

UN Pacific Regional Anti-Corruption project (UN-PRAC) - Independent Project Evaluation

DFAT Management Response

Overview

The United Nations Pacific Regional Anti-Corruption (UN-PRAC) project (2017-2020; \$6.1 million) is a DFAT funded activity to support Pacific Island Countries (PICs) with implementation of the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) and to develop anti-corruption systems. UN-PRAC is jointly managed by UNODC and UNDP in a globally-unique arrangement in the UN system. Advisors from the UNDP and UNODC deliver the project from in UNDP's Effective Governance Unit in Fiji. The UN-PRAC Project was established in 2012 to work with all 15 PICs. Phase II of UN-PRAC commenced on 1 July 2016 and will conclude on 30 June 2020.

Consistent with DFAT's funding agreement, UNDP and UNODC commissioned an Independent Project Evaluation of UN-PRAC in 2018. The IPE was scheduled and managed by the UN-PRAC project managers and conducted by external independent evaluators. The evaluation covered the period between July 2016 and 6 September 2018. The evaluation itself was conducted from August to November 2018.

The UN-PRAC program managers have prepared a response to the recommendations from the IPE which is being considered by the project implementation partners. DFAT has prepared Partner Performance Assessments of the UNDP and UNODC management and implementation of the projects in 2017 and 2018. DFAT's management response to the IPE recommendations follows.

<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Management Response (accepted/partially accepted/rejected)</i>
1: Increase the focus of the project on Right to Information (RTI).	<p>Partially accepted: DFAT notes that the UN-PRAC IPE and advisors have presented the case for expanding coverage of the project to include RTI. Before agreeing to expansion of project scope to cover RTI, DFAT will seek clarification from UNDP/UNODC on the case for inclusion. This will draw on an assessment in late 2019 of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity of UN-PRAC advisers to introduce a new theme while maintaining attention on long-standing goals; • Availability of resourcing from within the UN-PRAC funding envelope to maintain support for all PICs; and, • Alignment of RTI with implementation of UNCAC. <p>DFAT will also consider whether to expand the scope of UN-PRAC to cover RTI during assessment of renewal of the project through a third phase of the project.</p>
2: Revise how the project is administered, including new posts and new capacity.	<p>Partially accepted: Before agreeing to changes to the project's administration and introduction of new posts and capacity, DFAT would require detailed information on the rationale and resourcing required to support UN-PRAC. Key issues would include an assessment of the proposed staffing profile, location of new posts and the capabilities required to support advice to PICs. Critical concerns include the ability of UNDP and UNODC to recruit high-quality personnel to provide advisory support along with management and administration of an expanded presence in the Pacific.</p>
3: Consider transitioning UN-PRAC into a regional programme	<p>Partially accepted: DFAT welcomes the proposal to deepen UN-PRAC's engagement with countries in the Pacific including through establishment</p>

<p>with sufficient resources to operate at the regional level with national components.</p>	<p>of individual county programs that are able to respond to requests for assistance. However, DFAT requires assurance that any transition from a regional program serving the needs of all PICs to a program focused on individual countries would maintain the integrity of the program as a source of support for all countries in the Pacific.</p>
<p>4: Increase the Donor Base of the Regional Work</p>	<p>Accepted: Increasing the resources available to support implementation of UNCAC in the Pacific through contributions from other donors is likely to improve UN-PRAC's capacity to broaden the span and intensity of engagement and support to PICs. Ideally, increased resourcing from donors should enable UNDP and UNODC to recruit additional advisors with the specialist skills required to provide tailored support that meets the needs of individual PICs. Australia recommends that the advisors are placed a resident missions to ensure that they are able to build relationships with key officials and have on-the-ground familiarity with the local context. If UN-PRAC secures funding from other donors, Australia will work with UNODC and UNDP to establish a governance arrangement to ensure strategic alignment of donor interests and coordination.</p>
<p>5: Re-consider the added-value of the provision of small grants to project beneficiaries.</p>	<p>Accepted: DFAT supports actions to improve the efficiency of UN-PRAC's operations including the ending of the small grants element of the project. DFAT notes that while the small grants were a means to support participation of officials and other stakeholders in activities related to the aims of the program, the administrative burden was significant and diverted the attention of the UNDP and UNODC advisors from core work.</p> <p>DFAT will seek advice on the availability of other resources and means to support participation of officials and other stakeholders in UNCAC related activities if a third phase of the program is developed.</p>
<p>6: Promote more bilateral and multi-lateral interactions between beneficiaries through UN-PRAC platforms.</p>	<p>Accepted: DFAT supports establishment and use of broad coalitions drawn from multi-lateral organisations, government, civil society and the private sector to support implementation of UNCAC in the Pacific. Coalitions will ensure that the UN-PRAC agenda reflects the needs and interests of beneficiaries in the development of legislative, institutional and implementation arrangements.</p>
<p>7. More interventions – both through mainstreaming and targeting – are required to promote gender equality in the project's work.</p>	<p>Accepted: DFAT would welcome increased attention to gender mainstreaming in the UN-PRAC project. Noting that there is limited information and analysis of the gender impacts of corruption in the Pacific (and the wider Indo-Pacific region), DFAT encourages UN-PRAC to complete a detailed assessment of corruption in the region and its impacts on women and men. This will provide a baseline understanding of issues that will improve the project's capacity to devise interventions that mainstream gender in programming. DFAT will consider requests to provide expertise that will contribute to improved gender equity outcomes in the Pacific.</p>