Annual Learning Forums Papua New Guinea

In Papua New Guinea, regular Annual Learning Forums have been convened and funded through *Pacific Women*. The Forum's form part of the country program strategy to enhance knowledge and sharing of evidence to inform gender policy and practice. They are also an opportunity for implementing partners and other stakeholders to meet and engage in meaningful discussions, to present their research, share their experiences and to learn from each other.

Over the past five years, the scope of the Annual Learning Forum has grown considerably demonstrating the convening potential of the program. The 2019 Annual Learning Forum was attended by close to 300 participants from government and civil society. This included *Pacific Women* partners but also other researchers and community based organisations working on gender equality and women's empowerment.

The benefit of the Forum was captured by one attendee:

'It is at this forum that women and our grassroots, our NGOs, come and they listen. They get the information, they get the knowledge and then they go out and they start to talk, to conduct awareness in their small programs, in their own space,' said Dr. Eric Kwa, Secretary and Chief Executive Officer of the Constitutional and Law Reform Commission, who presented a keynote address on the second day of the workshop. 'It's about the community taking ownership of the law and changing it.'

The vehicle is through these individuals, through these NGOs, through these development partners who have come forward and want to support the different organisations. By supporting these organisations, we are actually implementing the law.'

In Tonga, the Post meets as a whole staff once a week which provides opportunity for the Gender Focal Point to support mainstreaming of gender into all activities. In this location, where many projects are undertaken with other donors, this has in turn increased attention to gender issues throughout the work of other donors, with DFAT reportedly becoming the 'go to' donor for gender.

At the regional level, *Pacific Women* has invested in advisory support to DFAT economic programs across the region, seeing a subsequent increase in the quality of those programs and the increased attention to the different experiences and needs of men and women.

There was consistent feedback that increased technical support from *Pacific Women*, managed through the Support Unit, is valued by DFAT Posts and is an area of work which could be expanded to ensure increased attention to gender in all DFAT activities. In most countries however, the program (that is the Support Unit and the relevant DFAT management) operates mainly as a funding mechanism for gender related activities. Partners appreciate the volume and long-term support provided through *Pacific Women* and this makes it an asset to Australia's aid partnerships. However, with the exception of the Papua New Guinea Country Program, *Pacific Women* supported activities are not always visible or linked in to DFAT country policy and sector level programming. This runs the risk of unclear communications with Government partners. As noted earlier, while a consultative Country Program Review followed by two consecutive Annual Program Reviews have been held in Fiji, these processes have not fully engaged with Fiji Department of Women. In Vanuatu, there is limited engagement between staff in the Support Unit and at Post, on the program goals or rapidly changing country context.

In addition to the Papua New Guinea Country Program experiences, there are useful lessons that can be learnt from existing bilaterally funded programs that are making significant contributions to the priorities of national governments. For example, the Vanuatu Skills Partnership (VSP) is a shared investment between the Governments of Australia and Vanuatu in the country's training and skills development sector. The program supports skills centres under the Vanuatu Ministry of Education. These centres act as brokers between demand and supply – contracting local training providers and industry coaches and providing opportunities for social inclusion amongst the workforce. A recent study found VSP has used its own political agency in highly effective ways to foster local leadership and build a sense of political community in an emerging sector.⁸⁸

KEY FINDING: The rapidly changing context for gender empowerment programming encourages closer examination of this split between strategic and technical roles held by the DFAT in Canberra, at Post and in the Support Unit. The program has worked best to leverage DFAT policy and programming in contexts such as Papua New Guinea, where Support Unit staff while responsible for technical aspects of program delivery, are working closely with DFAT Posts including the Gender Focal Points and other sectoral programs, on gender policy and mainstreaming approaches and collaboration with Government and in-country partners.

Finally, several respondents pointed to the emerging regional priorities of climate change and security, closely followed by economic development. It was suggested that alongside specific activities that address the needs of women, *Pacific Women* should also be supporting further attention to gender and women's experience in these significant issues. That is, a balance between specific and mainstreamed approaches to promotion of gender, with increased attention to gender in programs that address core regional activities.

⁸⁸ Barbara, J. (2018). *Thinking and working politically in the Vanuatu skills sector: supporting local leadership and building political constituency for change*. Department of Pacific Affairs. Australian National University. Canberra, ACT.

5.3 Influence on other donors and Pacific island governments

Pacific Women was always intended to be implemented in congruence with partner governments' development policies and plans. A core assumption in the design was that the ambitious outcomes intended for the program would only be achieved if responsibility for those outcomes was shared with Pacific governments and women's organisations. Respondents to this evaluation supported the further capacity building of the relevant Government Ministries, Departments and Divisions in order that the leadership at national level is gender mainstreamed and gender conscious. People suggested that it is essential for *Pacific Women* activities to align, contribute and extend national efforts for gender equality.

The signing of Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration coincided with development of *Pacific Women's* delivery strategy. Subsequently, the initial round of *Pacific Women* Country Plans was developed in the context of national policies on gender equality.

The program logic, however, does not adequately address the program's role in terms of other donors and Pacific island governments. Moreover, existing Country Plans lack the flexibility and action focus to respond to the rapidly changing policy and funding context for gender in Pacific Island countries. For instance, there has been significant progress across the region in the passing of Family Protection legislation. With Cook Islands and Pohnpei State (FSM) having recently passed such legislation, Niue and Chuuk and Yap states in FSM are the only Pacific Island countries (or states) without Family Protection legislation. However, the implementation of the legislation is hampered by a number of interrelated issues including a lack of capacity in women/ gender development ministries and a lack of coordination between different government stakeholders and implementing agencies. For example, in Kiribati *Pacific Women* has supported the Respectful Relationships Program (RRP). This program, developed over 3 years, has been adapted into Year 8 & 9 curriculum and seeks to increase address attitudes towards violence due to the impact of violence on children's health and performance at school. Identified challenges to program effectiveness include the resistance of key staff within Education Ministry due to personal values/beliefs/social norms that men are natural leaders and a religious belief that women should submit. Further, respondents report that the legislative commitment to protection for women and children has not been supported by increased budget for the relevant services.

The fact that *Pacific Women* as a program is not linked into national-level discussions on gender policy in most countries (although there has been some progress through the work of the Pacific Community's PGEP program), has meant that the opportunity to influence or strengthen policy implementation is untapped. Significantly, participants at the validation workshop in Kiribati reported that the meeting was their first opportunity to discuss gender equality programming priorities at a 'national level – highlighting the need for a forum that called all national stakeholders together to discuss and determine national priorities and a national plan for the development of women in Kiribati.

Investigation of capacity supplementation and gender mainstreaming support provided by *Pacific Women* through advisers in Fiji, FSM, Kiribati, Tonga and Tuvalu, further illustrates the opportunities and challenges involved. A common insight shared through gender adviser reporting, is that although the political will for gender equality has grown over recent years, many policies are yet to be implemented. In Tuvalu for instance, the lack of capacity in key gender equality and social inclusion organisations caused by high staff turnover, has been found to undermine program impact.⁸⁹ In Fiji, mid-term review of the Country Plan suggest that the first placement of a Gender Adviser in the Ministry has been successful to align DFAT's bilateral aid program to policy developments at the national level and has enabled the program to contribute to the Government's work of mainstreaming gender – particularly in the Ending Violence against Women area.⁹⁰ According to Fiji respondents, technical advice provided by the Gender Adviser continues to be instrumental in the Ministry's advice to Government on 'gender and women' and in its support to women's organisations and local authorities. However, the review suggested that adequate capacity had not been built within the Ministry to sustain this work and the Ministry has now engaged the current Gender Adviser to build staff capacity on a team basis. In Tonga, *Pacific Women* has supported three core government

⁸⁹ *Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development* (2018) Review Report: Tuvalu Country Plan 2015-2018, November.

⁹⁰ Cardno. (2017). *Fiji Country Review November 2017*. *Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development*. Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. Canberra, ACT.

positions – Family Protection officer, Monitoring and Evaluation officer and the Coordination officer. Respondents identified that these appointments have led to progress in national policy and some increased service outreach, however the work is still developing and will rely on, as yet uncommitted, Government funding for these positions to continue.

In the North Pacific, the gender equality adviser modality has worked well to support sub-regional cooperation and donor coordination. Half of the adviser's time was spent supporting the Australian Embassy in Pohnpei on the design and implementation of *Pacific Women* plans in Palau, RMI and the FSM. The other half was spent on supporting gender mainstreaming at the national level through PGEP.⁹¹

An implicit strategy, which has worked to influence national governments is the fact that *Pacific Women* is working with a diverse range of organisations. In the area of economic empowerment, the program can advocate for policy change from the experience and results produced through multi-level initiatives. In one country at least – Vanuatu, there is evidence of the Government taking over a program funded by the Australian Government, including funding through *Pacific Women*. The Vanuatu Skills Partnership is now a partnership between the governments of Australia and Vanuatu. In the Ending Violence against Women area, *Pacific Women* support to a diverse range of organisation has opened up multiple pathways to communicate, influence and expand this work. Interviews with partners in Papua New Guinea for instance, suggested that capacity building support provided by the Australian government through *Pacific Women* has strengthened partners' advocacy and voice on violence in communities, including with government ministries and service providers. The positive impacts of the program working with multiple partners in the ending violence against women space and women's networks more generally, were discussed earlier in this report.

Program documentation and interviews conducted as part of the evaluation also suggest that one pathway to influencing Pacific governments is through resourcing of the Pacific Community (SPC). SPC is the only organisation that counts 22 Pacific island countries in its membership. Moreover, SPC is the sole organisation aiding gender mainstreaming and gender statistics in program countries. A formative evaluation of PGEP conducted in 2017 found that the project was achieving positive and demonstrable gains in gender mainstreaming and gender statistics in seven countries. However, the evaluation noted that there are more countries than the small PGEP team could practically assist. Subsequently the approach has been refined to include prioritised countries (Cook Islands, FSM, Palau, RMI, Solomon Islands, Tonga) where PGEP provides comprehensive support, and others where assistance ranges from specific interventions to occasional support.

A further suggestion made by respondents was to broaden the capacity development approach utilised by *Pacific Women*. While there are various strategies, the major approach continues to be the placement of external advisers into government ministries and other organisations.⁹² The increased use of Pacific people in these roles is welcomed. But respondents also pointed to the value of other strategies, including internships, attachments and peer exchange. They also questioned the value of workshops for specific individuals which tends to provide value for those individuals rather than departments as a whole and is problematic when people leave positions.

KEY FINDING: *National Governments are a key partner to address development challenges for women and girls in the Pacific. Pacific Women has supported significant National policy change, but further development will likely require a wider range of adaptive and flexible strategies in cooperation with other programs and organisations.*

In regard to other donors, it is more difficult to identify increased coordination and influence by *Pacific Women*. In Fiji and Vanuatu, the validation workshops highlighted the number of design consultations underway for donor funded programs. *Pacific Women* partners expressed concerns over the duplication of efforts and the implications of large funding flows for smaller, local organisations. In Kiribati women expressed some concern about the crowded funding space that is creating tensions and competition amongst local organisations and groups to position their organisations for more and continued funding.

⁹¹ Dwyer, M. (2018). *End of service report to Pacific Women: Social Development Program North Pacific Gender Equality Adviser Jan 2016- Dec 2018*. Cardno Emerging Markets.

⁹² In 2019 *Pacific Women* will deploy 35 short and long term advisers.

There was support for the way in which *Pacific Women* has built a significant evidence base about the nature and scope of challenges for the development of women and girls in the Pacific, which is now available to inform the work of other donors. Further, the understanding which has emerged about the importance of working with national women's organisations and National governments is seen by several respondents as a critical lesson to be disseminated to other donors. As noted earlier, in the current funding environment with the Pacific Partnership to End Violence against Women and Girls and the Spotlight Initiative poised for take-off, linking to this evidence base will be critical for impact and sustainability of these and other new programs.

KEY FINDING: *The current funding environment creates opportunities for Pacific Women to play a convening role. In particular the experience and evidence collected though its seven years of implementation could be used to leverage the approach of other donor programs.*

Going forward, one of the challenges that *Pacific Women* in its current formulation faces, is that the mechanisms through which *Pacific Women* determines regional and/other donor funding and monitors and reports on results, varies considerably. It is hard to trace contribution back to *Pacific Women* in some cases, as with the UN Women Ending Violence against Women resourcing. A similar observation was made at the time of the Three-Year Evaluation. Moreover, as the *Pacific Women* program logic and program MELF does not explicitly address the program's influence on DFAT or other donors' policy or programming in the Pacific, this is not an area of practice that the Support Unit is tracking on measuring progress against.

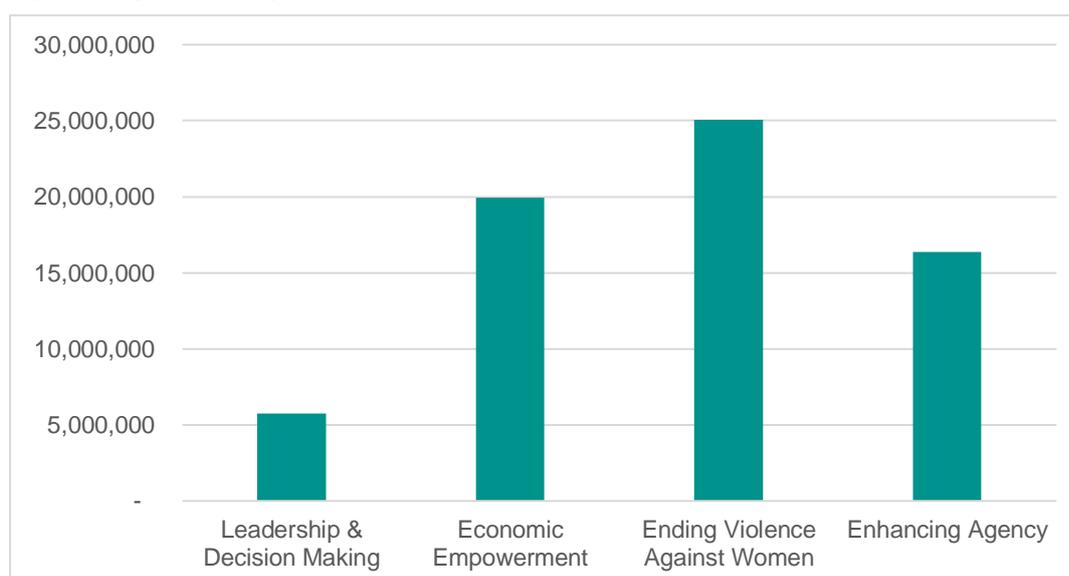
KEY FINDING: *The existing program systems do not adequately assess the program's role in terms of other donors and Pacific island governments.*

5.4 Contribution of regional programs

Pacific Women funds regional activities designed to address common issues across the region and to complement and build on country specific activities. The logic behind this regional funding, as outlined in the delivery strategy, was that regional funding would complement and build on country specific activities and in this way extend the geographical coverage of activities funded through the bilateral aid program. The Three-Year Evaluation found that there were visibility issues for *Pacific Women*, particularly in relation to regional funding of UN agencies as reporting was through the UN system rather than involving *Pacific Women*.

Up until June 2019, 39.4% of the total program budget for *Pacific Women* has been spent through 34 completed and ongoing regional activities. As noted in Figure 9, these funds have been directed towards all the four outcome areas with the largest proportion direction to Ending Violence against Women.

Figure 9. Regional funding by outcome area



As noted earlier however these figures includes several activities either managed or implemented directly within countries.

The activities in this regional category are wide-ranging. They include existing programs run by regional organisations such as SPC and UN organisations. They also include multi country programs managed by international organisations such as INGOs, usually implemented through local partners. Other regional programs have been specifically designed by *Pacific Women* and are focused on issues which have emerged across the region, including those not yet addressed by existing partners. The various activities are funded and managed in different ways, with some funded by DFAT Canberra directly and others funded and managed through the Support Unit. There are large programs that DFAT, through *Pacific Women*, contributes to along with other donors. Additionally, there is an overlap in terms of bilateral and regional funding. For example, SPC is funded from the regional budget of *Pacific Women* for the POETCom and RRRT but there is also an SPC Women's Economic Empowerment project called *Pacific Women Growing Business* in FSM that is funded through the bilateral component of *Pacific Women*. FWCC, while a Fijian partner is also funded for regional work in Kiribati and elsewhere. Significantly, decision making about regional programs and the rationale for each specific activity is not captured in a public regional strategy, unlike the country plans.

Furthermore, the relationship between organisations that implement the regional programs and *Pacific Women* is quite varied. Some organisations enjoy a close relationship with the Support Unit and participate actively in *Pacific Women* activities including contributing to country plans. Other regional organisations report that they have minimal contact with *Pacific Women* within countries or within the region, and that they are not able to contribute to or benefit from country planning and country-led discussions. Some of the organisations managing regional programs see value in increased co-operation with *Pacific Women* and the Support Unit, others less so.

These and other differences make it very difficult to generalise the contribution of the regional programs to the overall outcomes of *Pacific Women*. The Support Unit has tried to track outcomes, but this is difficult because some regional programs do not track their impact in countries and the monitoring and evaluation of various regional programs does not provide the level of detail and rigour sought by the Support Unit. The following observations therefore are broad but draw from the consistent themes emerging from the documents and interviews.

5.4.1 Program scope and reach

A key finding from the document review is that broader reach is achieved when partners operate at several levels from the individual and community level activities to activities that are national and regional in scope. Regional activities are thus an important part of a comprehensive portfolio of activities. For example, the Uniting World's Gender Equality Theology - Institutional Transformation (GET-IT) Project, operates at multiple levels from the individual and community to country and regional level.

Regional activities also enable improved reach in other ways. SPC's PGEP project is extending the reach of the program through its activity at the government level. The UN Women's Markets for Change works in specific communities and within these is working in disability inclusion, increasing the reach to vulnerable women, particularly in Fiji. Markets for Change also has strategies to address male engagement. Reporting by Shifting the Power Coalition, RRRT and GET-IT also mentions disability inclusion. SPC RRRT has reported increased receptiveness to LGBT issues as a result of its activities.⁹³

5.4.2 Progress towards outcomes

Regional activities have offered *Pacific Women* additional strategies through which to achieve its outcomes. They provide opportunities for learning between countries and across different contexts promoting the take-up of best practice from one location to the next. *Pacific Women* has utilised regional funding to address new and emerging challenges and to support work that is innovative and in some situations beyond the experience of existing partners. There is evidence across the

⁹³ RRRT Progress Report, 2018

documents reviewed and through interviews with implementing organisations, which suggests regional activities have made a range of contributions to *Pacific Women* program outcomes.

The regional activities include several that are specifically directed towards increasing Women's Leadership and Decision Making. These include for example, the Shifting the Power Coalition. This program is providing leadership development in the humanitarian sector for women. It aims to widen the opportunities in each country for a diverse range of women to engage in the resilience space (this is also a good example of a program which is supported regionally but led by Pacific women). Program managers report that they have already seen an influence on outcome statements and improved engagement with women's organisations in the humanitarian space. *Pacific Women* has also recently designed and commenced the Balance of Power program, working in several Pacific countries, this is intended to address cultural and other barriers to leadership and decision making by women.

In the area of Economic Empowerment, some of the regional programs are utilising their cross-country connections and learning to develop more integrated approaches to change. For example, SPC is implementing POETCom This project involves identifying and supporting organic value chains that benefit women as producers, suppliers, processors and entrepreneurs, while also enhancing their capacity for inter-regional organic trade within the RMI, FSM, Palau and Kiribati. The UN Women's Markets for Change Program has utilised learning from other projects in the Pacific to expand its focus on improved conditions and knowledge of market vendors to also address women's control and power over assets.

In the area of Ending Violence against Women there has been considerable investment in several large scale and multi country programs. This includes support to SPC RRRT which draws from human rights, Pacific cultures and faith-based considerations to provide an integrated response to prevention and awareness raising. It also includes the newly developed Pacific Partnerships to End Violence against Women and Girls, which brings together regional organisations (SPC and the Pacific Island Forum) and UN Women to work through partners in several Pacific countries. The program is primarily funded by the European Union, with targeted support from DFAT through *Pacific Women*. It is directed at work in Fiji, Kiribati, Samoa, Solomon Islands and Tonga.

Finally, in terms of Enabling Agency, there are several high-quality examples. For example, the PGEP project works to enable agency at National government level. *Pacific Women* has recently commenced Pacific Girl, a program co-designed with and inclusive of young women in the Pacific.

The overall evidence suggests regional programs make a significant contribution towards identified outcomes of *Pacific Women*. However, a corresponding question that was raised by many respondents to this evaluation was about the value of the work undertaken by regional programs versus the cost of working through these organisations, and how this compared to activities managed through national organisations and governments. A widely held view, which the evaluation team was not able to test from the evidence available to it, is that some programs funded through the regional allocation are more costly and divert funds away from locally led and owned programs.

A further concern identified by several respondents is the degree to which programs designed to operate in several countries are able to sufficiently adapt to different cultural, political, economic and other variables within national and local contexts. Notwithstanding the design consultations undertaken for many of the regional programs reviewed as part of the evaluation, there was a view that regional programs risk being top-down and unable to adapt sufficiently to very diverse Pacific contexts and are unlikely to achieve sustained impact in those contexts.

5.4.3 Capacity development

The reporting available from partners suggests that several regional programs have contributed to individual and group change through their activities. This includes for example the UN Markets for Change program where program reporting and independent evaluation indicates the program is contributing to the capacity of rural market vendors to claim their rights. The Women's Leadership Initiative, a large-scale investment by the Australian government to build a future generation of women leaders in the Pacific region, is showing results in terms of individual level skills and confidence.

Some programs are contributing to building capacity of networks and relationships. This includes the Shifting the Power Coalition, which has a deliberate focus on bringing together diverse groups of Pacific women including women with disabilities, young women, rural women and LGBT communities. The program exists specifically to strengthen the collective power influence and leadership of diverse Pacific women and their capacity to respond to disasters and climate change.

More broadly, *Pacific Women* is funding significant regional initiatives which have potential to influence capacity at country and regional level. For example, the SPC PGEP program supports capacity development and knowledge generation to address gender inequality in government systems in fourteen Pacific Island countries and in regional organisations including the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat. An evaluation of PGEP in 2017 found that the project was achieving positive and demonstrable gains in gender mainstreaming and gender statistics in seven countries where it was working as an active partner with government, and in a further three countries where assistance has been more sporadic.

Notwithstanding these and other positive contributions to capacity development, respondents suggested quite strongly that regional programs risk inhibiting Pacific ownership and leadership. In the absence of a transparent strategy around regional programming, national stakeholders from all of the focus countries expressed a preference for funding to be directed primarily through national organisations and governments.

KEY FINDING: Regional programs contribute to the reach and outcomes of Pacific Women in several important ways. However national stakeholders are concerned with the value of these programs in light of their costs, and the degree to which they mitigate against Pacific ownership. Despite several innovative strategies, respondents are also concerned with capacity of some regional programs to respond to different Pacific contexts.

5.5 Program sustainability

The program approach to addressing sustainability is to work on immediate and tangible changes while also building capacity, interest and motivation among a range of stakeholders to support wider and more sustaining change strategies. The delivery strategy mentioned a 'venture capital' approach, the idea being that the program would support a number of promising practices initially, and then scale up the more successful ones. This approach acknowledges that working for women's empowerment is a highly complex, long-term and challenging process; and at the same time, that program resources and support for the program are predicated on some initial gains being made.

One consequence of this thinking was that the program MELF was structured to include short-term, medium-term, and longer-term objectives in each of the program outcome areas. Additionally, as part of the program's evaluative approach, a set of inquiry questions were developed at the program and activity level, which focus on the degree to which benefits produced by the program will be maintained or ongoing.

In practice, the evaluation finds mixed experience in terms of some of the program results and outcomes being sustained, and others requiring further support or reorientation.

The funding of integrated approaches and partners that work across several outcomes and population sub-groups (young women, adolescents, men and women, etc.) supports sustainability. For example, in the case of Economic Empowerment projects as described earlier in the report, partners are adopting more multi-pronged approaches to address power over assets and expand activities to include men and families. Likewise, a growing number of partners working on women's economic empowerment, are looking at the inclusions of Do No Harm strategies in their programming to address the complex inter-relationships between these issues in Pacific women's lives. The evidence from these and other activities suggests that they are more likely to succeed and be sustainable if they are flexible, and able to address multiple factors that contribute to gender inequality.

KEY FINDING: The funding of integrated approaches and partners that work across several outcomes and population sub-groups (young women, adolescents, men and women, etc.) serves as an important sustainability mechanism. The evidence suggests that funded activities are more likely to

succeed and be sustainable if they are flexible, and able to address multiple factors that contribute to gender inequality.

The resourcing of capacity building at multiple levels also helps to sustain gender equality gains. In Fiji for instance, several positive gains have been made in terms of the capacity of women's organisations and women's movement. In the present enabling policy environment, this has encouraged partnerships across the government, donor and civil society sectors. DFAT Post has played a strong advocacy role engaging regularly with the Department of Women and the program has supported two consecutive gender advisers. The Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation's Director Women is a member of the Fiji Women's Fund Steering Committee which promotes coordination with the Department of Women's programs and services for women.

Investing in knowledge resources is another important part of achieving sustainability. In the Papua New Guinea Country Program for example, investing in knowledge resources forms part of the four fold outcome framework. There is an emerging emphasis on knowledge generation in the Vanuatu Country Plan as well. An Advisory Group on Research has been established to guide implementation of the *Pacific Women* Research Strategy. The aim of this Strategy is to support high quality, locally appropriate and sustainable research; that also informs the program strategy. A good example of the is the recent Do No Harm research project, which was undertaken in Bougainville, Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands. The project addresses the question of how to improve women's economic agency and the security of their livelihoods without compromising their safety, a focus which speaks directly to how to achieve sustained and comprehensive impact for women.

Finally, the program's contribution to policy and legislative change is an important element in terms of Pacific women achieving on-going benefits from the program. As noted earlier, the *Pacific Women* program logic and MELF does not explicitly address the program's influence on DFAT, other donors and Pacific governments, which means that this is not an area of practice that the Support Unit is actively tracking or measuring progress against. With the exception of the Vanuatu Skills Partnership, limited examples of government agencies taking over the work (a key question in *Pacific Women* MELF) were found. Nevertheless, there is evidence particularly in relation to the gender mainstreaming support *Pacific Women* funds and the assistance in the area of ending violence against women and women's economic empowerment, that the commitment of the government agencies to gender equality is shifting. Going forward it will be critical to better understand progress in this area as well as the degree to which *Pacific Women* is able to influence the work of other actors, including DFAT programs and other donors.

KEY FINDING: The existing program logic does not adequately address the program's role in terms of other donors and Pacific island governments. The current funding environment creates opportunities for Pacific Women to play a convening role, and for the program to leverage sustained change through influencing the work of others.

6 Findings: Progress since the Three-Year Evaluation

The *Pacific Women* Three-Year Evaluation, which occurred in 2015-16 made a wide number of recommendations across several aspects of the program (see [Annex Three](#)). This evaluation has been directed to give some attention to progress in addressing each of these recommendations.

The evidence from documentation and respondent communications indicates that *Pacific Women* has made substantial progress in addressing several of the three-year evaluation recommendations. In particular this includes:

- Increased program activity in the outcome areas of Economic Empowerment and Leadership and Decision Making.
- A more strategic and comprehensive approach to research with the development of a comprehensive research strategy and the establishment of the Research Advisory Council.
- The role of the Support Unit has been expanded to enable it to play a more strategic role, with increases in the number of staff and the establishment of technical panels to provide monitoring and evaluation and gender advisory services.
- There has been increased engagement between *Pacific Women* and the DFAT Gender Focal Points at Posts. This has included regular meetings with Gender Focal Points and increased technical support being made available to Posts. Recent surveys of the Gender Focal Points shows increased satisfaction with the support available through the program.
- The program has worked to increase its visibility in the Pacific, with additional attention given to program branding and communications.
- There have been increased convening activities, designed to bring together partners working in common areas such as Economic Empowerment. This includes regional and bilateral meetings and has included a mixture of bilateral and regional partners.
- *Pacific Women* has developed a comprehensive capacity development strategy which is now being applied across all activities and has been integrated into terms of reference for all technical advisers.
- The program has finalised the Value for Money rubric and this is now being applied in activity evaluations.

Pacific Women has made some progress in addressing most of the remaining three-year evaluation recommendations, including the following:

- The program has sought to advance leadership and ownership by women in the Pacific through more attention to co-design of new activities and increased emphasis on the review and reflection of program activities by women from the Pacific. However, this evaluation found that this remains an area where stakeholders would like to see more progress.
- *Pacific Women* has strengthened its mechanisms for learning and reflection across program. Since the Three-Year Evaluation, the Support Unit has coordinated country plan reviews in Kiribati, RMI and Tuvalu. Country reflection workshops have been held in Fiji, Tonga and Vanuatu. In Papua New Guinea the country monitoring evaluation and learning framework was revised following the country plan mid-term review. Respondents to this review suggested that the country plan process still requires further development. There were further suggestions about the need for increased learning between programs and between different implementing partners.
- Innovative programming is evident in the new programs such as Pacific Girl and Balance of Power. Through these and other emerging activities, *Pacific Women* is actively identifying gaps in program response and seeking to address these. However, resource and capacity constraints limit the degree to which the program is able to develop further initiatives.

- There has been increased effort to bring partners together, as described above, especially around program outcomes such as Economic Empowerment. The Papua New Guinea program in particular has reinforced the value of bring partners together around common purpose. However, respondents to this review identified that convening around national and shared priorities remains an area for further development in the program.
- There has been increased effort by the Support Unit to track results of regional activities, particularly as they contribute to outcomes in countries. Overall however, many regional partner reporting processes are not aligned to the *Pacific Women* monitoring and evaluation framework and this is unlikely to change.
- The program has developed some better understanding of change pathways for the outcome areas, although the Support Unit suggests that more could be done towards this development.
- A review of the program logic and theory was completed with stakeholders in 2017, but a complete examination of core program assumptions still appears to be required.
- The *Pacific Women* Advisory Board continues to meet on a biannual basis. There has been work to clarify the roles of Advisory Board members and the value they bring to the program. At the same time, there appears to be some ongoing concern that the full value of the Advisory Board members is not yet being realised.

There are a small number of areas where very limited progress appears to have been made in addressing the Three Year Evaluation recommendations. It is likely that factors beyond the immediate control of the program continue to influence these areas. They include:

- Large external partners continue to receive a substantial amount of funding through *Pacific Women*, notwithstanding some slight reductions since the previous evaluation.
- In-country connections between regional and bilateral funded activities does not appear to have shifted since the Three-Year Evaluation. For some activities there has always been good connection between these different activities. Others report ongoing poor communication and collaboration.

7 Discussion and Recommendations

7.1 Summary of findings

7.1.1 To what extent has *Pacific Women* achieved its intermediate outcomes and contributed to longer term change?

Pacific Women has broadened the reach of the Australian aid program in terms of the number of individual men and women the aid program is reaching and is enabling engagement in new geographical areas and implementation priorities. The program is fulfilling its intent to focus on vulnerable women and girls. Capacity building support to local organisations, multi-pronged approaches and the scaling up of successful activities has enabled the needs of vulnerable groups to be addressed in project design, outreach and delivery.

The long-term nature of funding has encouraged partners to tackle situations where entrenched and institutionalised forms of gender inequality exist. In this way, *Pacific Women* is supporting development of knowledge and approaches that are locally driven and relevant to Pacific island culture and context.

Positive improvements are evident in the project portfolio since the Three-Year Evaluation. While the bulk of *Pacific Women* investment continues to go to Ending Violence against Women initiatives, the program is supporting new partners and scaled-up initiatives on women's leadership and economic empowerment. In the area of Leadership and Decision Making, the program has supported some promising practices, which are contributing to an enabling environment and institutional change in support of women's leadership. These activities now need to be scaled up, with lessons informing *Pacific Women* programming in contexts which are proving challenging.

In the area of Economic Empowerment, partners in Fiji, PNG and Vanuatu are able to show results in terms of increase in women's income and assets. This evidence, along with improvements to partner monitoring of women's economic empowerment provides a good foundation to progress work in this area. *Pacific Women* as a program and through these diverse funding modalities, has made a significant contribution to knowledge and practice on economic empowerment in the Pacific context. In the area of Ending Violence against Women, the long-term support provided by *Pacific Women* for crises centres and local organisations has contributed to an increase in comprehensive services for survivors of violence.

Across the outcomes, the evaluation confirms that channelling of support through local organisations including women's organisations, is an effective strategy. This ensures the program is responding to diverse and culturally specific needs of women. Program mechanisms such as the *Pacific Women* Advisory Council and *Pacific Women* Research Strategy also provide opportunities for Pacific women leadership of the program.

At the same time, in many country contexts *Pacific Women* is not sufficiently linked into national-level dialogue on gender equality and women's empowerment. While *Pacific Women* Country Plans provide a useful operational framework for the program, their strategic potential to surface solutions, encourage local ownership with the buy in and support of National governments, is underutilised.

There is mixed evidence also of joined up action, as was envisaged in the *Pacific Women* design. The linkages between regional and bilaterally-funded initiatives are not apparent in all countries. The program logic also does not capture the linkages between different types of activities and outcomes.

In the Leadership and Decision Making area, the program is supporting activities that contribute to building the confidence of women leaders in addition to their knowledge and skills. However, there is less evidence of changed family and community attitudes and perceptions towards women's leadership. Moving forward, it is possible that more recently designed initiatives such as Balance of Power and POETCom offer a different model to achieve progress to outcomes on multiple fronts.

In the Economic Empowerment area, an area of challenge is that of working with government and industry partners. The evaluation suggests that funding and building the capacity of local

organisations to establish linkages with government and industry, is a high impact strategy and needs to be given more attention.

In the Ending Violence against Women area, while there has been an increase in services for survivors of violence, as demand grows the gaps and weaknesses in policy and program delivery by service providers become more apparent. Local knowledge, expertise and strengthened partnerships need to be harnessed to address these gaps.

Many *Pacific Women* activities address women's agency as part of their work, rather than as a stand along activity or component of an activity. Respondents to this evaluation strongly suggested this mainstreaming of agency ought to continue going forward.

Over time the program is giving voice and mobilising support for a Pacific perspective on several fronts. Pacific women value and rely on the many 'spaces' created and supported by *Pacific Women*, for their safety and well-being, and these results highlight the potential for *Pacific Women* to strategically influence gender equality programming by drawing on localised knowledge and experience.

7.1.2 How can the program maximise progress and sustainability in the last three years of implementation?

The program is contributing to building the capacity of individual women and men, and some progress has been made in terms of the organisational capacity and standing of key civil society institutions, including faith-based institutions in Fiji, Kiribati, PNG, and RMI. At the same time, the role for *Pacific Women* in terms of building the capacity of individuals and groups to engage with National governments, industry and other services providers is expanding, but needs strategic leadership in Pacific contexts.

The program has worked best to leverage DFAT policy and programming in contexts such as PNG, where Support Unit staff, while responsible for technical aspects of program delivery, are working closely with DFAT Post including the Gender Focal Points and other sectoral programs, on gender policy and mainstreaming approaches.

The funding of integrated approaches and partners that work across several outcomes and population sub-groups (young women, adolescents, men and women, etc.) serves as an important sustainability mechanism. The evidence suggests that funded activities are more likely to succeed and be sustainable if they are flexible, address multiple factors that contribute to gender inequality and are designed and implemented to respond to diverse Pacific contexts.

The role for *Pacific Women* in terms of building the capacity of individuals and groups to engage with National governments, industry and other services providers is expanding, but needs strategic leadership in Pacific contexts. The existing program logic does not adequately address the program's role in terms of other donors and Pacific island governments. The current funding environment creates opportunities for *Pacific Women* to play a convening role, and for the program to adopt more flexible and action-oriented approaches to supporting change.

The resourcing of capacity building at multiple levels is another mechanism for sustainability. This been challenging for the program, but requires attention going forward.

Finally, the program's contribution to policy and legislative change is an important element in terms of Pacific women achieving on-going benefits from the program and should continue to be supported.

7.2 Conclusions and recommendations

The overall conclusion of this evaluation is that *Pacific Women* has broadened the reach of the Australian aid program to vulnerable women and girls and is supporting key civil society and women's organisations in the Pacific. The long-term nature of funding has raised public awareness on gender equality and women's empowerment; and the program is an asset to Australia's partnership with Pacific governments. The work should be continued and further developed going forward

Recommendation I

The Australian support for women's empowerment and gender equality, particularly those activities implemented through Pacific organisations, should be maintained.

The evaluation has found that program impact has been undermined by a complex operating framework and insufficient engagement within some country contexts. There is room for some redevelopment of the program and the overall approach to management and implementation of this support.

Alongside this finding, is the issue of ongoing program relevance. As noted at the beginning of this report, there are several positive trends in the Pacific that have improved development for women and girls. Nevertheless, significant challenges remain, and new challenges are emerging. The second part of this evaluation was intended to be an examination of this changing context, from the perspective and experience of women in the Pacific. However, while there is encouragement to update Australia's support for gender equality and women's empowerment, to ensure that it is relevant to the current and future context of women's lives, many people are weary of more 'consultation'.

Finally, the Australian aid policy framework is currently under review, with the intention to develop a more mature and contemporary approach to development partnerships in the Pacific. This provides an opportunity to reconsider the programming approach for Australia's support to gender equality and women's empowerment, positioning it to best serve the objectives of both Australia and its Pacific partners.

A process of co-design, replacing the proposed second stage of this evaluation, would bring together the experience and knowledge of women in the Pacific together with strategic engagement by Australia around its interests and priorities, to shape a new, relevant and mature program of support going forward.

Recommendation II

Redesign Australia's support for women's empowerment and gender equality in the Pacific, making use of a co-design process that identifies and addresses the interests and objectives of the Australian Government and National governments and women's organisations in the Pacific.

Pacific Women has demonstrated effective approaches for change for women in the Pacific. In particular it has shown that a comprehensive approach - that addresses the interconnected challenges for women and girls (including safety, participation in decision-making, economic security and the capability to direct one's life) - supports more effective and sustainable impact. It has also demonstrated that working in ways that are relevant to local culture and relationships, across diverse Pacific contexts, is more likely to lead to real shifts in power and opportunity for women. Finally, *Pacific Women* has clearly shown that working with local organisations and promoting their capacity supports more sustained outcomes. These are important features which ought to be retained in any future programs of support.

Recommendation III

Australia's future support to gender equality and women's empowerment in the Pacific should continue to include a comprehensive approach including women's leadership, economic empowerment, ending violence against women and increasing agency as outcomes.

As outlined through this report, *Pacific Women* has enabled Australia to make a significant contribution to the safety and further development of women and girls in the Pacific.

In particular, the long-term support to organisations addressing violence against women and girls has allowed those organisations to mature and provide more comprehensive services. These various services, located in different Pacific countries, are critical to women's safety and support ought to be maintained going forward. They should also be supported to continue to expand their reach to rural and remote women and to women living with disability.

Finally, there was a strong view among women living in communities that attention should be maintained on prevention activities. These should form part of the overall strategy going forward.

Recommendation IV

The ongoing program of support should continue to support local organisations providing holistic care for survivors of violence; ramp up efforts to address disability issues and maintain attention to violence prevention.

Pacific Women has also supported innovation in the areas of Economic Empowerment and Leadership and Decision-Making. These innovations plus the lessons about what does not work, ought to be the basis for ongoing program support in these areas.

Recommendation V

The ongoing program of support should build on the evidence base of promising practices in women's economic empowerment and leadership, through sharing of evidence and further development of these approaches.

Pacific Women has also shown how increased impact can be leveraged. Where national women's organisations and local groups are supported to work with each other, and to work with and advocate to National governments, more extended and sustained change can be achieved. Where the technical expertise, including the learning and experience from regional programs, is integrated into DFAT bilateral programs, gender is mainstreamed and more substantial change for women is supported. Where evidence and experience is documented and made available to women's organisations, DFAT and others, it can support mature approaches being integrated and adopted throughout programs including the work of new donors in the region.

Recommendation VI

Pacific Women's convening role in countries with national governments, donors, civil society organisation and donor programs should be developed further. Work should be undertaken to ensure that core program lessons are integrated into DFAT Pacific bilateral programs and are positioned to influence the work of other donors in-country.

A significant contribution to the success of *Pacific Women* has been its size and ambition. However as noted, this has created some challenges for management and some confusion for external stakeholders. The program has grown throughout the years and while adjustments have been made to the Support Unit and other components, the current modality needs some reconsideration. Through a redesign the modality can be crafted to fit the various likely purposes and needs of future programming.

These needs will be best identified through the co-design process, which includes frank exploration of interests, commitments and shared responsibility. The modality should be developed with mature discussion about Australia's objectives and accountability requirements, alongside the objectives and interests of Pacific National governments and women's organisations. Policies, procedures and systems of support can then be designed to align with these interests.

Recommendation VII

The redevelopment of the modality for future support should give explicit attention to the mutual and different interests and objectives of Australia and other stakeholders. The systems and procedures underpinning any future support should be transparent and well communicated to all stakeholders.

Australia has been identified as a committed and strategic donor in the area of women's empowerment and gender equality. In order to maximise strategic and policy engagement with National governments, women's organisations and other donors, consideration should be given to shifting overall program responsibility into the Pacific region.

Recommendation VIII

Strengthen the strategic leadership of the program by transitioning program management and oversight from DFAT in Canberra to the Pacific Regional office in Fiji.

Pacific Women has demonstrated the importance of building the capacity of women's organisations, national governments and other local organisations, in order to sustain and further develop outcomes for women and girls. This includes building awareness about the centrality of women's development to a sustained and stable Pacific future. It also includes development of skills, systems and technical expertise to ensure the range of services are available to women and their families and communities. Finally, it includes developing the capacity of National governments and local organisations to effectively and efficiently utilise external development funding.

While there is a place for using more traditional capacity development strategies such as technical assistance and training for individuals, experience suggests that additional strategies which support learning through doing (for example, internships, attachments, peer to peer support, mentoring) and collaborative approaches (for example cross agency problem-solving and partnership approaches) are often more effective and generally more likely to lead to sustained capacity gains. These approaches build the capability of organisations and people to solve problems and develop solutions that are fit for context.

Recommendation IX

Capacity building work should be strengthened and extended during the last phase of the program and in any future program of support, with a view to better enabling DFAT Posts, *Pacific Women* partners and government departments to both understand and address the challenges for gender equality and women's empowerment in the Pacific.

Throughout this evaluation a recurring theme identified by respondents is the desire for increased leadership by women in the Pacific and a strong expectation that Pacific National governments ought to be providing leadership within countries and across the region for gender equality. While it is understood that Australia brings its own interests and requirements, people pointed to the need to build Pacific capability and responsibility for leading change over the long-term.

Pacific Women and any future program support by Australia, cannot be responsible for such development but can work in ways which support and contribute to the opportunities for Pacific leadership development. This includes making use of existing engagement with Pacific women leaders and building a deliberate program of support going forward.

Recommendation X

The *Pacific Women* Advisory Board and leaders of Pacific women's organisations including faith-based organisations, should provide strategic oversight for the proposed redesign process. The roles for these leaders within any future program of support should be explicitly identified in the new design.

In line with further development of the current capacity building strategy, future programming should continue to focus on building the capacity of Pacific women leaders at multiple levels, in government, community and the private sector.

Annex One - Evaluation data sources and scope

Table one: Documents reviewed

Table one: Documents reviewed

Year	Country	Document name	Document type	Author
2016	All	Gender equality and women's empowerment strategy	Background	DFAT
2017	All	Ending Violence against Women Roadmap Synthesis Report	Background	DFAT
2017	All	Women in Leadership Synthesis Report	Background	DFAT
2017	All	Women's Economic Empowerment Synthesis Report	Background	DFAT
2017	All	<i>Pacific Women</i> Shaping Development 3 Year Evaluation Progress Report	Background	Independent
2017	All	Mid-term Evaluation of the <i>Pacific Women</i> Parliamentary Partnerships Project 2013-2018	Evaluative	Independent
2017	All	<i>Pacific Women</i> Annual Progress Report 2016 - 2017	Learning and comms	<i>Pacific Women</i> Support Unit
2019	All	<i>Pacific Women</i> Annual Progress Report 2017 - 2018	Learning and comms	<i>Pacific Women</i> Support Unit
2019	All	The <i>Pacific Women</i> Regional Learning Forum on Women's Economic Empowerment	Learning and comms	<i>Pacific Women</i> Support Unit
2016	All	<i>Pacific Women</i> Shaping Pacific Development First Progress Report 2012 - 2015	Operational	<i>Pacific Women</i> Support Unit
2017	All	Program Progress Report, September 2016 - February 2017	Operational	<i>Pacific Women</i> Support Unit
2017	All	Program Progress Report, March - August 2017	Operational	<i>Pacific Women</i> Support Unit
2017	All	Program Progress Report, July - December 2017	Operational	<i>Pacific Women</i> Support Unit
2017	All	Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Framework	Operational	DFAT
2017	All	Toolkit for Monitoring and Evaluation Data Collection	Operational	<i>Pacific Women</i> Support Unit
2018	All	Program Progress Report, January - June 2018	Operational	<i>Pacific Women</i> Support Unit
2019	All	Program Progress Report, July - December 2018	Operational	<i>Pacific Women</i> Support Unit
2014	All	<i>Pacific Women</i> Shaping Pacific Development	Planning/design	DFAT
2018	All	Research Strategy <i>Pacific Women</i> Shaping Pacific Development June 2017 - June 2022	Planning/design	<i>Pacific Women</i> Support Unit
2013	Cook Islands	Cook Islands Country Plan 2013 - 2015	Planning/design	<i>Pacific Women</i> Support Unit
2017	Fiji	Fiji Country Review	Evaluative	<i>Pacific Women</i> Support Unit
2017	Fiji	Fiji Annual Reflection and Planning Workshop Report	Evaluative	<i>Pacific Women</i> Support Unit

2019	Fiji	Review of Spa Academy Rural Scholarship Program	Evaluative	<i>Pacific Women Support Unit</i>
2019	Fiji	Mid-term evaluation of the Strengthening Feminist Coalitions and Partnerships for Gender Equality: We Rise Phase 2 project	Evaluative	Independent
2018	Fiji	We Rise Coalition Year 3 Annual Report	Operational	Partner
2019	Fiji	Fiji Country plan 2019	Planning/design	<i>Pacific Women Support Unit</i>
2017	Fiji	Exploring multidimensional poverty in Fiji - Findings from a Study Using the Individual Deprivation Measure	Research	Partner
2018	FSM	Quarterly <i>Pacific Women</i> Progress Report: Family Protection Adviser, FSM, June - September 2018	Operational	Partner
2018	FSM	Quarterly <i>Pacific Women</i> Progress Report: Family Protection Adviser, FSM, January-March, 2019	Operational	Other
2019	FSM	Quarterly <i>Pacific Women</i> Progress Report: Family Protection Adviser, FSM, September - December, 2020	Operational	Other
2016	FSM	Federated State of Micronesia Country Plan 2016-2019	Planning/design	<i>Pacific Women Support Unit</i>
2018	Kiribati	Australia-Kiribati Aid Partnership Arrangement 2016 -2019	Background	DFAT
2019	Kiribati	Kiribati Development Cooperation Fact Sheet	Background	DFAT
2019	Kiribati	Aid Program Performance Report Summary 2018 -19: Kiribati	Background	DFAT
2017	Kiribati	<i>Pacific Women</i> Shaping Pacific Development 3 Year Evaluation Progress Report	Evaluative	Independent
2018	Kiribati	Kiribati Country Plan Review	Evaluative	<i>Pacific Women Support Unit</i>
2018	Kiribati	Six- monthly progress report: Organisational assessment of umbrella women's organisation (Kiribati)	Operational	Partner
2018	Kiribati	Six monthly Report: July - December 2018	Operational	Partner
2018	Kiribati	Respectful Relationships Program	Operational	Partner
2018	Kiribati	Strengthening Peaceful Villages	Operational	Partner
2019	Kiribati	Six- monthly progress report: Staff Salary and 'Mwaneaba' Restoration Project	Operational	Partner
2019	Kiribati	Six monthly and Completion Report; January - June 2019	Operational	Partner
2019	Kiribati	Respectful Relationships Program	Operational	Partner
2019	Kiribati	Strengthening Peaceful Villages	Operational	Partner
2019	Kiribati	Kiribati Country Plan, 2018-2022	Planning/design	<i>Pacific Women Support Unit</i>
2018	Kiribati	Women's Economic Empowerment Feasibility Study, Kiribati	Research	<i>Pacific Women Support Unit</i>
2018	Nauru	Nauru Country Plan, 2018 - 2022	Planning/design	<i>Pacific Women Support Unit</i>

2018	Palau	Palau Country Plan Review	Evaluative	<i>Pacific Women</i> Support Unit
2015	Palau	Republic of Palau Country Plan 2015 - 2019	Planning/design	<i>Pacific Women</i> Support Unit
2018	Papua New Guinea	Development Cooperation Fact Sheet, Papua New Guinea	Background	DFAT
2019	Papua New Guinea	Aid Program Performance Report 2018 -19 Papua New Guinea	Background	DFAT
2019	Papua New Guinea	Aid Investment Plan Papua New Guinea 2015/16 to 2018/19	Background	DFAT
2019	Papua New Guinea	Aid Program Performance Report 2018-19 Papua New Guinea	Background	DFAT
	Papua New Guinea	Australian High Commission's annual 'Gender Action Plan' (2015-2020)	Background	
2017	Papua New Guinea	CARE International in Papua New Guinea Coffee Industry Support Project Mid-term Evaluation Report	Evaluative	Partner
2017	Papua New Guinea	CARE International in Papua New Guinea Coffee Industry Support Project Mid-term Evaluation Report	Evaluative	
2017	Papua New Guinea	<i>Pacific Women</i> Shaping Pacific Development - Mid-term Review of the Papua New Guinea Country Plan	Evaluative	Independent
2017	Papua New Guinea	<i>Pacific Women</i> Shaping Pacific Development - Papua New Guinea Performance Report	Evaluative	Independent
2018	Papua New Guinea	Young Women Leadership Project Final Report	Evaluative	Independent
2018	Papua New Guinea	Bougainville Women's Federation Voter Education Project - Final Project Report	Evaluative	Independent
2018	Papua New Guinea	Women mean business Empowering women through savings groups in Papua New Guinea Pilot Program Review	Evaluative	Independent
2018	Papua New Guinea	Parenting for Child Development - Final Evaluation Report	Evaluative	Independent
2018	Papua New Guinea	From Gender Based Violence to Gender Justice and Healing - Nazareth Centre Phase I Evaluation Report 2015 - 2018	Evaluative	Independent
2018	Papua New Guinea	Gender Justice Program Mid-term Review	Evaluative	Independent
2019	Papua New Guinea	Women's Economic Empowerment Among Coffee Smallholders in Papua New Guinea	Evaluative	Independent
	Papua New Guinea	Business Case for Women's Economic Empowerment In the Coffee Industry in Papua New Guinea Coffee Industry Support Project (CISP)	Evaluative	Independent
2018	Papua New Guinea	Cultivating Equality- Model Farming Family Extension Approach	Learning and comms	Partner
2018	Papua New Guinea	Kommuniti Lukautim ol Meri Project - Performance Summary Report	Learning and comms	Partner
2019	Papua New Guinea	Family Farm Teams: Executive Summary	Learning and comms	Partner
	Papua New Guinea	What are the key outcomes of the Papua New Guinea WiLSP candidate training so far?	Learning and comms	<i>Pacific Women</i> Support Unit
2017	Papua New Guinea	<i>Pacific Women</i> Shaping Pacific Development - Papua New Guinea Performance Report 2016-2017	Operational	<i>Pacific Women</i> Support Unit

2017	Papua New Guinea	Bougainville Women's Federation Voter Education Project - Final Evaluation Report	Operational	Partner
2017	Papua New Guinea	BCFW Monitoring and Evaluation Data	Operational	Partner
2018	Papua New Guinea	<i>Pacific Women</i> Shaping Pacific Development - Papua New Guinea Performance Report 2017 -2018	Operational	<i>Pacific Women</i> Support Unit
2018	Papua New Guinea	Young Women Leadership Project End of Project Evaluation	Operational	Partner
2018	Papua New Guinea	End of Project Report 2014-2017	Operational	Partner
2018	Papua New Guinea	Kommuniti Lukautim ol Meri Project - Impact Stories 2012 -2016	Operational	Partner
2018	Papua New Guinea	Final report: Highlands Sexual, Reproductive and Maternal Health Project	Operational	Partner
2019	Papua New Guinea	<i>Pacific Women</i> Shaping Pacific Development - Papua New Guinea Performance Report 2018 -2019	Operational	<i>Pacific Women</i> Support Unit
2019	Papua New Guinea	Coffee Industry Support Project – Progress Report	Operational	Partner
2019	Papua New Guinea	MSB & M-Bus Midyear Report	Operational	Partner
2019	Papua New Guinea	Six-monthly progress report Bel Isi Papua New Guinea	Operational	Partner
2019	Papua New Guinea	Creating an Entrepreneurial Ecosystem for Women in Papua New Guinea	Operational	Partner
2019	Papua New Guinea	Creating A Movement to End Violence Against Women in Papua New Guinea: The SASA! Pilot - Progress Report Update	Operational	Partner
2019	Papua New Guinea	Papua New Guinea Women in Leadership Support Program	Operational	Partner
2019	Papua New Guinea	Women and Extractives in Papua New Guinea	Operational	Partner
2019	Papua New Guinea	Business Coalition for Women - Six-monthly progress report	Operational	Partner
2015	Papua New Guinea	Papua New Guinea Country Plan 2014 - 2019	Planning/design	<i>Pacific Women</i> Support Unit
2019	Papua New Guinea	<i>Pacific Women</i> Shaping Pacific Development - 3 Year Evaluation - Progress re	Planning/design	<i>Pacific Women</i> Support Unit
2019	Papua New Guinea	Recommendations for a <i>Pacific Women</i> Papua New Guinea Third Country Plan July 2019–June 2022	Planning/design	<i>Pacific Women</i> Support Unit
2019	Papua New Guinea	<i>Pacific Women</i> Shaping Pacific Development - Papua New Guinea Country Plan Draft 2019 - 2022	Planning/design	<i>Pacific Women</i> Support Unit
	Papua New Guinea	Business Care for Women's Economic Empowerment in the Coffee Industry in Papua New Guinea	Planning/design	Partner
2018	Papua New Guinea	Do No Harm Research Bougainville	Research	Independent
2018	Papua New Guinea	Do No Harm Research Papua New Guinea	Research	Independent
2018	Papua New Guinea	Kisim Famili Plenin Strongim Komuniti - A formative study of women and adolescents' knowledge, perceptions and practices on modern family planning in two districts of	Research	Partner

		East Sepik and West Sepik Provinces of Papua New Guinea		
2017	Regional	Progressing Gender Equality in the Pacific (PGE) Project Mid-term Evaluation Report	Evaluative	<i>Pacific Women</i> Support Unit
2017	Regional	Review of UNICEF Pacific Child Protection Program	Evaluative	Partner
2018	Regional	UN Women Markets for Change Midterm Review Report	Evaluative	Independent
2018	Regional	Mid-term Evaluation of the Pacific Community Progressing Gender Equality in the Pacific Project Management Response	Evaluative	DFAT
	Regional	Eliminating Violence Against Women in the Asia Pacific: Its All of Our Responsibility	Learning and comms	Partner
2017	Regional	Funding for Social Inclusion Adviser - Progress Report	Operational	Partner
2018	Regional	Narrative Report to the Australian Government: July to December 2018	Operational	Partner
2018	Regional	Shifting the Power Coalition - July 2018 to July 2021	Operational	Partner
2018	Regional	Australia Awards Women's Leadership Initiative - Year 2 Report July 2018 - June 2020	Operational	Partner
2018	Regional	Markets for Change Six Month Progress Report - July - Dec 2018	Operational	Partner
2018	Regional	Partnering Women for Change – Regional Capacity Development - Six Monthly Progress Report	Operational	Partner
2018	Regional	Narrative Report to the Australian Government: 1 July to 31 December 2018	Operational	Partner
2018	Regional	Partnerships for Health and Rights Program: Working for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights for All in the Pacific - Project Completion Report	Operational	Partner
2018	Regional	End of service report to <i>Pacific Women</i> : Social Development Program North Pacific Gender Equality Adviser (SDP NPGEA), Maire Dwyer, Jan 2016- Dec 2018	Operational	Other
2018	Regional	Pacific Partnership to End Violence Against Women and Girls	Operational	Partner
2018	Regional	Narrative report to the Australian government July - December 2018	Operational	Partner
2019	Regional	Shifting the Power Coalition - July 2018 to December 2018	Operational	Partner
2019	Regional	Narrative Report to the Australian Government: 1 January 2019 to 30 June 2019 - The Pacific Community (SPC), Regional Rights Resource Team (RRRT)	Operational	Partner
2019	Regional	Australia Awards Women's Leadership Initiative - Year 2 Report June - September 2018	Operational	Partner
2019	Regional	Markets for Change Six Month Progress Report - January to June 2019	Operational	Partner
2019	Regional	Building Prosperity for Women Producers, Processors and Women Owner Business Through	Operational	Partner
2019	Regional	Gender Equality Theology - Institutional Transformation - Progress Report FY 2019	Operational	Partner

2019	Regional	Progressing Gender Equality in Pacific Islands Countries Phase 2 - Program Inception Report	Planning/design	Partner
2017	Regional	The Last Taboo: research on menstrual hygiene management in the Pacific: Solomon Islands, Fiji, and Papua New Guinea	Research	Partner
2018	RMI	Review of the Republic of the Marshall Islands 2014 Country Plan	Evaluative	<i>Pacific Women Support Unit</i>
2017	RMI	Republic of Marshall Islands Second Country Plan	Planning/design	<i>Pacific Women Support Unit</i>
2013	Samoa	Samoa <i>Pacific Women</i> Country Plan Phase 1 2013 - 2018	Planning/design	<i>Pacific Women Support Unit</i>
2017	Solomon Islands	Independent Review of the Solomon Islands Country Plan 2013-2017	Evaluative	Independent
2018	Solomon Islands	Gender Inclusive Value Chains - improving women's participation in Solomon Islands	Research	Partner
2018	Solomon Islands	Do No Harm Research Solomon Islands	Research	Independent
2018	Tonga	Tonga Progress Report June 2017 - September 2018	Evaluative	<i>Pacific Women Support Unit</i>
2019	Tonga	Formative Evaluation of the Tonga National Centre for Women and Children Women's Economic Empowerment Project	Evaluative	Independent
2013	Tonga	<i>Pacific Women</i> Shaping Pacific Development Tonga Country Plan	Planning/design	<i>Pacific Women Support Unit</i>
2018	Tuvalu	Review Report: Tuvalu Country Plan 2015-2018	Evaluative	<i>Pacific Women Support Unit</i>
2018	Tuvalu	Tuvalu Study on People with Disability	Research	<i>Pacific Women Support Unit</i>
2018	Tuvalu	Tuvalu Study on People with Disability	Research	Independent
2018	Vanuatu	Aid Investment Plan for Vanuatu 2015/16 to 2018/19	Background	DFAT
2019	Vanuatu	Development Cooperation Fact Sheet, Vanuatu	Background	DFAT
2019	Vanuatu	Aid Program Performance Report Vanuatu	Background	DFAT
2016	Vanuatu	Country Reflection Workshop Vanuatu, April 2016	Evaluative	Independent
2018	Vanuatu	Vanuatu Country Progress Report 2016 - 2018	Evaluative	<i>Pacific Women Support Unit</i>
2018	Vanuatu	Vanuatu Women's Centre: Program Against Violence Against Women, July 2019 - June 2020 Annual Plan	Evaluative	Partner
2019	Vanuatu	Vanuatu Women's Centre: Program Against Violence Against Women, July 2017 - October 2018	Evaluative	Partner
2017	Vanuatu	Achievements from 2008 2017 (website post)	Learning and comms	Partner
2019	Vanuatu	Young Women Leadership Program Bios and Profiles	Learning and comms	Partner
	Vanuatu	Case Study - Economic and Social Change: The Experience of Women Producers from the Skills for Handicraft Christmas Decoration Work-stream, Malampa Handicraft Centre	Learning and comms	Partner

2018	Vanuatu	Six Monthly <i>Pacific Women</i> Progress Report: Gender Equality Together	Operational	Partner
2018	Vanuatu	<i>Pacific Women</i> Update: July - December 2018	Operational	Partner
2019	Vanuatu	Six Monthly <i>Pacific Women</i> Progress Report: Strengthening the trading facilitation structure for the community's products	Operational	Partner
2019	Vanuatu	Six Monthly <i>Pacific Women</i> Progress Report: Gender Equality Together	Operational	Partner
2019	Vanuatu	<i>Pacific Women</i> Update: January - June 2019	Operational	Partner
2016	Vanuatu	<i>Pacific Women</i> Shaping Pacific Development Vanuatu Country Plan (Phase 2)	Planning/design	<i>Pacific Women</i> Support Unit
2018	Vanuatu	<i>Pacific Women</i> Shaping Pacific Development: Vanuatu Country Plan Summary	Planning/design	<i>Pacific Women</i> Support Unit
	Vanuatu	Thinking and working politically in the Vanuatu skills sector: supporting local leadership and building a political constituency for change	Research	Independent
2018		End of Service Report	Operational	Other
2016	Fiji	Australia-Fiji Civil Society Engagement Strategy 2016 - 2019	Background	DFAT
2019	Fiji	Development Cooperation Fact Sheet Fiji	Background	DFAT
2016	Fiji	Aid Investment Plan Fiji	Background	DFAT
2019	Fiji	Aid Program Performance Report	Background	DFAT
2016	Fiji	3 Year Evaluation Progress Report Part 2: Country Case Study - Fiji	Evaluative	Independent
2016	Fiji	We Rise Coalition Year 3 Annual Report	Operational	Partner
2018	Fiji	Fiji Women's Fund Six Monthly Progress Report	Operational	Partner
2019	Fiji	Fiji Women's Fund Annual Progress Report	Operational	Partner
2019	Fiji	Fiji Women's Crises Centre Annual Report 2019	Operational	Partner
2019	Papua New Guinea	Papua New Guinea Country Plan Summary	Planning/design	<i>Pacific Women</i> Support Unit
2016	Papua New Guinea	Papua New Guinea Third Country Plan	Planning/design	<i>Pacific Women</i> Support Unit
2016	Papua New Guinea	Papua New Guinea Second Country Plan	Planning/design	<i>Pacific Women</i> Support Unit
2019	Papua New Guinea	National Policy for Women and Gender Equality (2011–2015)	Background	
	Papua New Guinea	Gender Equity and Social Inclusion (GESI) Policy	Background	
	Papua New Guinea	National Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Gender Based Violence	Background	
2018	Papua New Guinea	Papua New Guinea Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Framework	Background	

2017	Papua New Guinea	Mid-term Review of the Papua New Guinea Country Plan	Evaluative	Independent
2018	Papua New Guinea	Bougainville Women's Federation Voter Education Project Completion Report	Operational	Partner
2017	Papua New Guinea	Investing in Women: New Evidence for the Business Case	Learning and comms	Partner
2019	Papua New Guinea	<i>Pacific Women</i> in Papua New Guinea Performance Reporting 2018 - 2019	Evaluative	<i>Pacific Women</i> Support Unit
2019	Papua New Guinea	Bougainville Performance Report 2018 - 2019	Evaluative	<i>Pacific Women</i> Support Unit

Table Two - People consulted

Location	Name	Organisation		
Fiji	Nalini Singh	Fiji Women's Rights Movement Chair of Fiji Women's Fund		
	Michelle Reddy	Fund Manager, Fiji Women's Fund		
	Menka Goundan	Senior Program Manager, Fiji Women's Fund		
	Susan Grey	Executive Director, FemLink Pacific		
	Brigitte Sonnois	Chief Child Protection, UNICEF		
	Sandra Bernklau	Representative, UN Women Fiji Multi Country Office		
	Sarah Boxall	UN Women		
	Kemueli Naiqama	Deputy Government Statistician, Bureau of Statistics		
	Shamima Ali	Coordinator, Fiji Women's Crises Centre		
	Emily Hazelman	Program Manager, DFAT		
	Angeline Fatiaki	Program Manager, DFAT		
	Rochelle White	Counselor for Development Cooperation, DFAT		
	Meghan Cooper	International Women's Development Agency		
	Hon. Mereseini Vuniwaqa	Minister, Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation		
	Selai Korovusere	Director Women		
	Setareki Macanawai	Chief Executive Officer, Pacific Disability Forum		
	Angeline Chand	Pacific Disability Forum		
	Rev, Sereima Lomaloma	House of Sarah		
	Debra Sadranu	Managing Director, Spa Academy		
	Papua Guinea	New	Angelyn Amos	
Barbara Pamphilon			Project lead, University of Canberra	
Charlotte Kakebeeke			Program Director, Oxfam Papua New Guinea	
Doreen Fernando			Program Director, CARE International	
Emily Ellis			IWDA Young Women's leadership program Bougainville	
Elena Leddra			Program Manager, IWDA	
Evonne Kennedy			Executive Officer, Business Coalition for Women	
Hannah McMahon			Program Administrator, Department of Pacific Affairs, ANU	
Josephine Pitmur			Department of Justice and Attorney General	
Judith Oliver			Bougainville Women's Federation	
Dr. Judy Putt			Lead researcher, Department of Pacific Affairs, ANU	
Sr. Lorraine Garasu			Centre Coordinator, Nazareth Centre	
Marcia Kalinoe			National Program Coordinator, Consultative and Implementation Monitoring Committee	
Richelle Tickle			Country Program Manager, <i>Pacific Women</i> Papua New Guinea	
Kiribati			Ioanna Taraia	Director, Te Teitoinigaina
			Anne Kaitu	Director, Women's Division, Ministry of Women, Youth, Sports and Social Welfare
	Eribwebwe Takirua	Inspector and Domestic Violence and Sexual Offences Coordinator		
	Meere Maere	Inclusion & Equity Officer, Kiribati Institute of Technology		
		Manager Student Support Services, Kiribati Institute of Technology		
	Carolyn Jones	Academic Services Advisor, Kiribati Institute of Technology		
	Aretaake Lentaake	Director, Ministry of Justice		
	Rev Maleta Tenten	Secretary for Mission, Uniting Church		
	Tabaina luta	Uniting Church		
Bairenpa Kirabuke	Uniting Church			

	Norma Yeeting	Executive Director, Kiribati Family Health Association (KFHA)
	Bruce Cowled	High Commissioner, Australian High Commission
	Kakiateiti Erikate	Senior Program Manager, Australian High Commission
	Rusila Tekamotiata	Australian High Commission
	Helen Stannard	Team Leader, Kiribati Education Improvement Program
	Teburantaake Kaei	Kiribati Education Improvement Program
	Reetina Katokita	Director Policy, Planning & Development, Ministry of Education
	Remwan Mantaia	Maternal Health Program Manager, Ministry of Health and Medical Services
	Eretii Timeon	Director, Ministry of Health & Medical Services (MHMS)
	Koriri Tioti	Deputy Principal, Kiribati School & Centre for Children with Special Needs
	Eretia Tieei	Child Protection Officer, Te Toa Matao
	Noketi Karoua	Business Development Officer, Te Toa Matao
	Sister Kateia Teanako	Provincial Leader, Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Crisis Centre
	Sister Rosarin Tataua	Sister in charge of women and Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Crises Centre
	Sister Tetaake Kaimanga	Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Crises Centre
	Sr Korete Temmoa	Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Crises Centre
	Erimeta Barako	Coordinator, Aia Maea Ainen Kiribati (AMAK)
	Froline Tokaa	
	Kakiata Tikataake	Deputy Clerk, Parliament
	Toorenga. B	Community Leader, Abatao Village
	Tetiria Tautika	Community Leader, Abatao Village
	Alieta Taamwatau	Community Leader, Abatao Village
	Tekanana Atongannara	Community Leader, Abatao Village
	Katuri Bangao	Community Leader, Abatao Village
	Terouta Tekeoa	Community Leader, Abatao Village
	Metera Ariera	Community Member, Buota Village
	Meere Katoaiti	Community Member, Buota Village
	Taburewa Tetaake	Community Member, Buota Village
	Reiango Kabora	Community Member, Buota Village
	Beataa Tavita	Community Member, Buota Village
	Veronika Kabwati	Community Member, Buota Village
	Takeiti Kabureta	Community Member, Buota Village
	Taeribwa Pentusi	Community Member, Buota Village
	Tooma Tebao	Community Member, Buota Village
Vanuatu	Anna Gilbert	Strategic Adviser, DFAT
	Cathy McWilliam	First Secretary Development Cooperation, Australian High Commission Vanuatu
	Cindy Vanuaroro	Presbyterian Women's Mission Union
	Fremden Shadrack	Vanuatu Skills Partnership
	May Garae	Vanuatu Skills Partnership
	Seman Dalesa Saraken	Governance Program Officer, Department of Women Affairs
	Megan Chisholm	CARE Vanuatu
	Meryline Tahi	Centre Coordinator, Vanuatu Women's Centre
	Anne Marie Simeon	Vanuatu Women's Centre
	Marilyn George	Vanuatu Women's Centre
	Miriam Bule	Vanuatu Women's Centre
	Sandrine Wallez	Director, ACTIV
	Renie Anderson	Australian High Commission Vanuatu

	Jeannette Wallace	Secretary, Silae Vanua Market Vendor Association
	Madlyne Taripoa	Treasurer, Silae Vanua Market Vendor Association
	Morasi Joel	Spokeswoman, 12 Market vendors from Rentapao, Teouma, Etas, Lamine
	Wilson Toa	Coordinator, Balance of Power
	Jo Dorras	Wan Smol Bag
	Jodie Devine	Wan Smol Bag
	Betty Toa	Country Program Coordinator, UN Women
	Trisha Toangwera	UN Women
	Vasemaca Takau	UNDP
Tuvalu	Mr Melton Tauetia	General Manager Fusialofa (DPO)
	Eleazar O'Connor	Senior Program Manager, Gender Focal Point, DFAT
	Jo Houghton	First Secretary, DFAT
Tonga	Ofa Guttenbeil-Likiliki	Tonga Women and Children's Crisis centre
	Lesila Toia	Tonga Women and Children's Crisis centre
	Eleni Mone	AFP program, Families Free of Violence
	Tracey Tupou	Program manager, Gender Focal Point, DFAT
	Ana Baker	Program manager, Gender Focal Point, DFAT
Regional	Jane Kierath	First Secretary, Gender Equality and Human Development DFAT
	Kim Robertson	The Pacific Community, Social Development Programme
	Joanne Kunatuba	The Pacific Community, Social Development Programme
	Emily Sharp	The Pacific Community,
	Bronwyn Spencer	Uniting World
	Natasha Holland	Uniting World
	Abigail Erikson	Pacific Partnership to End VAWG Programme Manager, UNWomen
	Michelle Higelin	Action Aid
	Karen Mapusua	POETCom
	Miles Young	The Pacific Community, RRRT
Canberra	Tracey Newbury	Director, Pacific Gender and Health Section DFAT
Support Unit	Leonie Whyte	Acting Team Leader
	Tara Chetty	Gender advisor
	Laura Holbeck	Monitoring and Evaluation Manager
	Amali Shaw	Monitoring and Evaluation Officer
	Jennifer	
	Nicol Cave	
	Lye	
	Farni	
Other	Audrey Aumua	<i>Pacific Women</i> Advisory Board member
	Savina Nongebatu	<i>Pacific Women</i> Advisory Board member
	Francis Barns	Consultant undertaking evaluation of the FWF

Table Three - Data sources by evaluation question

EQs	Sub themes	Program database	Program documentation	In-country consultations	Distance interviews	Other
EQ1	To what extent has <i>Pacific Women</i> achieved its intermediate outcomes and contributed to longer term change?					
1.1	Program scope and reach to vulnerable women and communities					
1.2	Progress to program outcomes					
1.3	Progress from baseline					
1.4	Responsiveness to Pacific context and culture					
1.5	How well has the modality of PW supported the intended outcomes?					
EQ2	How can the program maximise progress and sustainability in the last three years of implementation? What promising practices and approaches are evident from program implementation to date?					
2.1	Capacity development of partners' organisations, women's movement or					
2.2	Leveraging of Australian government policy and programs					
2.3	Support to networks, coalitions or associations					
2.4	Influence on policy, practices and programs of other donors and Pacific					
2.5	Evidence of ongoing benefits from program activities					
2.6	Contribution of regional programs					
EQ3	To what extent have recommendations from the Three-Year <i>Pacific Women</i> Evaluation been addressed?					
3.1	Expected outcomes from the recommendations identified in the evaluation					
3.2	Practical changes in resourcing, practice or approach have been					
3.3	Contextual factors and mechanisms have influenced this progress					
3.4	Impact of progress on management and program implementation					
3.5	Stakeholders satisfaction in relation to evaluation recommendations					
3.6	Implications of this progress for further program development					

Annex Two – Program Approach

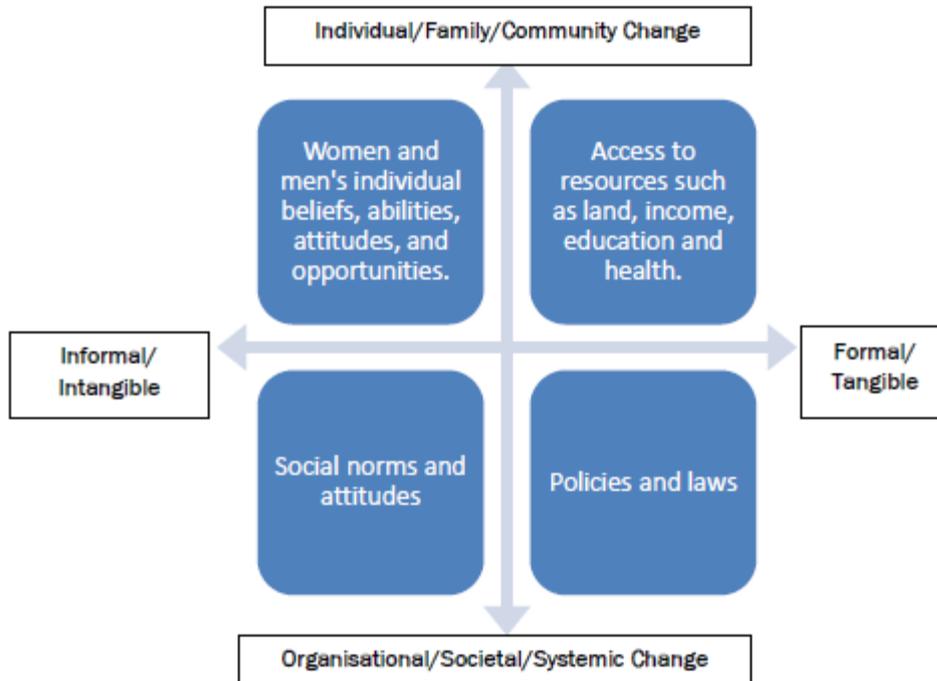
Program Logic

YEARS 1- 3 Short Term Outcomes	YEARS 4 - 7 Intermediate Outcomes	YEARS 8 - 10 Long Term Outcomes
 <p>There are increasing enabling spaces for women and girls to participate and practice decision-making skills (1)</p> <p>Community and Public and Private sector knowledge about gender equality has increased.(3)</p>	<p>More women and girls are visible and influence decision making at community, local and national levels (2) (6)</p> <p>More women stand for or apply for leadership positions (4) (6)</p> <p>Public and private institutions have developed policies, practices and programs that support and enable women to move into leadership roles (5)</p>	<p>Community, local and national decision-making reflects the needs and interests of women and girls</p> <p>Women elected to local and national level governments have the skills to fulfil their roles</p> <p>Women hold senior positions in the public and private sector and have the skills to fulfil their roles</p> <p>Community and public and private sector attitudes and perceptions support women and girls' inclusion in leadership and decision making processes</p>
 <p>Family, community, public and private sector knowledge about the benefits of women's economic empowerment has increased. (7)</p> <p>Women are provided with opportunities to participate in formal and informal economic activities or business entrepreneurship opportunities (9)</p> <p>Public and private sector identify the need policies and legislation that mandates safe working conditions for women (11)</p>	<p>Family, community, public and private sector attitudes and perceptions support women's economic empowerment (8)</p> <p>Women have developed increased knowledge, skills and confidence to successfully undertake formal and informal economic activities (10)</p> <p>Private and public sector have developed policies, practices and programs that support and enable women's economic empowerment (12)</p>	<p>Family and community members share the burden of work to enable women's participation in economic activities</p> <p>Women have increased decision making in relation to their income and assets</p> <p>More women are employed in the public and private sectors and running small businesses</p> <p>National policies and regulations for safe working conditions for women are operating effectively</p>
 <p>Pacific women, their partners, families and communities understand the causes of violence against women (13)</p> <p>Legislative reforms that protect women and children human rights have been enacted and have commenced implementation (15)</p> <p>Women and children can access contextually relevant support and justice services to assist them to respond to and deal with violence (17)</p>	<p>Pacific women, their partners, families and communities mobilise and take action to address violence against women (14)</p> <p>Duty bearers support and implement legislative reforms that protect women and children's human rights (16)</p> <p>Contextually relevant prevention and justice services continue to expand and result in more women and children reporting violence and accessing services (18)</p>	<p>Family and community tolerance for violence against women is reduced</p> <p>Legislative reforms that protect women and children's human rights are operating effectively and duty bearers are upholding the responsibilities</p> <p>Contextually relevant prevention services are more widely available across the region, and women and children are accessing and reporting violence when it occurs.</p>
 <p>Public and private institutions have increased knowledge and capacity to develop gender equality policies, practices and programs (19)</p> <p>Collective action (at the community, local and national level) is strengthened to advocate for gender equality (21)</p> <p>Women and girls have access to information about their rights and responsibilities (23)</p> <p><small>*The numbers in the brackets represent the program logic outcome assumptions</small></p>	<p>Public and private institutions are implementing policies, practices and programs that support gender equality (21)</p> <p>Collective action (at the community local and national level) is effectively advocating for social and legislative change in relation to gender equality (23)</p> <p>Women and girls have more knowledge, skills and confidence to claim their rights and access resources (25)</p>	<p>Public and private institutions are up-holding the rights of women and girls</p> <p>Collective action (at the community local and national level) has resulted in social and legislative change in relation to gender equality</p> <p>Women and girls are utilising their strengthened agency for positive change in gender equality</p>

Pacific Women Program Theory



Rao & Kelleher Framework



Annex Three – Three Year evaluation recommendations

Context:

- Since ownership by women and women's organisations from the Pacific is a major part of the driving force that will gain leverage for the programme and sustain its benefits, the programme needs to develop specific and explicit strategies to advance ownership (and leadership) by women, women's organisations and other organisations from the Pacific region.

Strategy:

- Now is the time to scale up work on the WEE and WLDM outcomes: rebalance overall resource distribution to better support these and to ensure that all outcome areas are active in each country. Wherever possible, work in outcome combinations to achieve this.
- In cases where it is felt Ending Violence against Women should continue to be more emphasised than other outcomes, the logic for this should be reflected in the Theory of Change.
- Conduct an analysis by project of the extent to which alignment with the programme's administrative mechanisms including reporting systems, MEF and objectives has been achieved, and to gauge levels of recognition for the programme.
- Renegotiate or reconsider the terms of *Pacific Women's* relationships with partners that have low levels of recognition for the programme and low levels of alignment with key administrative mechanisms. Clarify reporting requirements so that reporting is understood to be reporting to *Pacific Women* rather than simply to DFAT (whether through Post or through the Support Unit).
- Develop a specific and explicit strategy to move towards ownership and leadership by women, women's organisations and other organisations from the Pacific region including by reducing the level of funds going through large partners such as UN organisations and INGOs. Include building *Pacific Women* programme identity among new partners as a core part of this strategy.
- Strengthen and enhance the mechanisms for reflection and learning across the programme. These should make the most of experience generated, promote peer learning, and aim to create a fully 'joined-up' picture in the near future.
- A more strategic approach to research supporting the programme should be the outcome of the continued research strategy development.
- More attention to and emphasis on the issue and role of innovation will help to collect and synthesise information on innovative approaches being tested across the programme and to bring these into systematic learning processes.

Process:

- Initiate an open and forward-looking process between Posts, the Support Unit and the *Pacific Women* management team to explore a dynamic and strategic role for the Support Unit. A more dynamic role could contribute to building the identity of the programme and therefore a strong platform for advocacy and leverage. This process must maximise and reinforce a culture of mutual support among a set of well-positioned actors with clear common purpose.
- A strategic role might include utilising the capacity within the Support Unit to develop and carry out a strategy for evolving Pacific leadership for the programme and ownership by women and women's organisations from the Pacific. Articulating the vision for this more proactive role for the Support Unit and generating understanding and agreement for it among key staff at Post is a key 'next step' for the programme.
- Develop a stronger role in advocacy at country and regional level among Advisory Board members and clarify their roles and potential roles in generating 'value added' for the programme.
- Seek out ways to support GFPs; engage them in the *Pacific Women* Theory of Change; and clarify its operational strategy. To the degree that their wider roles allow, this could include facilitating a deeper analysis of gender inequality and the underlying theoretical basis for the Theory of Change. It could also involve casting the net more widely at annual GFP meetings to include government counterparts and other stakeholders who liaise most closely with Post – this could provide opportunities for building relationships as well as enhancing learning.

- Create opportunities wherever possible to build linkages across the programme's partners to enhance programme visibility, coordination, learning and a sense of collective action.
- Establish in-country links (information flows) between regionally funded partners and bilaterally funded partners as a matter of urgency in all countries.

Outcomes and Challenges:

- More focus on WEE and WLDM will be necessary to produce consistent outcomes in these areas, particularly since these outcomes do not have the advantage of considerable prior work in the Pacific region.
- Given budget constraints it is critical to take all opportunities for leveraging resources as well as generating momentum by increasing the local profile and branding of this flagship programme. Raising the profile of the programme provides the platform on which raising the profile of gender inequality can be achieved. It provides an opportunity both for projects coming together around shared regional-level goals and successful progress towards these. At the same time, a higher level profile can create a platform for raising awareness of the extent and role of persisting gender inequalities that will require continued and concerted resources from donors and governments alike if they are to be successfully and fully addressed.
- Enhancing government engagement may be achieved by continuing to support GFPs with more senior DFAT staff in engaging governments, and also by supporting women's organisations to find the right balance between critique of governments and engagement with them.
- Facilitate working across outcomes wherever possible. Consider aiming to create at least one example – in a strategic small island location - of full coverage on all outcomes. This would provide a “test case” for the Theory of Change to be taken up at final evaluation stage and contribute significantly to learning on social norm change.
- Develop a concerted strategy for promoting programme identity by bringing partners together in common purpose and demonstrating their contributions to common regional goals. Further communication of the vision and strategic purpose of the programme would contribute to a clearer understanding at Post of how visibility for *Pacific Women* can bolster its progress. Establishing a branding strategy which enables recognition and leverage will be important in the next phase, alongside clearly articulating a regional convening role for the programme. Establish agreements at DFAT Posts and with all partners and sub-partners regarding the profile to be given to the programme.
- Further efforts to bring together programme stakeholders would help join up the programme. These could include bringing together: Gender Advisors; partners working in outcome areas of WEE and WLDM; and ‘specialist’ partners with those who are developing new working areas. Innovations for bringing people together using mechanisms which do not incur substantial travel costs should be explored.
- Establish clear mechanisms for capacity support and mentoring in the relatively less experienced WEE and WLDM outcomes as the programme matures and expands this work.
- Ensure all capacity support is firmly focused on transferring skills into organisations, and this be included in tasks that utilise consultants.
- All programme level, TA exercises should also have an element of capacity transfer built into design as a non-negotiable component.
- Clearly separating M&E support exercises into the different types of capacity they may be addressing would contribute to building mutually supportive relationships.
- Require all partnerships with UN organisations, international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) and others operating ‘sandwich’ partnerships to include capacity needs identification for sub-partners (in cases where this is not already done) and a clear strategy for assessing sub-partner progress towards criteria for becoming eligible for independent funding.
- Assign scores to the standards and define more precisely the requirements that need to be met before allocating a score, as suggested by the adapted matrix.
- Consider using a second type of analysis to track changes in quantitative, qualitative and monetary indicators in specific results areas, set against programme costs.
- Shift the emphasis on building knowledge and understanding to the weaker areas of WEE and WLDM and maximise opportunities for knowledge building in these areas at learning and other events.
- Consider developing more systematic systems for distinguishing the different methodologies used in training and to promote the personalised and experiential methods generally used by

behaviour and social norms change advocates – including for methodologies used to build male advocacy for gender equality. This could create important knowledge for the programme and strengthen behaviour change efforts.

- Finalising the *Pacific Women* research strategy must include components to build local research capacity as well as to make research findings available to partners in accessible and relevant formats. Better understanding of what works in working with male advocates in the Pacific region would add to the knowledge base.
- Assumptions guiding the current ToC should be reviewed so that programme activities can be better targeted to address them through methodology or approach. Regular review of these assumptions, including with stakeholder groups, would strengthen the basis for future programme responses.
- Consider the issue of enhancing agency as a cross-cutting theme, rather than an outcome. It should thus be supported through activities in each outcome area. This implies bringing the issue of social norm change among women to the forefront of the programme and exploring promising methodologies to address this.