Australia Awards Global Tracer Facility

Global Synthesis Report Methodology

Acknowledgements:

Acknowledgement of Country:

In the spirit of reconciliation, the authors would like to acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia, including the Wurundjeri People of the Kulin Nation, where this report was written, and their connections to land, sea and community. We pay our respect to their elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who continue to contribute to our work to improve learning, education, and research.

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Overview

The Australian Awards Global Tracer Facility (GTF) Global Synthesis Report is designed to highlight key evidence and findings from 8 years of operation. It involves the consolidation of thousands of data points collected by the GTF over the years to build insight and evidence of the Australia Awards Program Outcomes. The GTF developed a theory-based approach using the *Australia Awards Global Monitoring and Evaluation Framework* (DFAT, 2022) to draw on the 8 years of GTF reporting to inform DFAT of the extent to which the Australia Awards are achieving its long-term Program Outcomes.
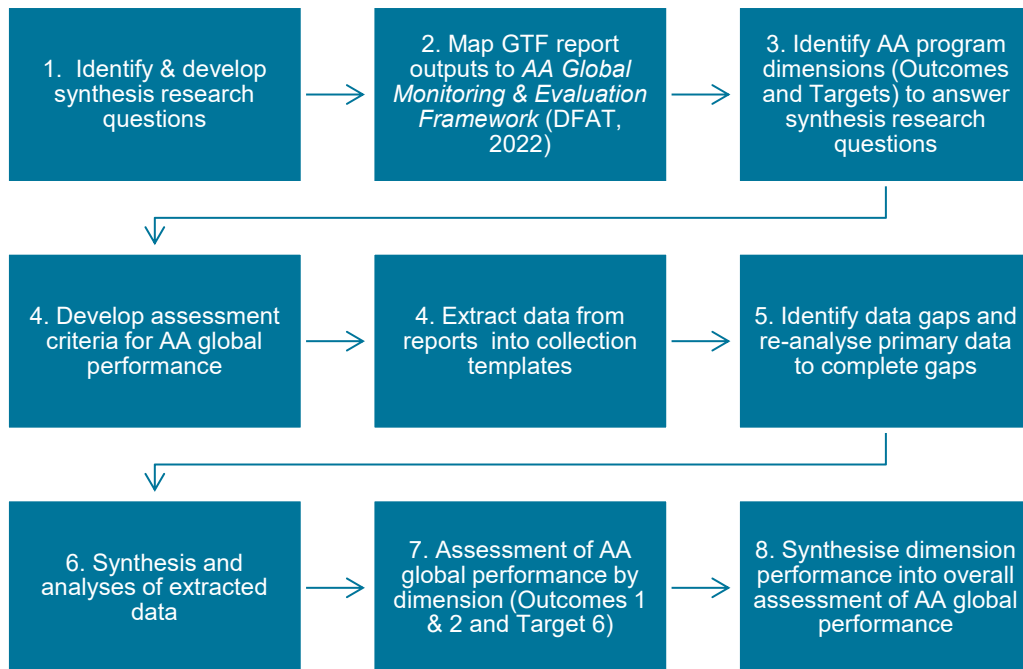
This methodology report is designed to supplement understanding of the process involved in the GTF development of its Global Synthesis Report. The GTF Global Synthesis Report can be found here.

Implementation

The GTF undertook a systematic analysis of the 40 GTF research products developed between 2016 to 2024 to produce a compilation of key findings on the long-term program outcomes of the Australia Awards from different perspectives, using a variety of different data points. The synthesis aggregated findings from the GTF quantitative and qualitative data collections which includes:

- 5 Global Tracer Surveys (GTS)
- 2 Longitudinal Global Tracer Surveys (LGTS)
- 2 targeted surveys with a focus alumni population
- 4 social network analysis studies (SNA)
- 27 qualitative interview studies (QIS)

Figure 1 outlines the process used by the GTF in conducting this study.

1. Identify & develop synthesis research questions	2. Map GTF report outputs to *AA Global Monitoring & Evaluation Framework* (DFAT, 2022)	3. Identify AA program dimensions (Outcomes and Targets) to answer synthesis research questions
4. Develop assessment criteria for AA global performance	4. Extract data from reports into collection templates	5. Identify data gaps and re-analyse primary data to complete gaps
6. Synthesis and analyses of extracted data	7. Assessment of AA global performance by dimension (Outcomes 1 & 2 and Target 6)	8. Synthesise dimension performance into overall assessment of AA global performance

Figure 1: Synthesis implementation process

The collected data was categorised based on key variables and themes related to the programs objectives and long-term outcomes. Researchers analysed the collected data to identify patterns, trends, and correlations. See Figure 2 below for an example of the mapping process.

Figure 2: Screenshot to illustrate example of GTF report mapping Year 1 to Year 8 for development of GTF Research Synthesis

Using the mapping described above, the synthesis drew on alumni data from a range of different collection methods across a significant number of cohort years. Figure 3 shows the spread of GTF research reports by type of data collection and by alumni completion cohort year, to show the ability of this synthesis to focus on specific cohorts within the alumni group, as well as to garner overall outcomes across all alumni cohorts in their long-term outcomes.
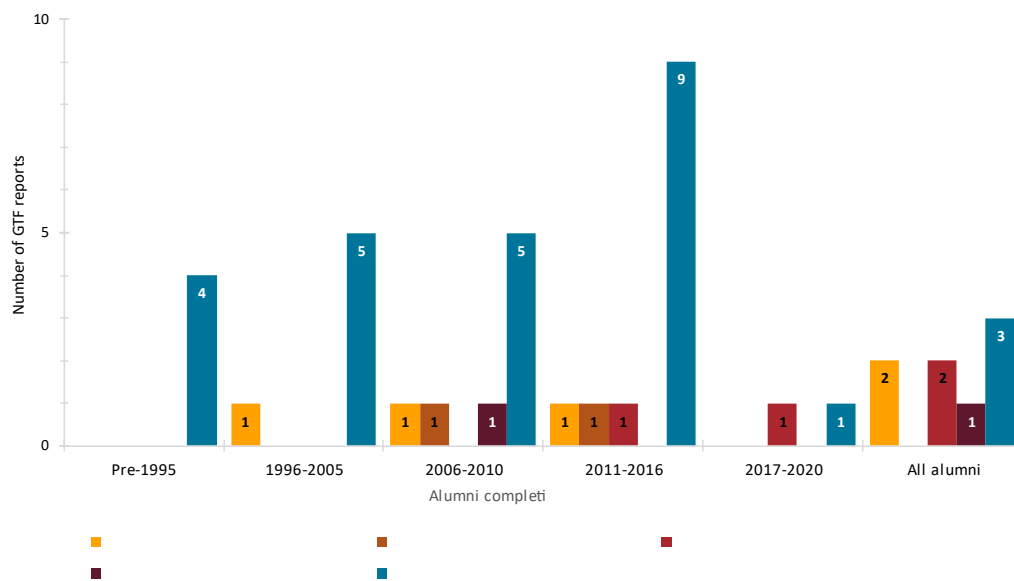
Figure 3: GTF research reports by alumni cohort of focus

The exploration of data relating to long-term outcomes of the Australia Awards using the research outputs of the GTF is further indicated through the information in Figure 4. This figure shows the way in which the GTF research team has identified where aspects of evidence relating to the long-term outcomes can be found within GTF reporting. The synthesis analysis work involved 'diving' into these reports to extract data points relating to each of the aspects of the outcomes and collating them in a means that enables developing some overarching insight into the achievement of outcomes from the perspective of alumni contributions and networks.
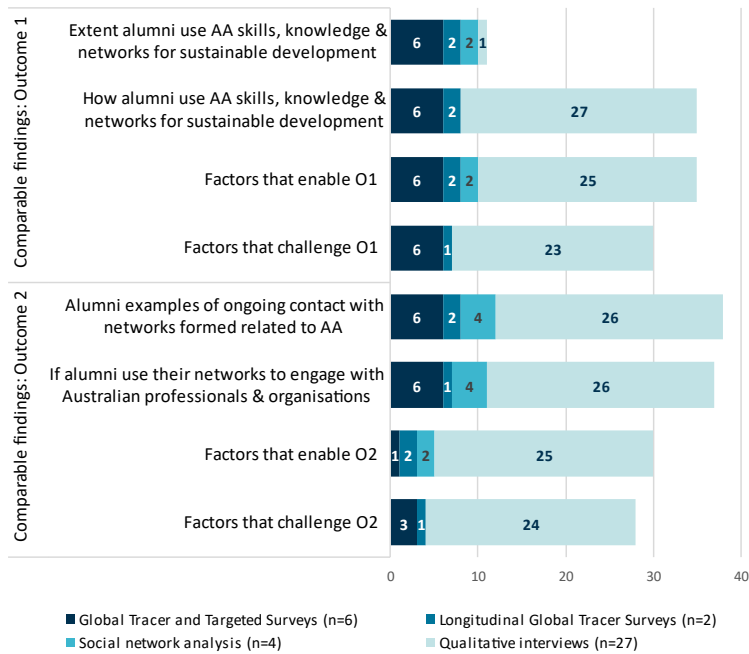
Figure 4: GTF Research Reports by type of collection and relevance to aspects of the Australia Awards Long-Term Outcomes

GTF research scope and synthesis focus

GTF research focusses on tracing alumni outcomes using the *Australia Awards Global Monitoring and Evaluation Framework* (*global MEF*) (DFAT, 2022; DFAT, 2016). The *global MEF* outlines two key program outcomes to realise the goal of the Australia Awards (see Figure 5). In addition, the *global MEF* identifies six Global Performance Targets aligned to the program logic goals and outcomes (DFAT, 2022, p.12). In Figure 5, these targets are linked to the Australia Awards program lifecycle. The figure shows that Targets 1 and 2 are focussed on stages in the lifecycle relating to selecting candidates for the awards. Targets 3 to 6 are related to the Program Logic long-term Outcomes 1 (contribution to sustainable development) and 2 (contribution to cooperation with Australia). Targets 3 to 6 – and their relationship to the long-term outcomes – are the most relevant to the data collection and research of the GTF.
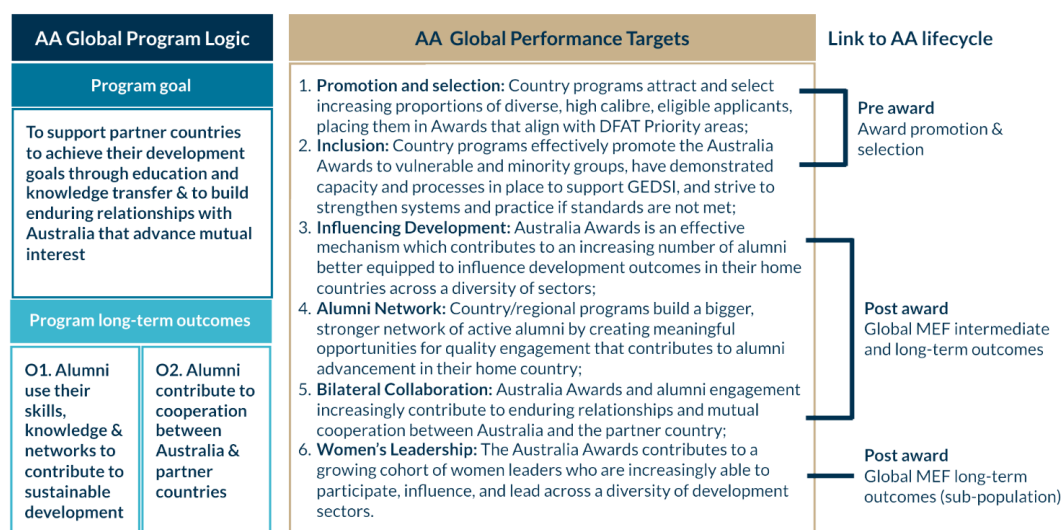
Figure 5: Australia Awards Global Program Logic and Performance Targets (DFAT, 2022)

The Performance Targets 3 to 5 overlap with the Australia Awards' two long-term outcomes, and given these outcomes form the basis for the GTF's data collection, analysis, and reporting, they are explicitly covered in the synthesis of data from the GTF research. Across the 40 GTF research reports, the data collected looked at the extent to which alumni state they can contribute to the long-term outcomes, how they are contributing and their impact, and the factors influencing their ability to contribute in these ways.

In addition to the broad data collection relating to the two long-term outcomes, the GTF has consistently collected data relating to the gender of alumni. This collection has enabled a focus in this synthesis on Performance Target 6, Women's Leadership. Women's leadership is an equity priority articulated in the Australia Awards Global Strategic Framework: Investing in the next generation of global leaders for development 2021-24 (the Framework). The Framework sets gender equality and empowering women and girls as one of six long-term priorities, and ensuring equity of access is embedded as one of five key operating principles.

The evidence synthesised to explore Target 6 is drawn from 11 research reports across the GTF data collection. These include the 5 Global Tracer Surveys (GTS) and 2 Longitudinal Global Tracer Surveys (LGTS), which are disaggregated by gender and region. Further contextual insights are gained from 4 case studies focussed on women alumni, using social network analysis, interviews, and a targeted survey to understand the factors influencing career progression and opportunity to contribute to developmental change.

Synthesis research questions

This synthesis study draws on the [Australia Awards MEF](#), applying a theory-driven approach to answer the key research question: *Is the Australia Awards effective in achieving its long-term Program Outcomes?*

In answering this overarching question, the synthesis has adopted three dimensions, detailed in Table 1: the two long-term Program Outcomes and Performance Target 6—Women's leadership. Connected to these three dimensions are sub-research questions examining the extent alumni report they are contributing, the impact of these contributions and the opportunity and resources they have to do so. Answering these sub-research questions involved drawing on the variety of qualitative and quantitative data collected and reported by the GTF. An insight into the number and type of sources used for each sub-research question is included in Table 1. Within the findings section of this report, links and references are provided to the specific reports in which data used for analyses in the synthesis were drawn.

Table 1: GTF Synthesis research and sub-research questions explored in this study

Synthesis research question					
Is the Australia Awards effective in achieving its long-term Program Outcomes?					
Synthesis dimensions					
Outcome 1: contributions to sustainable development		Outcome 2: contributions to cooperation with Australia		Target 6: Women's leadership	
Sub-research questions					
1a. To what extent do alumni use their skills, knowledge, and networks developed on award to contribute to sustainable development?	1b. What is the impact of alumni's use of skills, knowledge and networks developed on award to contribute to sustainable development?	2a. Who do alumni engage with in ongoing networks or relationships related to the Australia Awards?	2b. To what extent do alumni use their networks to build cooperation between Australia and partner countries?	3a. To what extent are women alumni attaining positions of leadership?	3b. To what extent are women alumni able to participate, influence and lead across a diversity of development sectors?
Data sources					
5 Global Tracer Surveys **2** Longitudinal Global Tracer Surveys **21** qualitative interview studies	**2** Global Tracer Surveys **25** qualitative interview studies	**5** Global Tracer Surveys **2** Longitudinal Global Tracer Surveys	**5** Global Tracer Surveys **2** Longitudinal Global Tracer Surveys **20** qualitative interview studies **4** social network analysis studies	**5** Global Tracer Surveys **2** Longitudinal Global Tracer Surveys	**5** Global Tracer Surveys **2** Longitudinal Global Tracer Surveys **1** targeted survey **2** qualitative interview studies **1** social network analysis study

Assessing Australia Awards performance

Assessment of Australia Awards performance in this report is drawn from the data used in responding to the sub-research questions (Table 1) using the following criteria:

Performing well: Consistent evidence the majority of alumni have positive sentiments of being able to contribute with limited variation across characteristics and location;

Opportunities for improvement: Inconsistent evidence of alumni having positive sentiments of being able to contribute with variation across characteristics and location.

These assessments by the sub-research questions are then synthesised into a dimension performance rating (Outcomes 1 and 2, and Target 6) and an overall performance rating (summarised in Figure 6).

Table 2 details the guideline for synthesising the global performance rating from the sub-research question level to a dimension level rating (Outcomes 1 and 2, and Target 6) and an overall Australia Awards rating.

| 6 Sub-research question performance ratings | 3 Dimension performance ratings | 1 Overall performance rating |

Figure 6: Process for synthesizing assessment of Australia Awards performance

Table 2: Guideline for synthesizing sub-research question performance rating into dimension and overall ratings

Australia Awards global performance rating	Description	Dimension/Overall ratings
Performing well	*Consistent evidence* across all sub-research questions/dimensions that the majority of alumni have positive sentiments of being able to contribute.	All sub-research questions/dimensions rated 'Performing well'
Performing well with opportunities for improvement	*Consistent evidence* across at least 1 sub-research question/dimension that the majority of alumni have positive sentiments of being able to contribute; *but inconsistent evidence* across at least 1 sub-research question/dimension of alumni having positive sentiments of being able to contribute with variation across characteristics and location.	At least 1 sub-research question/dimension rated 'Performing well'
Opportunities for improvement	*Inconsistent evidence* across all sub-research questions/dimensions of alumni having positive sentiments of being able to contribute with variation across characteristics and location.	All sub-research questions/dimensions rated 'Opportunities for improvement'

Data extraction and analysis

Connected to the dimensions (Outcomes 1 and 2, and Target 6) are three sub-dimensions used to examine the sub-research questions, these are:

1. **extent:** the degree/proportion of alumni who report they can contribute/attain an outcome,

2. **impact:** the result of alumni contributions,

3. **opportunity & resources:** the factors influencing alumni ability to contribute/attain an outcome.

Table 3: Data extraction and analysis

Sub-research question	Related sub-dimension	GTS reports	Instrument items	Analysis method
1a. To what extent do alumni use their skills, knowledge, and networks developed on award to contribute to sustainable development?	Extent	5 GTS	Passing on new skills and knowledge to others	Document proportions for "strongly agree" & "agree" by all alumni, gender & region. Due to changing cohort samples over surveys, response proportions are averaged. Change from 5 point to 4 point Likert scale in GTS Y5 and Y7, focus on "strongly agree" sentiments as unaffected and represents most significant change.
	Opportunity & resources	3 GTS 2 LGTS	Factors enabling & challenging alumni contributions to Outcome 1	Document top 6 enabling and challenging factors cited in order of significance per report. Factors scored from 1 (least frequently reported) to 6 (most frequently reported) and tallied across reports. Top 3 most frequently cited enabling & challenging factors reported.
		21 QIS		Document top 6 enabling and challenging factors cited in order of significance per report. Factors scored from 1 (least significant) to 6 (most significant) and tallied across reports. Top 3 most frequently cited enabling & challenging factors reported.
		4 SNA	Alumni engagement in job advice and/or sharing information connections	Document proportions of alumni reporting they are part of these network connections. Percentage calculated with numerator as the number of alumni part of a connection and denominator is number of survey respondents + number of alumni who were nominated by others but did not respond
1b. What is the impact of alumni's use of skills, knowledge and networks developed on award to contribute to sustainable development?	Impact	2 GTS	Contributions to development by UN SDG	Document percentages reported for all alumni. Re-analyse primary data to extract percentages by region. Average percentages from both GTS reports.
		25 QIS		Document and categorise the number of alumni contributions to the UN SDGs by goal and magnitude of impact (micro, meso, macro). Sum across reports and average by number of alumni (n=197) for percentage proportions.
2a. Who do alumni engage with in ongoing networks or relationships related to the Australia Awards?	Extent	5 GTS 2 LGTS	Alumni contact frequency with AA related groups post award	Document percentages for alumni reporting they are frequently (Always + Often) in contact with groups. Re-analyse primary data to complete percentages by gender and region across all reports. Due to changing cohort samples over surveys, response proportions are averaged and reported.
2b. To what extent do alumni use their networks to build cooperation between Australia and partner countries?	Impact	4 GTS 2 LGTS	Developed a professional relationship/partnership with Australian organisations	Document percentages of alumni reporting they have/have not developed a professional relationship/partnership with an Australian organisation and the sector. Re-analyse primary data to complete percentages by region across all reports. Due to changing cohort samples over surveys, response proportions are averaged and reported.
		22 QIS		Document and categorise the number the types of professional link/partnerships alumni reported creating. Sum across reports and average by number of alumni (n=176) for

Sub-research question	Related sub-dimension	GTS reports	Instrument items	Analysis method
				percentage proportions. Percentages included in the survey data overall average.
		4 SNA	Social network maps showing who alumni would go to to connect with Australia	Extract SNA maps showing who alumni would go to to connect with Australia, documenting description of these network maps. Document similarities and difference in network maps.
	Opportunity & resources	**3 GTS** **2 LGTS**	Enabling & challenging factors to forming partnerships	Document top 6 enabling and challenging factors cited in order of significance per report. Factors scored from 1 (least frequently reported) to 6 (most frequently reported) and tallied across reports. Top 3 most frequently cited enabling & challenging factors reported
		22 QIS		Document top 6 enabling and challenging factors cited in order of significance per report. Factors scored from 1 (least significant) to 6 (most significant) and tallied across reports. Top 3 most frequently cited enabling & challenging factors reported.
3a. To what extent are women alumni attaining positions of leadership?	Extent	**5 GTS** **2 LGTS**	Leadership in the workplace	Document percentages of alumni by gender who report they hold a formal leadership position. Re-analyse primary data to complete gender comparison by region. Due to changing cohort samples over surveys, percentages are averaged and reported.
3b. To what extent are women alumni able to participate, influence and lead across a diversity of development sectors?	Impact	**2 GTS**	Contributions to development by UN SDG	Document percentages reported by gender. Re-analyse primary data to complete data gaps. Average percentages from both GTS reports.
		4 GTS **2 LGTS**	Developed a professional relationship/partnership with Australian org.	Document percentages of alumni by gender reporting they have/have not developed a professional relationship/partnership with an Australian organisation. Re-analyse primary data to complete data gaps. Due to changing cohort samples over surveys, percentages are averaged and reported.
	Opportunity & resources	**1 TS** **1 SNA** **2 QIS**	Factors enabling and challenging women's career progression & leadership attainment	Document top 6 enabling and challenging factors cited in order of significance per report. Factors scored from 1 (least significant) to 6 (most significant) and tallied across reports. Top 3 most frequently cited enabling & challenging factors reported.

GTS = Global Tracer Surveys, **LGTS** = Longitudinal Global Tracer Surveys, **QIS** = Qualitative interview studies, **SNA** = social network analyses, **TS** = targeted surveys

Reporting

The report developed for the synthesis uses data visualisation such as and infographics to illustrate the findings and capture a comprehensive snapshot of the impact and effectiveness of the Australia Awards using the data collected by the GTF from 2016 to 2024. The report is intended to be used as a key reference point for identifying where evidence to illustrate the long-term outcomes of the Australia Awards and is structured as follows:

- Introduction
- Approach
- Australia Awards global performance – alumni impact and long-term outcomes
- Implications and next steps.

GTF report mapping reference guide

#	GTF Report	Report characteristics			Australia Awards long-term Program Outcomes		Australia Awards Performance Targets			GTF Research Frameworks		Regions Covered							
		Research Program Year	Method used	Alumni graduation years (cohort)	Long-term Program Outcome 1	Long-term Program Outcome 2	Target 3: Influencing development	Target 5: Bilateral collaboration	Target 6: Women's leadership	UN Sustainable Development Goals	Magnitudes of Impact	East Asia	South Asia & Mongolia	Pacific Island countries	Papua New Guinea	Sub-Saharan Africa	Latin America & Caribbean	North Africa & the Middle East	Global [non specific]
1	Global Tracer Survey Report Year 1 - 2016-17: Alumni of 2006 to 2010	1	Survey (cross-sectional)	2006-2010	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
2	Global Tracer Survey Year 2 2017-18: Alumni of 1996 to 2005	2	Survey (cross-sectional)	1996-2005	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
3	Global Tracer Survey Report Year 3 2018-19: Alumni of 2011 to 2016	3	Survey (cross-sectional)	2011-2016	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
4	Australia Awards Alumni Global Tracer Survey 2020 (Year 5)	5	Survey (cross-sectional)	All alumni	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
5	Alumni Growth: Tracking Australia Awards Alumni Over Five Years - Longitudinal Tracer Survey 2021	6	Longitudinal survey	2006-2010	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			
6	Case Study #1: Fiji (Education)	1	Interviews	Pre-1995	✓	✓	✓	✓						✓					
7	Case Study #2: Sri Lanka (Engineering)	1	Interviews	Pre-1995	✓	✓	✓	✓					✓						
8	Case Study #3: Kenya (Agriculture)	1	Interviews	Pre-1995	✓	✓	✓	✓								✓			
9	Case Study #4: Nepal (Public service)	1	Interviews	Pre-1995	✓	✓	✓	✓					✓						
10	Case Study in China - environment and public health fields	2	Interviews	2006-2010	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓							
11	Case Study in Indonesia - education field	2	Interviews	2006-2010	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓							
12	Case Study in Mongolia - management and commerce fields	2	Interviews	2006-2010	✓	✓	✓	✓					✓						
13	Case Study in Solomon Islands – health field	2	Interviews	2006-2010	✓	✓	✓	✓						✓					
14	Case Study in Vanuatu - legal and justice fields	2	Interviews	2006-2010	✓	✓	✓	✓						✓					
15	Case Study in Cambodia in public health fields	3	Interviews	1996-2005	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓							
16	Case Study in Mozambique in the fields of agriculture, food security and natural resources	3	Interviews	1996-2005	✓	✓	✓	✓								✓			
17	Case Study in Pakistan in governance and leadership	3	Interviews	1996-2005	✓	✓	✓	✓					✓						
18	Case Study in Papua New Guinea in information and communication technology	3	Interviews	1996-2005	✓	✓	✓	✓							✓				
19	Case Study in Vietnam women in finance and banking	3	Interviews	1996-2005	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓							
20	Timor-Leste Case Study: Disability and Development	4	Interviews	2011-2016	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓							
21	Samoa Case Study: Engineering and Information Technology	4	Interviews	2011-2016	✓	✓	✓	✓						✓					
22	Costa Rica Case Study: Environment and Agriculture	4	Interviews	2011-2016	✓	✓	✓	✓									✓		
23	Bangladesh Case Study: Economic Development	4	Interviews	2011-2016	✓	✓	✓	✓					✓						
24	Philippines Case Study: Peace, Security and Inclusive Development	5	Interviews	2011-2016	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓							
25	Kiribati Case Study: Mapping Alumni Networks and Links to Australia	5	Social network analysis	All alumni		✓		✓						✓					
26	Alumni Case Study— outcomes and impact of globally mobile alumni	5	Interviews	All alumni	✓	✓	✓	✓											✓
27	Alumni contributions to the COVID-19 pandemic response	5	Interviews	All alumni	✓	✓	✓	✓											✓
28	Social Network Analysis of an Australia Awards Leadership Program cohort	6	Social network analysis	2011-2016		✓		✓											✓
29	Australia Awards Exemplary Partnerships: The South Pacific Centre for Central Banking	6	Interviews	2011-2016	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓			✓					
30	Alumni Case Study – Insights into short course capacity building	6	Interviews	2011-2016	✓	✓	✓	✓											✓
31	Australia Awards Pacific Scholarships Alumni Survey 2021	6	Survey (cross-sectional)	All alumni	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓			✓					
32	Women's Leadership and Career Progression: Insights from Indonesian Australia Awards Alumnae	7	Survey (cross-sectional)	2006-2010	✓		✓		✓			✓							

#	GTF Report	Research Program Year	Method used	Alumni graduation years (cohort)	Long-term Program Outcome 1	Long-term Program Outcome 2	Target 3: Influencing development	Target 5: Bilateral collaboration	Target 6: Women's leadership	UN Sustainable Development Goals	Magnitudes of Impact	East Asia	South Asia & Mongolia	Pacific Island countries	Papua New Guinea	Sub-Saharan Africa	Latin America & Caribbean	North Africa & the Middle East	Global [non specific]
33	Outcomes of Australia Awards Fellowships: Sport for Development in Fiji	7	Interviews	2011-2016	✓	✓	✓	✓						✓					
34	Australia Awards Alumni Contributing to Civil Society: Supporting development through volunteerism	7	Interviews	All alumni	✓		✓			✓									✓
35	Australia Awards Alumni Global Tracer Survey 2022	7	Survey (cross-sectional)	All alumni	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
36	A Social Network Analysis of Australia Awards Alumni Workshops	7	Social network analysis	All alumni	✓	✓	✓	✓					✓						
37	Developmental leadership for women in the Pacific: Cultivating networks for change in Australia Awards WLI alumni	8	Social network analysis	2017-2020	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					✓					
38	Developmental leadership for women in the Pacific: WLI alumni reflections and insights	8	Interviews	2017-2020	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					✓					
39	Longitudinal Alumni Case Study: Where are they now?	8	Interviews	2011-2016	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓								✓
40	Longitudinal Global Tracer Survey: Alumni of 2013-2016	8	Longitudinal survey	2011-2016	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	