



Independent evaluation of Infrastructure for Growth (IFG) and South Asia Trade Facilitation Program (SARTFP)

MANAGEMENT RESPONSE

INITIATIVE SUMMARY

Initiative Name	Infrastructure for Growth and South Asia Regional Trade Facilitation Program		
AidWorks initiative number	INL093		
Commencement date	30 May 2013	Expected Completion date	30 June 2020
Total Australian \$	\$45,000,000		
Delivery organisation(s)	World Bank		
Country/Region	South Asia		
Primary sector	Infrastructure and Trade Facilitation		
Initiative objective/s	The Trade Facilitation and Infrastructure initiative aims to increase intra-regional trade and connectivity to achieve accelerated and sustainable economic growth to reduce poverty and address increasing disparities between growing and lagging regions. The funds will be used to support regional connectivity in South Asia by: improving cross-border trade and reducing trade costs; enhancing women's economic activity along connectivity corridors; and fostering an enabling environment for infrastructure development. There is a significant focus on operationalising gender equality principles in all activities.		

Summary of management response

DFAT considers the independent evaluation to be satisfactory. It adequately addresses the questions in the Terms of Reference and subsequent evaluation plan. DFAT accepts its recommendations wholly or in part. A number of the recommendations are already, or are soon to be, implemented by DFAT. In addition, the recommendations relating to future initiatives are already informing the design of the next regional connectivity initiative for South Asia.

The independent evaluation of IFG and SARTFP was conducted by ABT Associates. Two consultants were engaged: Beth Elson and Anneke Schmider.



Individual management response to the recommendations

Recommendations: IFG

Recommendation 1:	Agree on a common reporting standard for reporting grant data, allowing opportunities for discussing significant budget reallocations with DFAT.
Response:	Agree in part
Actions:	Agree that setting a naming and/or number protocol for activities is important for DFAT to track activities. However, additional standards for reporting grant data are not required at this level. The financial acquittal and management of trust fund activities is managed by the World Bank using a pre-agreed and determined protocol.
Responsibility	DFAT and World Bank

Recommendations: SARTFP

Recommendation 2:	Consider renaming the Medium-Term Outcomes (MTOs) as long term, and develop short- to medium-term outputs and indicators to enable results to inform course correction by the program.
Response:	Agree
Actions:	Agree that MTOs need to be reviewed to inform course correction by the program. DFAT with the World Bank will review the results framework to determine the suitability of MTOs. After consultation with the monitoring and evaluation adviser and the World Bank, a recommendation on adjustments to the results framework will be tabled at the next Donor Steering Committee meeting.
Responsibility	DFAT and World Bank

Recommendation 3:	Produce a communication plan with milestones and resources that communicate 'performance stories' as pioneered by other DFAT programs.
Response:	Agree



Actions:	Agree that the communications and program narratives need to improve. At the April 2018 SARTFP steering committee meeting, the World Bank proposed to improve and share SARTFP's communications and program narratives by utilising its country teams' social media expertise, media contacts and generating human stories.
Responsibility	DFAT and World Bank

Recommendation 4:	Ensure ongoing DFAT engagement to encourage Task Team Leaders (TTLs) to continue introducing new perspectives into project design, particularly new approaches to integrating gender equality and inclusive development that can then be shared and replicated across the organisation.
Response:	Agree in part
Actions:	Agree TTLs introducing innovative approaches would be beneficial. Engagement with TTLs sits with the World Bank; it is not DFAT's role to connect directly with TTLs. Bank TTLs are introducing innovative approaches to gender in trade as appropriate to client demand and context in an incremental manner.
Responsibility	World Bank

Recommendation 5:	Revisit and refine the SARTFP results framework in light of implementation experience and an established program Secretariat who were not involved in the original co-development process.
Response:	Agree
Actions:	DFAT and World Bank to meet in August 2018 to review the results framework. Suggested changes to the result framework are to be tabled at the next Donor Steering Committee meeting.
Responsibility	DFAT and World Bank



Recommendation 6:	Track evidence of gender being embedded in key aspects of policy, financing, regulation and program delivery across the relevant sectors to measure the influence of SARTFP on gender programming.
Response:	Agree
Actions:	The SARTFP results framework currently measures these elements. DFAT will seek an update from the World Bank at the next Donor Steering Committee on a new SARTFP activity that will further strengthen the measurement of gender integration. DFAT and the World Bank will discuss how best to deepen this approach in any new programming.
Responsibility	DFAT and World Bank

Recommendation 7:	Update the Specific Program Management Arrangements for SARTFP in the Partnerships for South Asia Administration Manual and disseminate to keep all parties (DFAT, WB, TAF) informed of roles and responsibilities in the program.
Response:	Agree
Actions:	To be discussed at the next Donor Steering Committee meeting.
Responsibility	DFAT and World Bank

Recommendation 8:	Make SARTFP funding accessible to all World Bank Global Practices to be more effective in influencing WB practices and processes and supporting reformers.
Response:	Agree
Actions:	Agree this would be beneficial. DFAT and the World Bank will discuss expanding SARTFP funding to other Global Practices at the next Donor Steering Committee meeting.
Responsibility	DFAT and World Bank



Recommendation 9:	The SARTFP Secretariat should continue to monitor the spread of SARTFP funds while maintaining quality thresholds of project selection and implementation.
Response:	Agree
Actions:	The SARTFP Secretariat is responsible for general management and implementation of the program. This includes the assessment and approval of potential activities that support the goals of SARTFP. The World Bank and DFAT will continue to discuss the composition of activities and their progress at each Donor Steering Committee meeting.
Responsibility	DFAT and World Bank

Recommendation 10:	Maintain relevance to DFAT development policy for the region by integrating inclusive growth into infrastructure and connectivity investments.
Response:	Agree
Actions:	The integration of inclusive growth into DFAT's infrastructure and connectivity investments will be considered in the design of the next regional connectivity initiative.
Responsibility	DFAT

Recommendation 11:	Continue to fill the gaps in preparatory work and technical analysis on mainstreaming gender equality in all SARTFP activities.
Response:	Agree
Actions:	The SARTFP Secretariat is responsible for ensuring all activities meet the initiative's gender mainstreaming requirements. The World Bank and DFAT will continue to discuss the progress of gender mainstreaming in SARTFP activities at each Donor Steering Committee meeting.
Responsibility	The World Bank



Recommendation 12:	Identify factors that increase demand for gender-related technical assistance, both within the World Bank and from client countries.
Response:	Agree
Actions:	<p>Increasing gender consideration across World Bank investments is a SARTFP priority. This includes generating knowledge and lessons on what works and what does not and sharing them within the World Bank and with client countries.</p> <p>The responsibility of this work sits with the World Bank and will be discussed at the next Donor Steering Committee.</p>
Responsibility	World Bank

Recommendation 13:	Consider the differences between DFAT and the World Bank's Gender Strategies, and how they can be reconciled.
Response:	Agree in part
Actions:	<p>Agree that an analysis of where DFAT and the World Bank's gender strategies diverge and align would be beneficial. The TAF Gender adviser and World Bank Gender staff work together closely and this issues is discussed in their regular interaction.</p> <p>A detailed comparison of DFAT and the World Bank's global gender strategies is outside the scope of SARTFP and resources available.</p> <p>The World Bank Group is currently implementing its Gender Equality Strategy (financial year 2016-23). The strategy charts an ambitious course by focusing on tangible interventions that reach real-world results, by identifying and implementing operations that narrow opportunity and outcome gaps between males and females. It aims further to address constraints cited in many economies as impediments to closing these gaps: occupational sex segregation, with women and girls often streamed into lower-paying, less secure fields of study and work; lack of safe, affordable transportation; and inadequate investment in and prioritisation of care services across the life cycle, from early childhood to old age. The strategy aims further to help countries go the last mile in addressing issues such as maternal mortality while taking aim at emerging challenges such as ageing populations, climate change, slowing economic growth, and the global jobs crisis.</p>



Responsibility	DFAT and World Bank
----------------	---------------------

Recommendation 14:	Use SARTFP to demonstrate the benefits of integrating gender equality into policy and practice.
Response:	Agree
Actions:	DFAT and the World Bank will agree on how to demonstrate and communicate the benefits of integrating gender equality into policy and practice.
Responsibility	DFAT and World Bank

Recommendation 15:	Include a process for integrating SARTFP stakeholder feedback into project design with sincerity, transparency and a means of reporting back to the stakeholders.
Response:	Agree in part
Actions:	Agree on the importance of integrating stakeholder feedback in future project design. Note the World Bank has existing mechanisms and processes in place to provide feedback to stakeholders. DFAT will discuss World Bank approaches to stakeholder feedback for SARTFP activities at the next Donor Steering Committee meeting.
Responsibility	DFAT and World Bank

Recommendations: Comparison of the programs' management and implementation model

Recommendation 16:	Clearly define the Technical Advisory Facility's role parameters so that the World Bank is able to maximise their technical skills and empower gender equality champions within the World Bank.
Response:	Agree in part
Actions:	Agree the role of the Technical Advisory Facility needs to be revisited and redefined to maximise technical skills and this will be actioned by DFAT. The extent to which the Technical Advisory Facility will work with the World Bank to empower gender equality champions will be discussed at the next Donor Steering Committee meeting.



Responsibility	DFAT and World Bank
----------------	---------------------

Recommendation 17:	DFAT maintain close involvement in SARTFP to continually reinforce the World Bank's understanding of the nature of the partnership and the role of the TAF within the program.
Response:	Agree
Actions:	DFAT will maintain involvement in SARTFP and reinforce the nature of the partnership with available resources. DFAT's involvement will focus on strategic partnership issues. The SARTFP Secretariat is responsible for general management and implementation of the program.
Responsibility	DFAT

Recommendation 18:	Consider a phased management model that allows for a close partnership to agree initial strategy that transitions to more autonomy for the World Bank regarding tactical decisions.
Response:	Agree
Actions:	This recommendation will be taken into consideration in the design of the next regional connectivity initiative.
Responsibility	DFAT

Recommendations: Informing DFAT's future investments and policy decisions

Recommendation 19:	Create and maintain processes that encourages a culture of sharing of information and facilitates innovation.
Response:	Agree
Actions:	Innovation is one of DFAT's annual reporting components. This will be considered as part of the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) discussions in August 2018. This recommendation will be taken into consideration in the design of the next regional connectivity initiative.
Responsibility	DFAT and World Bank



Recommendation 20:	DFAT creates complementary relationships outside the World Bank to create multiple entry points to influence gender programming, and strengthen program legitimacy.
Response:	Agree
Actions:	This recommendation will be taken into consideration in the design of the next regional connectivity initiative.
Responsibility	DFAT

Recommendation 21:	Develop a process to share lessons learned across DFAT-funded programs in the region and beyond.
Response:	Agree in part
Actions:	Agree, noting there are processes already in place to support lessons learned throughout DFAT. Development of a new process would be unnecessary. DFAT will consider how to improve its reporting on lessons learned for SARTFP, IFG and in the design of the next regional connectivity initiative.
Responsibility	DFAT

Recommendation 22:	Ensure theory of change and results framework are living documents that are revisited and revised as necessary.
Response:	Agree
Actions:	A review of the theory of change and results framework is currently under way (see recommendations 2 and 3). This recommendation will be taken into consideration in the design of the next regional connectivity initiative.
Responsibility	DFAT and World Bank

Recommendation 23:	Develop and test the theory of change to be more than a collection of effective but disparate projects.
Response:	Agree



Actions:	Recommendation to be progressed as part of the improvement in communications and program narrative (recommendations 2 and 3). This recommendation will be taken into consideration in the design of the next regional connectivity initiative.
Responsibility	DFAT and World Bank

Recommendation 24:	Develop a system for learning and adaptation (including defining roles and responsibilities) as part of the initial program design phase. Have regular health checks of this system and refine accordingly. Consider how the DSC can provide a support structure to this system.
Response:	Agree
Actions:	This recommendation will be taken into consideration in the design of the next regional connectivity initiative.
Responsibility	DFAT