

Education Pathways to Peace in Mindanao

Mid-term review



Prepared for Australian Embassy in
the Philippines

December 2022



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Document review and authorisation

Version	Date distributed	Issued to	Comments
First draft	16 September 2022	Peter Carreon	Comments from DFAT awaited
Second draft	3 October 2022	Peter Carreon	Revised following DFAT comments
Third draft	28 November 2022	Peter Carreon	Revised following further DFAT comments
Fourth draft	6 December	Peter Carreon	Addressing accessibility requirements

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Acknowledgement

The Mid Term Review (MTR) team would like to thank all the people consulted (either in person or by telephone). In particular, the team would thank all colleagues in the Ministry of Basic, Higher, and Technical Education (MBHTE) in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) for giving their time and views so willingly. We would thank in particular the four Directors General in MBHTE, Director General Marjuni Maddi, Director General Abdullah 'Junn' Salik, Jr., Director General Tahir Nalg, and Director General Ruby Andong.

The Review team would like to thank the team at the Department of Education (DepEd) Central Office Project Management Service under Director Mila Talinio, DepEd Planning Service, and the National Educators' Academy of the Philippines.

The team would also express their appreciation to Richard Sisson, Thanh Le, Georgina Harley-Cavanough, Peter Carreon, and Ariana Santoalla from the Australian Embassy in Manila. Thanks also to other external development partners, and of course Pathways staff. We would also like to thank Maria Cristina Ricote for so efficiently handling all the team's many and various logistical arrangements.

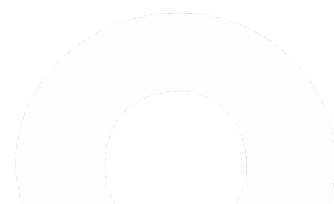
All gave their time unsparingly.

Disclaimer

This MTR of the Education Pathways to Peace program in Mindanao was undertaken by a team including Ica Fernandez (peace and conflict specialist), Chloe Olliver (monitoring, evaluation, and design specialist), Zenaida Reyes (gender, education, and disability specialist), Peter Grimes (education specialist), and Graham Teskey (governance adviser and team leader). The views expressed in this report are those of the MTR team and do not necessarily reflect those of the Government of the Philippines, the Government of the BARMM, the Australian Government, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) or Abt Associates.

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Acronyms and abbreviations

AKAP	Abot Kaalaman sa Pamilyang Bangsamoro or community learning centres
ARMM	Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao
AWP	Annual Work Plan
BARMM	Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao
BEAM-ARMM	Basic Education Assistance for Mindanao in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao
BEMIS	Bangsamoro Education Management Information System
BOL	Bangsamoro Organic Law
BTA	Bangsamoro Transition Authority
Covid	Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)
DepEd	Department of Education (national)
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
DG	Director General
EoPO	End of Program Outcome
EPCC	Education Program Coordinating Committee
GEDSI	Gender Equality Disability and Social Inclusion
IO	Intermediate Outcome
IPED	Indigenous Peoples' Education
IRRs	Implementing Rules and Regulations
K-3	Kindergarten to Grade 3
KRQ	Key Review Questions
Madrasah	School (singular), in particular, Islamic schools
/ Madaris	Schools (plural) in particular, Islamic schools
MBHTE	Ministry of Basic, Higher, and Technical Education
MERL	Monitoring, Evaluation, Research and Learning
MILF	Moro Islamic Liberation Front
MTR	Mid-Term Review
NEDA	National Educators' Academy of the Philippines
PEA	Political Economy Analysis
PSC	Pathways Steering Committee
RAF	Responsive Assistance Fund
RIF	Responsive Innovation Fund

RRG	Review Reference Group
SLAB	Student Learning Assessment for Bangsamoro
SMT	Strategic Monitoring Team
ToC	Theory of Change

Executive Summary

Pathways is a nine-year (2017-26) AUD 90 million education program with explicit peacebuilding objectives. Its design builds on the lessons learned from the implementation of its predecessor program, the Basic Education Assistance to Mindanao the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BEAM-ARMM) program. It is designed to adapt to the changing circumstances of a fragile, dynamic, and post-conflict context and to address emerging priorities, while focusing on strengthening education systems.

Pathways' End-of-Program Outcomes (EoPOs) are:

EoPO1: Reduced disparity, improved participation, and increased performance in Kindergarten to Grade 3 (K-3) education for all boys and girls in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM), particularly those experiencing disadvantage

EoPO2: Sustainable positive engagement, collaboration and convergence of key actors and stakeholders in providing and supporting conflict-sensitive quality basic education services

To achieve the EoPOs, Pathways has five intermediate outcomes (IOs):

IO1: K-3 educators deliver integrated, inclusive, contextualised and peace promoting curriculum

IO2: Improved quality, effectiveness, and management of K-3 teachers

IO3: More children access and participate in contextualized K-3 education

IO4: Parents and communities contribute to reform and development of the education system

IO5: Institutions are better at collaboratively formulating, implementing, and monitoring inclusive policies

The purpose of this mid-term review (MTR) is to assess the extent to which the Pathways program, its theory of change, and modalities are contributing to the objective of strengthening quality inclusive early year K-3 education for all children in the BARMM.

The MTR aims to assess the progress of the program and generate recommendations to strengthen implementation and management for the next three to four years.

Context and relevance

The BARMM region is still undergoing fundamental institutional transition. Despite recent institutional gains, the BARMM remains a fledging government, autonomous but not independent. The extent of institutional uncertainty has increased recently. On 26 September 2022, lawmakers in the Bangsamoro Transitional Administration tabled bills that would see the Ministry of Basic, Higher, and Technical Education (MBHTE) restructured into three separate agencies: a Ministry of Education, a Ministry of Technical Education and Skills Development, and a separate and quasi-independent Bangsamoro Commission on Higher Education. It is too early to identify the implications for the program, but at best this move is likely to slow down implementation of reforms as senior staff grapple with changing organisational mandates, structures, and systems.

Looking at the sector, any gains in educational outcomes made since the inception of Pathways in 2017 are likely to have been stalled or possibly reversed. This is due to both institutional discontinuity and the impact of Covid. The MTR team would therefore suggest that in some regards the program is only now emerging from an inception phase.

It is clear that the two EoPOs will not be delivered. But four of the five IOs may be – IO 5 is the outlier.

The MTR found that Australia's ongoing investment in education in Mindanao is highly valued by all stakeholders in the region, and in Manila. The team heard many quotes: "Pathways is our program;" "Pathways is easy to talk to;" "Pathways is willing to help us"; "Other donors just want our data"; "Program outcomes are MBHTE outcomes. If Pathways fails, then MBHTE fails" and "Pathways always finds a way."

Education remains a high political priority for the BARMM government. A minority block politician said to the team that "BARMM cannot fail in education. We can fail in all other sectors but not education. This would

undermine the whole future of BARMM and the peace.” As was noted above, the institutions responsible for building and sustaining education planning, delivery and oversight are new and evolving. They still need support to deliver what is needed for ongoing peace, stability, and prosperity.

The three-year extension to the life of the Bangsamoro Transition Authority (BTA) through to elections in 2025 provide a window of opportunity for Pathways to lock in the gains it has already made, enhance the legitimacy of the sector, and to reduce grievances.

The policy space remains somewhat contested (as in all pluralistic polities), and decision-making tends to be centralised as trust, and policy / technical capability are established. There remain different views on what constitutes ‘moral governance’ and ‘balance’. Expectations on what autonomy can deliver are extremely high from civilians to ex-combatants. The MBHTE must navigate a tricky space between, on the one hand, delivering what most citizens want, which is an Islamic education curriculum, and on the other, meeting national education standards as articulated by the Department of Education (DepEd) at the national level.

The Pathways to Peace Program has delivered many strong outcomes: notably the community learning centre (AKAP) program, support to education provided through Madaris (Islamic private schools), the education management system, and the learning continuity response to Covid. But the Pathways program does have weaknesses. It will not deliver either of the two EoPOs by the end of the program, and its monitoring and communications work are below par. The work on Gender equality, Disability, and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) is varied.

Effectiveness

The program will not deliver its two EoPOs. This is for slightly different reasons.

EoPO1 is an ambitious *educational* objective. It is likely, that given Covid, learning outcomes will be stalled or go backwards during the life of the program. Capacity gaps and weaknesses in the newly established and evolving MBHTE have also constrained the program’s ability to achieve this outcome.

EoPO2 is an ambitious *institutional* objective. It requires ‘increased stakeholder engagement and collaboration’. Building linkages vertically and horizontally among a range of key stakeholders requires trust, confidence, incentives, and the space and the time to meet, discuss and see benefits from so doing. Institutions such as these take years to create and embed, and that is without two years lost due to Covid.

Intermediate Outcomes 1 – 4 could well be achieved, as could a slightly tweaked IO 5.

Pathways successes

The MTR team would highlight five areas of success.

- Pathways provided support which enabled some learning continuity despite Covid
- The AKAP program (community learning centres) provided greater access to school-less Barangays
- MBHTE is rapidly formalising the Madaris education system, which is central to the peace agreement and a significant policy priority of the BARMM government
- The program has assisted with the establishment and development of a functional database in the Ministry. BEMIS (the Bangsamoro Education Management Information System) is a unified data base for education which provides relevant information for policy formulation, program targeting, and review
- Some satisfactory progress has been made on systems strengthening within MBHTE: strategic planning, policy priorities, school budgets, Maintenance, Operating and Other Expenses, School Improvement Plans, its organisational structure, human resources planning and management, and basic data handling.

Relevance

Pathways undoubtably remains relevant. It is considered valuable - indeed essential - as a partner in education development in the region.

GEDSI

Progress in the different components of GEDSI varies. Broader social inclusion is the most developed in terms of implementation among the three. Pathways has contributed in a variety of ways including strengthening the capacity of MBHTE to recognize at least 100 Madaris schools, establishing community learning centres in school-less barangays, and supporting inclusion of indigenous peoples in education. More K-3 children from geographically isolated and dispersed areas, conflict affected areas, and non-Moro indigenous peoples are now formally in school as a result. Further, alternative learning systems¹ are now being implemented and may indicate an important accomplishment in the future.

Work in disability is slowly moving forward. The study, “20 Day Reach Every Child Campaign” has mapped out learners with special education needs. From this study, model/s on inclusive schools will be co-designed by Pathways, MBHTE, and other stakeholders to include children with disabilities. Moreover, from the preliminary data, capability building for school heads, school coordinators, and special education coordinators were organised to provide initial intervention programs for identified children with disabilities.

The gender component is less visible in Pathways’ reports. Although the gender story is intersected with the narratives of social inclusion and disability in the Marginalisation Study, there remains a need to surface this story. Sex disaggregated data is seen in the reports. However, there was little evidence of serious gender analysis, gender planning and budgeting, activities on gender mainstreaming, monitoring, and evaluation for the past five years.

Efficiency

Program governance arrangements are multi-layered and involve a complex four-way relationship. Pathways, as a program has less authority than others to convene and project an agenda and is therefore not an equal partner. Formal governance events can be a source of tension. There is insufficient informal dialogue occurring to ease these tensions and smooth the way for effective formal program governance.

Pathways interlocutors provided many anecdotal instances where the program is delivering positive, sustainable outputs. However, the program is hampered in telling the formal story by inadequate Monitoring, Evaluation, Research and Learning (MERL) and strategic communications. Palladium recently commissioned a Rapid Readiness Assessment of the MERL arrangements that provides more comprehensive analysis and recommendations regarding Pathways MERL than the MTR allows. There appears to be limited understanding within the Pathways senior management team of Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) public diplomacy needs.

The Pathways team is seen as a valuable partner to MBHTE, and there are significant examples of effective working relationships delivering high quality, responsive support to key counterparts. Good advisors are deemed effective because they listen, are accessible and flexible, and invest in building relationships with counterparts. They are credible because they bring much needed technical expertise together with integrity.

Pathways leadership has worked hard to establish a sense of team and shared objectives while working remotely due to Covid. Since being back in country, the team has worked hard to develop a coherent delivery strategy via Annual Work Plan 6.

The Managing Contractor model provides DFAT with the potential for enhanced strategic oversight, direct engagement with key counterparts, improved communications and public diplomacy, and the ability to be responsive to context and emerging needs. However, given the weaknesses and missed opportunities outlined above in MERL and communications, some of these potential benefits are not yet being realised by DFAT through the Pathways investment.

¹ Alternative Learning Systems are systems which substitute for, or complement, formal education offered to out-of-school youth and adult (OSYA) learners in the Philippines. Learners are equipped with basic numeracy and literacy skills in order to access basic education pathways

Scenarios

The MTR team were asked to consider alternative scenarios for the last three years of the program. Four were identified:

- **Recommit and replicate:** the *status quo*. Continue as of now with a few tweaks around the edges
- **Revise and reconfigure:** this will require a significant refocus of the Pathways strategy, building in successes to date and an increased alignment with MBHTE priorities. The contract with Palladium would be extended to the end of the program period but with a set of demanding conditions
- **Redesign and rebrand:** this option is more demanding. The current contract holders will be given notice and a new 'design and implement' contract be taken to the market. This would allow for a complete rethink of strategy and approach, including the option of giving all the funds to a third-party provider. However, the transactions costs would be substantial and the handover to a new implementing partner would cause a real delay in implementation
- **Reimagine and reconceptualise:** manage the program to a conclusion (either in 18 months' time when the current contract with Palladium ends, or when the program ends in 2026) and 'fold in' the Pathways component into a new national education program.

The MTR team consider that neither option 1 or 4 are technically desirable or politically appropriate. Option 1 would not provide scope for revision and option 4 constitutes a strategic risk to DFAT. Neither option 2 nor 3 completely mitigates that risk, but they maximise the possibility for mitigation. Option 3 creates a surfeit of transactions costs and delays that make it unviable.

The MTR therefore recommend option 2: a judicious mix of continuity and change. It is not the easy option (that is #1). Option 2 will require significant DFAT oversight to restructure the team, agree which parts of the program will end, and to ensure the new revised and reset program meets the objectives and recommendations summarised in the next section. The Head Contract should be extended with heavy conditions imposed on Palladium.

Recommendations

Figure 1 summarises MTR recommendations (see section 9 for a full discussion).

Figure 1: Summary of recommendations

Issue	Recommendation
<p>Strategic</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Program will not achieve EoPOs 2. Oversight arrangements sensible in principle but not functioning effectively or efficiently 	<p>Strategic</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pathways accountable for existing IOs 1-4 and revised IO5 2. DFAT to invest more time in ensuring oversight arrangements more meaningful and functional
<p>Programmatic</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. IO1: Leave unchanged. Pathways demonstrated progress here. Issue is focus and prioritisation 4. IO2: Leave unchanged. Issue is the extent of the need for pre- and in-service teacher training 5. IO3: Leave unchanged. Build on significant Pathways success here – the AKAP (community learning centres) program and the Madaris education system 6. IO4: Leave unchanged. The challenge of involving parents and communities in education reform should not be underestimated 7. IO5: Current IO5 unachievable, so revise to focus on principal partner – MBHTE 8. Bottlenecks in Office of the Minister – slows implementation and results in <i>ad hoc</i> requests to Pathways for small items 9. Gender is given insufficient attention in the Program, Disability and social inclusion progressing reasonably well. Stories need surfacing 	<p>Programmatic</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Retain Pathways focus on integration of contextualised teacher training and curriculum: “two sides of the same coin” 4. Intensify efforts to improve teaching quality through more effective oversight, training and learning materials 5. Focus on supporting MBHTE rapidly to formalise Madaris education and implement a sustainable long-term strategy for community learning centres in school-less Barangays. 6. Redouble efforts in school management to involve parents, provide modest resources to learning centres, and offer adults learning opportunities too. 7. Specify which MBHTE systems to be improved, and how. Build skills and competencies 8. Introduce financial advice to MBHTE e.g., procurement systems, basic financial management procedures, and improved paper flow processes 9. Redouble emphasis on gender and identify success stories within existing streams of work. Recruit senior gender / education specialist. Consider periodic gender update
<p>Operational</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10. MERL system delivers only on Activity to Output level: but no convincing narrative on Output to IO level. Pathways not meeting DFAT or DepEd needs 11. The Pathways’ team needs more skills in some areas. Structure does not map to that of the MBHTE 	<p>Operational</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10. Implement recommendations of the Kibblewhite review.² Recruit senior communications person (underway). Understand and appreciate DFAT and DepEd reporting and communication needs more thoroughly 11. Team to be restructured to mirror Directorate Generals in MBHTE. Positions and skill sets to be reconsidered. Introduce annual 360-degree performance assessments of key roles

² Rapid Readiness Assessment: Monitoring, Evaluation, Research and Learning System. Andrew Kibblewhite, August 2022

1 Introduction

Background

Pathways is a nine-year (2017-26) AUD 90 million education program with explicit peacebuilding objectives. Its design builds on the lessons learned from the implementation of its predecessor program, the Basic Education Assistance to Mindanao the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BEAM-ARMM) program. It is designed to adapt to the changing circumstances of a fragile, dynamic, and post-conflict context and to address emerging priorities, while focusing on strengthening education systems.

While BEAM-ARMM focused on direct service delivery and the attainment of pre-determined outputs, Pathways employs institutional strengthening as the primary development mechanism, and adopts a flexible, adaptive, and responsive implementation approach to achieve the desired outcomes. Pathways provides critical technical assistance to support institution building and at the same time, trials and adapts approaches to enhance delivery of inclusive quality education. It identifies yearly priorities through annual 'rolling' program workplans, in consultation with the national Department of Education (DepEd) and the Ministry of Basic, Higher, and Technical Education (MBHTE) in a 'co-design' approach. An innovation fund provides flexible and responsive support for conducting research and analysis, enhancing institutional capacity, facilitating collaboration with key stakeholders, and leveraging government and resources to support education delivery.

Pathways' End-of-Program Outcomes (EoPOs) are:

EoPO1: Reduced disparity, improved participation, and increased performance in kindergarten to grade 3 (K-3) education for all boys and girls in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM), particularly those experiencing disadvantage; and

EoPO2: Sustainable positive engagement, collaboration and convergence of key actors and stakeholders in providing and supporting conflict-sensitive quality basic education services

To achieve the EoPOs, Pathways has five intermediate outcomes (IOs):

IO1: K-3 educators deliver integrated, inclusive, contextualised and peace promoting curriculum

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IO3: More children access and participate in contextualized K-3 education

IO4: Parents and communities contribute to reform and development of the education system

IO5: Institutions are better at collaboratively formulating, implementing, and monitoring inclusive policies

Review Purpose and scope

The purpose of this Mid-Term Review (MTR) is to assess the extent to which the Pathways program, its theory of change, and modalities are contributing to the objective of strengthening quality inclusive early year (K-3) education for all children in the BARMM. A secondary purpose is to consider the contribution the program has made to inclusive public policy dialogue and decision-making.

The MTR was designed to generate recommendations to strengthen impact over the final three years of the program. This includes identifying the strengths and / or weakness of the program regarding achieving education outcomes as well as policy influence and impact and ensuring post-program sustainability. It is hoped that these improvements will also serve to enhance the overall performance narrative of the program and increase ownership by all stakeholders. The MTR will also indirectly inform the design of any future education and governance investments in conflict-affected situations.

The review has been framed as follows:

- Prove (25 per cent): To assess the effectiveness of Pathways in achieving progress towards EoPOs
- Knowledge (25 per cent): To identify key features of Pathways' approach and model which contribute to impact, and could inform best practice in the BARMM

- Improve (50 per cent): To identify key lessons learned in the program to date, and provide recommendations for the current program, and options for potential program design updating, and improve the overall performance narrative, in consideration of the Covid pandemic and other developments.

The review assesses the Theory of Change (ToC) including the extent to which it enabled real-time assessment of the drivers of progress in the BARMM. As part of this, it assesses the effectiveness of the current monitoring, evaluation, reporting and learning (MERL) framework and system in terms of its ability to provide sufficient and appropriate data to track progress, and the extent to which the program has been effectively implemented by relevant partners.

2 Methodology

Overview

The review is mostly forward-looking. It follows the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) review guidelines, examining effectiveness, relevance, and efficiency criteria. It identifies progress and highlights achievements to date and seeks to identify lessons learned to make recommendations to improve the final three years of the program. The MTR team included a Team Leader and governance expert, a Peace and Stability specialist, a Monitoring and Evaluation and program design specialist, and an Education specialist and Gender, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) specialist. (See Annex 1 for Review Team members and roles). The review team undertook a desk-based document review and engaged stakeholders in Manila and Mindanao as advised by the Australian Embassy and by the Pathways team.

In-country fieldwork was conducted over the period of 18 August to 8 September. A 'Validation Workshop' was held in Davao on 31 August, attended by four Directors General of MBHTE, representatives from DepEd Manila and the Australian Embassy, and Pathways team members. The purpose was to test the messages heard by the team during its field work. The team presented its findings to an informal meeting of the Education Policy Coordinating Committee in Manila on 8 September. This meeting was attended again by the four Directors General from MBHTE, DepEd Manila, and the National Economic Development Agency (NEDA), as well as DFAT. An Aide Memoire was presented to the Embassy on 9 September.

The review was subject to two relatively minor limitations: first, no school or site visits were possible due to security issues; and second, it was not possible to schedule a meeting with NEDA.

Key Review Questions

The Review considered the implementation and resulting achievements of the program in the past four years (2017-21), and the three reviews undertaken to date by the Strategic Monitoring Team (SMT), a three-person team established by DFAT independently to review annual progress. The MTR considered the role, effectiveness, and 'value for money' of the Responsive Innovation Fund (RIF), and its contributions to the attainment of the EoPOs.

The Review was designed to propose areas where the design may need revision for the remaining three years of the program. The MTR Terms of Reference specified that the review was not expected to identify specific activities; its role is to advise on strategic approach and to provide examples of activity types (but not actual activity designs) that may help the program achieve its intended outcomes.

Key review questions (KRQ) are shown in Annex 2.

Data Collection and Analysis

Review of Relevant Documents

The team gathered information on the KRQs from relevant grey literature. The review team assessed the original Investment Design Document, the Inception Report, intended Governance Arrangements and the MERL framework. The team further considered the three SMT reviews. These documents constituted the focus of the initial 'Document Review'. See Annex 3 for the list of documents and literature.

Key Informant Interviews and Focus Group Discussions

Key informant interviews and focus group discussions or consultation workshops were conducted to gather data. Meetings with relevant agencies and individuals were also conducted in Manila. A shared semi-structured interview protocol was used, based on the KROs. Informants were selected based on their roles and perspectives on the program. Interlocutors included individuals from DFAT, Pathways, DepEd, MBHTE, implementing partners, development partners, and program beneficiaries. See Annex 4 for list of stakeholders consulted.

Validation Process

As noted above, a Validation Workshop was held to interrogate the program design, progress to date, and to identify what may need to change in the final three years of the program.

Data Analysis and Reporting

The review focused on relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, gender equality, disability, and social inclusion. All of these are answered from the perspective of sustaining, improving achievement of, or enhancing, and communicating the program's EoPOs and improving overall program coherence. These adjustments will help enhance the overall performance narrative of the program and enhance the ability for Australia to promote its achievements. For more details on this aspect of the Review, please see the Review Plan.

3 Findings – Context and relevance

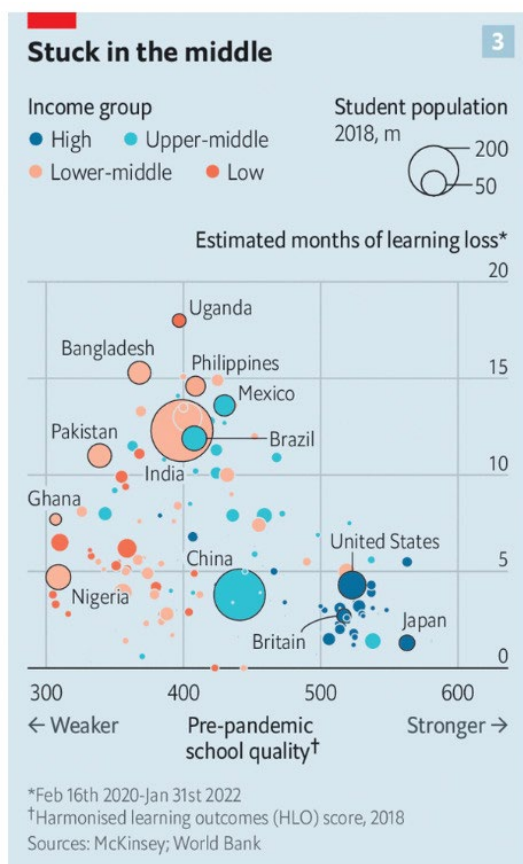
There are several critical contextual issues in the BARMM that strongly influence the performance and trajectory of the program. Most importantly it must be remembered that the region is still undergoing a fundamental institutional transition. This was noted in the three SMT reviews to date, and it remains a primary contextual driver. Despite the institutional gains (the passing of the Bangsamoro Organic Law (BOL), the establishment of the Bangsamoro Transition Authority (BTA), the creation of the unified MBHTE, the passing of the Bangsamoro Education Code, and the drafting of the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR), the BARMM remains a fledgling government, autonomous but not independent. Senior staff in MBHTE must navigate between the popular demand for a more 'balanced' education curriculum and the requirement that it complies with national Philippine standards for core (national and secular) curriculum and learning attainment.³ Within the BARMM there are different interpretations of 'balance' and 'moral governance' as far as the education curriculum is concerned, and similarly with the terms 'contextualisation' and 'elaboration.' None of these terms have been unambiguously defined, nor are they likely to be, as many stakeholders prefer to project their own interpretations on to them. These words are the key motifs of education in the BARMM, and they remain contested. Even the most sophisticated bureaucracy would find handling these complexities challenging.

The extent of institutional uncertainty has been increased recently. On 26 September 2022, lawmakers in the BTA tabled bills that would see the MBHTE restructured into three separate agencies: a Ministry of Education, a Ministry of Technical Education and Skills Development, and a separate and quasi-independent Bangsamoro Commission on Higher Education. It is too early to identify the implications for the program, but at best this move is likely to slow down implementation of reforms as senior staff grapple with changing organisational mandates, structures, and systems. It is almost certain to slow the implementation rate of the program.

At the national level, further institutional change has followed the Presidential election, with Vice President Sara Duterte's appointment as the new Secretary of Education. The MTR team were advised that she has appointed a strong technical education team to advise her. This may be an opportunity to reset relationships among DepEd, DFAT, MBHTE, and Pathways (recommendation 2). Earlier this year the first elections in the BARMM were pushed out to 2025. This three-year extension to the BTA may create a window of opportunity for Pathways to embed its chosen strategy of institutional strengthening. Pathways must steer its way through the complexity, discontinuity, and immaturity of the BARMM's institutional context.

³ For more details, see www.officialgazette.gov.ph/k-12/

Figure 1: Learning Loss



Looking at the basic education sector, any gains in educational outcomes made since the inception of Pathways in 2017 are likely to have been stalled or reversed by Covid. This is due to both institutional discontinuity and the severe impact of Covid on learning continuity. The 9 July 2022, edition of The Economist noted just how severe was the impact in the Philippines (see Figure 1). Starting from a relatively weak position, data from the World Bank and McKinsey indicate that the average learning loss in the Philippines was 15 months for every child. Pre-covid, the BARMM had the highest rates of poverty nationally, the lowest levels of enrolment and completion / transition rates, lower learning outcomes, and more out of school youth. It is likely therefore that learning loss in Mindanao could be up to 24 months.

The MTR team would therefore suggest that in some ways the program is only now emerging from an inception phase. It is clear that the two EoPOs will not be delivered. However, four of the five IOs may be achieved – IO 5 is the outlier. Given the ‘newness’ and institutional frailty of the BARMM, the institutional strengthening objectives of the program will remain hard to achieve. With these points in mind, the bottom line is that Pathways remains absolutely relevant in the BARMM – arguably it is more relevant today than it was in 2017. Indeed, the program represents one of the highest priorities in the BARMM and for the BARMM government – from both an education perspective, and from peace, security, stability, and conflict prevention perspectives.

The MTR found that Australia’s ongoing investment in education in Mindanao is highly valued by all stakeholders in the region, and in Manila. The team heard many quotes: “Pathways is our program;” “Pathways is easy to talk to;” “Pathways is willing to help us;” “Other donors just want our data;” “Program outcomes are MBHTE outcomes. If Pathways fails, then MBHTE fails;” “Pathways always finds a way”.

Education remains a high political priority for the BARMM government. A minority bloc politician said to the team that “BARMM cannot fail in education. We can fail in all other sectors but not education. This would undermine the whole future of BARMM and the peace.” As was noted above, the institutions responsible for building and sustaining education planning, delivery and oversight are new and evolving. They still need

support to deliver the foundations for ongoing peace, stability, and prosperity. That said, significant institutional progress has been made since 2017 – while they provide the framework for delivery, they do not guarantee delivery.

The three-year extension to the BTA through to elections in 2025 provides a window of opportunity for Pathways to lock in the gains it has already made, enhance the legitimacy of the sector, and to reduce grievances. BARMM is very new (March 2019) and is building its political and administrative institutions. This has been hampered by Covid including delays to policy deliberations, planning, and recruitment of much needed staff. MBHTE was established only in 2019, bringing together four previously separate agencies.

The policy space remains contested (as in all pluralistic polities), and decision-making tends to be centralised as trust, policy and technical capability are established. There remain different views on what constitutes ‘moral governance’ and ‘balance.’ Expectations on what autonomy can deliver are extremely high from civilians to ex-combatants. The MBHTE must navigate a tricky space between, on the one hand, delivering what most citizens want, which is an Islamic education curriculum, and on the other, meeting national core curriculum and learning attainment standards as articulated by DepEd. This is no easy task, and it underscores the value of technical advice from the two Indonesian education advisers employed by Pathways.

The program is operating in a highly challenging and complex environment. The MTR team are aware of this. For this reason, we would stress the five real achievements of the program – outlined in section 4. Figure 2 on the next page attempts to capture the complexity and the challenges facing the program. There are three overarching challenges to the success of the program.

- **the fragility and ‘newness’ of BARMM political institutions.** This is compounded by the continuing ‘tensions’ between the region and the national government. The impact of the President’s desire to break up so-called super ministries in the region to align with their national counterparts is unknowable, but it will have implications for the program. The political economy of the region is contested and must be watched closely;
- **the internal functioning of the MBHTE.** Pathways will have no influence on the first challenge, but could play a key role in this, the second challenge. The program has the opportunity to embed and build on the embryonic systems that it has helped put in place to date; and
- **within the Pathways office itself:** can it respond to the changing context; can it deliver on its Annual Work Plan (AWP) 6 agenda? Can it recruit and retain the right staff? Can it work effectively, efficiently, and responsively with the four directorates general in MBHTE? Many of the issues summarised in Figure 2 are discussed in the following sections of the report.

For all the above reasons. Pathways undoubtedly remains relevant. It is considered valuable, indeed essential, as a partner in education development in the region. Its contribution is seen as important by colleagues in MBHTE. It has achieved considerable outcomes as noted above.

Figure 2: High level assessment

Context	Strategic	Programmatic	Operational	Pathways: strengths and challenges	Critical issues
<p>Presidential decision on future of MBHTE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decision to restructure MBHTE risks slowing implementation of the program Pathways engaged on sensitive issues - hearts and minds agenda 	<p>The next three to four years</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will not achieve EoPOs, possibly achieve IOs 1-4 A challenge for Pathways to help lay the foundations for the future of education (and possible follow-on DFAT programming) Directors General committed to sustainability 	<p>AWP6</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is complicated – but the Gantt chart and commentary help More change than continuity Little data driven evidence regarding progress to EoPO 1 and EoPO 2 	<p>Staffing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Variability of advisers. Less to do with location and more to do with attitude, empathy and understanding of context MBHTE concerned that none of the Exec Team are based in Cotabato 	<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Universally well regarded Playing a significant role Provides (largely) well regarded Technical Assistance and operational funding – with some caveats Seen as responsive RIF and Responsive Assistance Fund well liked 	<p>National government – BARMM relationship</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of IRRs Interest of new Vice President / Sec of Education – strong team offers an opportunity to reset relationship
<p>Sovereignty jealously guarded</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pathways ‘owned’ by MBHTE but real demand that advisers ‘listen’ Ambition of MBHTE exceeds its current reach Major institutional progress (BOL, Basic Education Code, IRRs etc) but institutions still fragile 	<p>Balance of upstream v downstream</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AWP6 shifts centre of gravity to learning sites The work on ‘institutions’ (MBHTE systems and processes) is critical – it ties the system together. If this fails, the program fails 	<p>Technical education issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interpretations of ‘balance’ and ‘moral governance’ unlikely to be defined Implementation of IRR will be telling 	<p>Spending profile</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pathways asked to fund recurrent activities due to sclerotic MBHTE systems and reluctance of MBHTE staff to take decisions for fear of Independent Audit Commission 	<p>Challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pathways has not been able to report against outcomes and provide a narrative to DFAT to demonstrate outcomes and progress Tendency to overclaim: use of ‘we’ Staff profile, recruitment, and retention is problematic No consistent attention to gender MERL is underdeveloped 	<p>Pathways way of working</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How to be more responsive without slowing progress or compromising neutrality Regaining trust across the whole program staff Listen more
<p>Impact of Covid</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Philippines among the worst affected globally – see The Economist of 9 July. Learning loss estimated at 15-24 months Baseline situation as bad as when Pathways started 	<p>MBHTE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decision-making remains centralised Finance a blockage Two priorities: (i) cross-ministry performance, planning and oversight, and (ii) Quality Management Systems in the Office of the Minister How much support can it absorb? 	<p>MERL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insufficiently developed Focused on Activities and Outputs Little evidence that Pathways has turned Outputs into Outcomes <p>Does not deliver for DFAT public diplomacy needs</p>	<p>Staffing in Pathways</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Availability of pre-school technical skills insufficient Local Program Officers underutilised for their contextual understanding Cohesion improving but cliques remain No senior indigenous Moro staff; More junior Program Officers are mostly Moros Need for comms skills and strategic MERL 		<p>Technically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need to have specialists in GEDSI and K-3 education Need to fast track GEDSI lens/framework in ongoing programs in curriculum development, teacher’s professional development, learning resources, inclusive schools, and community learning centres (AKAP) Investment in Madaris could be significantly ramped up
<p>Absence of real BARMM accountability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> BTA something of a rubber stamp 	<p>To what extent is Pathways an education and conflict program?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pathways is an education program, but viewed through a governance lens 	<p>GEDSI</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> DFAT emphasises gender and disability; MBHTE emphasises social inclusion Gender is insufficiently prioritised 			

Figure 3 presents a more specific SWOT analysis of the program and its operating environment. As can be seen the program has delivered a range of strong outputs: the AKAP program, Madaris education, the education management system, and learning continuity during Covid. But the program does have weaknesses. It will not deliver either of the two EoPOs, and its MERL and communications work are below par. The work on GEDSI is varied. These issues are discussed in the next sections of the report.

Figure 3: SWOT analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ delivering some excellent outcomes in a complex and changing environment ➤ response to Covid ➤ the AKAP initiative ➤ support to Madaris ➤ Bangsamoro Education Management Information System ➤ program highly valued by all interlocutors ➤ Pathways office established and known by all stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ program will not meet its EoPOs in time frame ➤ skills shortage and vacancies in MBHTE ➤ MERL not delivering what is needed strategically for MBHTE, DepEd or to DFAT for reporting and public diplomacy ➤ variable adviser performance ➤ GEDSI – variable performance – gender seen as an ‘add-on’ ➤ AWP6 is complex and may not be widely understood ➤ uneven grasp of cultural sensitivities in Pathways Office
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ to deliver IOs 1-4 and a revised IO 5 ➤ to work with new DepEd team under VP Duterte ➤ three years of <i>relative</i> political calm ➤ further to embed system and process gains made to date ➤ to exploit the political and popular support for Madrasah education ➤ to align with priorities of four DGs in MBHTE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ high expectations amongst BARMM stakeholders ➤ implications of splitting up MBHTE ➤ BARMM institutions still new and emerging ➤ political shifts and potential spikes in violence leading up to the May 2025 elections

4 Findings - Effectiveness: progress against outcomes

The main finding as far as effectiveness is concerned is that the program will not be able to deliver its two EoPOs. This is for slightly different reasons. The EoPOs as stated in the original design are:

- EoPO1: Reduced disparity and improved participation and education performance of boys and girls, particularly those experiencing disadvantage.
- EoPO2: Sustainable positive engagement, collaboration and convergence of key actors and stakeholders in providing and supporting conflict sensitive quality basic education services.

EoPO1 is an ambitious *educational* objective: reduced disparity, improved performance of boys and girls, particularly the disadvantaged. These are three demanding requirements. It is possible, indeed likely, that given Covid, learning outcomes may well go backwards during the life of the program based on international experience and evidence. The field trial of the Student Learning Assessment for Bangsamoro (SLAB), carried out in late 2019 as a precursor to a baseline, could provide a way to measure learning loss. While the full baseline version of the SLAB was delayed due to COVID, the trial will provide some benchmarking against which to measure learning outcomes and learning loss. However, participation in education has likely been extended through the successes of AKAP, alternate learning systems, and support to madaris (see next section).

Weaknesses in MBHTE as it has evolved have also constrained the program’s ability to achieve this outcome. As demonstrated in Figure 1 above, the impact of Covid has been devastating. Given Covid and the youthfulness of BARMM institutions it is too early to measure ‘performance’ and too early to say that ‘all learners’ have benefitted.

EoPO2 is an ambitious *institutional* objective. It requires ‘increased stakeholder engagement and collaboration’. Building linkages vertically and horizontally among a range of key internal and external

stakeholders requires trust, confidence, incentives, and the space and the time to meet, discuss and see benefits from so doing. Institutions such as these take years to create and embed, and that is without two years lost due to Covid. Progress here was interrupted, if not halted altogether, by Covid. However, despite not being able to make any site visits (schools, learning sites, sub-national officers etc.), the review team heard consistent stories where parents and communities had been able to interact with officials, and articulate their views. The team would suggest that these incidents do not - yet - add up to a formalised, regular, and routine system of ‘stakeholder engagement and collaboration’. This is what *institutionalisation* means. An option for the Embassy would be to make this a focus on the next SMT.

Pathways successes

Despite the finding regarding EoPOs, Pathways has achieved some real and notable successes. The MTR team would highlight five. First, and as noted in the third SMT report, **Pathways provided significant support to MBHTE for policies, planning, and budgeting** which enabled a considerable degree of learning continuity throughout the two-year period of restrictions brought about by Covid. Pathways assisted in contextualised DepEd adaptive / alternative learning materials that could be adapted to different teaching and learning contexts, for example, community learning centres led by education facilitators and formal primary schools with qualified teachers. These materials can also be adapted to allow for teaching at the right level, an approach to education that builds core competencies rather than teach a set range of competencies based on student age. This is particularly important in a context where students may have lost years of learning due to conflict. Alternate learning materials included a relevant component for parents and guardians. The program supported teachers to deliver learning in the Covid context and supported remote orientation of new teachers.

Second, AKAP is MBHTE’s ‘flagship’ education program for access. The MTR would concur with the findings of the second and third SMT reports that the response here has been exceptional. The AKAP system is now being institutionalised, with MBHTE paying salaries for Learning Facilitators at a total cost of AUD500,000 per annum. This outcome makes a tangible contribution to IO3 on expanding access and participation in K-3 education. As of December 2021, Pathways reports that the AKAP system has provided education for 4,605 learners (2,355 boys and 2,250 girls). This provides an early signal that this aspect of the program is achieving sustainability.

Third, MBHTE is rapidly formalising the Madaris education system, which is central to the peace agreement and a significant policy priority of the BARMM. There has been substantial and commendable progress here, with Pathways providing support to formalising the Madaris system and working towards accreditation, teacher development, and curriculum development and contextualisation. More than 100 Madaris now comply with national and regional educational standards. According to a 2019 study, there are at least 1,534 traditional Madaris in Mindanao covering programs from kindergarten to college, representing a significant opportunity to contribute further to learner access to and participation in formal education.⁴

A small but effective base of understanding of the importance of Madaris education now exists in the Pathways team. Pathways has facilitated tri-lateral linkages to the successes in Indonesia and Australia’s extensive support to the Islamic education sub-sector in Indonesia.⁵ There is significant opportunity for Pathways further to enhance its strategic engagement with relevant programs and stakeholders in Indonesia and increase support to Madaris education.

Madaris education remains an attractive option for parents in the Bangsamoro: this may be for ideological reasons – a values-based education for their children; it may be the only school available, or it may be the only affordable option. To date, there is no standardisation, quality assurance or oversight of non-formal Madaris. Some of these schools deliver only religious instruction (somewhat akin to an Australian Sunday school), while others deliver a mix of basic education and religious instruction (more akin to a denominational school). Subject matter and ideological content are determined by the founders and teachers. Upgrading

⁴ For more details, see Institute for Autonomy and Governance, Research on Traditional Madaris in ARMM and Adjacent Regions (2019)

⁵ See www.inovasi.or.id/en/ for details of Australia’s current engagement in the Islamic education sector in Indonesia

these schools and bringing them into the formal education system contributes significantly to IO3 on expanding access and participation in K-3 education.

The Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) has promised that it will provide ‘morally upright’ education through two processes: supporting these non-formal Madaris to meet DepEd standards for curriculum, teaching, learning and assessment so that they can be accredited as formal public Madaris, oversights and funded through Director General (DG) Madaris Education; and developing standardised Islamic learning modules that can be delivered in secular public schools, oversights and funded through the DG for Basic Education. The success of these two initiatives is politically important for the MILF, and it is strategically important for reducing the potential for violent extremism. Current levels of support for the BARMM Islamic education agenda within DepEd are mixed and / or unclear.

Pathways is providing support to the MBHTE Islamic education agenda in several ways. First, and most impactful, a Pathways Adviser from Indonesia delivers high-level strategic advice and support. He has provided strategic advice to the BARMM Minister for Education and the BARMM Congress on options for bringing private / non-formal madaris into the public education system. He works with political and administrative leaders on policy issues such as including public Madaris in the Basic Education Code, strategic plans, budgets, IRRs, etc. This support has been crucial to MBHTE. The Adviser has been able to use his political connections in Indonesia, contributing to the development of an MoU between the Presidents of Indonesia and the Philippines on support to quality Islamic education, and MBHTE self-funded visits to Indonesia to engage on key policy areas. A second Pathways Senior Education Adviser – also from Indonesia - has been hired full-time and is based in Cotabato. He advises MBHTE and Pathways technical leads on how to integrate the support to Madaris education across key program interventions (curriculum and learning materials development, teacher training and licensing, competency assessment, etc) in compliance with national standards.

The current Minister and relevant DG’s have requested further Australian assistance to deliver progressive, modern, quality Islamic education. The MTR team are of the view that the opportunity now exists to entrench a formalised, quality assured system of madaris education, but the opportunity may be time bound, subject to the outcome of the 2025 elections. The program should continue to draw on Indonesian skills and expertise, as it brings experience and expertise, lends credibility as Muslims lead the discussion, and supports important trilateral engagement.

There remain some knotty regulatory and technical issues where MBHTE will need support. The principal challenge is likely to be the constitutional “separation of church and state”, meaning that MBHTE will need to navigate laws regarding funding what are currently non-formal madaris as a first step to support in the journey towards accreditation. MBHTE have requested a legal adviser to help them on this journey. The MTR team would support this request. They will also need to address Industrial Relations issues around staff with longer hours to accommodate secular and religious education workloads.

It is notable that Pathways investments have had most success where political will is high (e.g., AKAP and Madaris) so investing here is justified and likely to lead to success. The ‘Desired State by 2026’ for Madaris education in AWP 6 could be more ambitious. The MTR team would note that the Madaris system is starting from a low base, but this means that Pathways should ramp up support in the areas of curriculum, learning materials, teacher professional development, and school-based management rather than lower the ‘Desired State by 2026’.

Fourth, the program has assisted with the establishment and development of a functional data base in the Ministry. BEMIS (the Bangsamoro Education Management Information System) is a unified data base for education which provides relevant information for policy formulation, program targeting, and review. This database includes education statistics, sector performance indicators and profile of public and private schools, learning centres and other education service providers. It is a web-based system designed to enhance information management at all levels of the education system (school, division, region, and national levels)

through streamlined processes and use of information and communication technologies.⁶ It is linked to DepEd Central Office and has interoperability potential with other agencies. This contributes to IO5 through improved monitoring evidence-based policies and programs.

Fifth, some satisfactory progress has been made on systems strengthening within MBHTE: In interviews with key MBHTE stakeholders, they provided numerous examples of systems strengthening supported by Pathways, including strategic planning, policy priorities, school budgets, Maintenance, Operating and Other Expenses, School Improvement Plans, its organisational structure, human resources planning and management, and basic data handling. Key Pathways' Advisers have been able to facilitate more effective working relationships among the four Directors General. This contributes to IO5 through collaborative, inclusive, and evidence-based policies, and programs.

Even though the EoPOs will not be achieved, the MTR team are of the view that Intermediate Outcomes 1-4 can be achieved, and that if IO 5 is revised slightly, then it can also be achieved. This is discussed in section 7. The Pathways program should be held accountable for delivering these five IOs over the remaining lifetime of the investment. This is discussed in the first recommendation in section 9.

Relevance

Organisational development within the MBHTE – and the new structure

The success of K-3 educational reform and development in the BARMM is the responsibility of MBHTE, not Pathways. That said, IO5 demands that “institutions are better at collaborating, formulating, implementing, and monitoring inclusive policies”. MBHTE has to lead this agenda. To date, MBHTE has been Pathways' principal partner. This is appropriate: without a functioning and performance oriented MBHTE, Pathways cannot be successful. For this reason, the organisational development component of the program is critical: if the MBHTE does not work then neither will Pathways. Experience and the evidence tell us that sustained institutional strengthening is hard to deliver and takes years. The MTR team judge that an impressive and significant start has been made – especially given the fact that MBHTE was created out of four previously separate organisations, each with their own systems and culture. MBHTE now has put in place an overall framework for educational policy coherence, but much remains to be done. MBHTE continues to face challenges:

- there is a tendency to refer decisions upwards
- there remain bottlenecks in the office of the Minister for Education in BARMM especially with regards to procurement processing and finance
- limited skills and competencies reduce absorptive capacity
- cross directorate-general cooperation and cohesion remains a challenge.

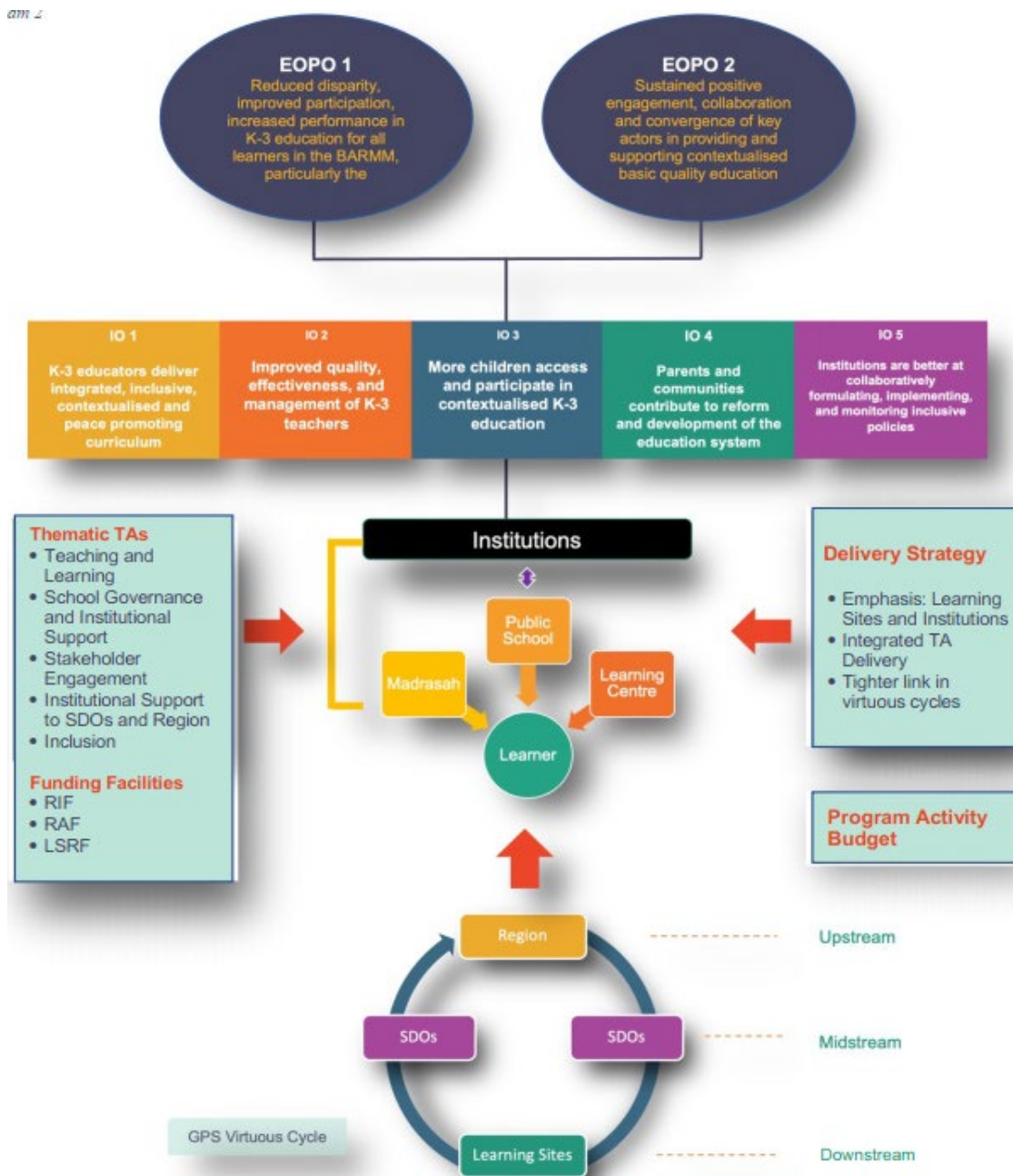
Although not yet approved by the BTA, bills have been tabled to restructure MBHTE into three separate agencies: a Ministry of Education, a Ministry of Technical Education and Skills Development, and a separate and quasi-independent Bangsamoro Commission on Higher Education. It is probable that the new Ministry of Education will take responsibility for K-3 education, and that it will replace the MBHTE as Pathways' principal partner. It is essential that Pathways should do all it can to keep abreast of this organisational change and offer timely and credible change management and technical support. It is probable that the first three challenges identified in the previous paragraph will continue in the new Ministry of Education.

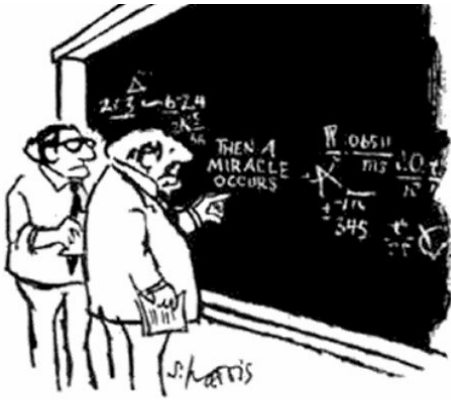
Continued support to the newly created Ministry of Education **is therefore strongly supported.** In AWP6, this is referred to as the institutional strengthening agenda. It is an approach that underpins all Pathways work. This stands in contrast to the more direct 'delivery' orientation of AWP6 1-3. It is therefore important that Pathways gets this component right. Figure 4 represents the overarching strategy from AWP6. The MTR team found this figure slightly impenetrable. At its heart lies the little black box labelled 'institutions.' Further documentation regarding AWP6 has been developed, which presents a Gantt chart and accompany text of activities to be funded. These documents constitute more of an annual plan than the formal AWP6 document.

⁶ For more details, see <https://ebeis.deped.gov.ph/beis/>

AWP6 identifies the learner to be at the core of the program. This is reasonable given that the learner is the ultimate objective of the program. However, sustainability means focusing on the MBHTE: the program must focus on MBHTE’s ability to deliver to the learner. AWP6 prioritises three sets of learning sites (or ‘Centres of Gravity’): the Madaris, Public Schools, and other Learning Centres. The strategy emphasises that these three Centres of Gravity are to be supported by ‘institutional strengthening.’ No return to more direct service is envisaged. The MTR team would recommend reconsidering the ‘two policy-to-practice cycles’ approach as explained in AWP6. It could be cut back in two ways (i) fewer target sites / schools for testing and piloting, and (ii) policy-to-practice does not have to be tested across all thematic areas at the same time twice as is the plan: field level testing, piloting, and feeding back up to policies and systems can occur in different parts of the system at different times. AWP6 emphasise the downstream but the focus on the upstream cannot be reduced for reasons of sustainability.

Figure 4: Annual Work Plan 6 Strategy





"I THINK YOU SHOULD BE MORE EXPLICIT HERE IN STEP TWO."

AWP6 does not define institutions. The term has different meanings (see the Organisational Development Strategy for MBHTE p 10). It is important to note that institutions are means to achieve ends – the achievement of the IOs. Institutions can be defined as: the rules and regulations, the systems and processes, the guidance and good practice notes, and the norms and values that influence (and maybe determine) how things get done in MBHTE, in the regions, in Local Government Units, in School Division Offices, and in schools. This is not discussed in AWP6, neither are the specific ‘institutions’ to be strengthened. It is almost (but not quite) like the famous cartoon reproduced on the right.

AWP6 does not bring together or prioritise the institutions it seeks to strengthen. Each section of the AWP6 document lists its own systems and processes to be strengthened. Confusingly these are termed ‘strategies.’ Some are shown in Figure 5 – and these are taken just from the summary.

Figure 5: Which institutions, which systems, which processes?

<p>STRATEGIES</p> <p>Strengthen</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Capacities to design and implement innovations on K-3 teaching and learning delivery systems ❖ Mechanisms for stakeholders' engagement, accountability, and continuous improvement ❖ Capacities of parents, community members to support for K-3 education. 	<p>STRATEGIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Build and strengthen the regional Director General for Madaris Education (DGME) competencies and capacity for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Islamic Studies and Arabic Language (ISAL) curriculum development and delivery; ❖ ISAL teacher development and management; and Madrasah-based management.
<p>STRATEGIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Build the capacity of Access TWG and Catchment Schools in learning supervision and school leadership ❖ Strengthen the Alternative Delivery Mode (ADM) and other Flexible Learning Options (FLO) for Geographically Isolated and Disadvantaged Areas (GIDA) and conflict affected school-less communities. ❖ Sustain the engagement of parents, community leaders, Local Government Units (LGUs), and agencies in providing education services 	<p>STRATEGIES</p> <p>For Regional Office & SDOs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Strengthen capacity in providing strategic leadership and supervision. ❖ Establish priority education management systems, standards, and structures to deliver governance functions and education services ❖ Build capacity to continuously improve, expand and/or replicate systems and innovations in early grades education.

Thus, the MTR team have concluded that continued work with MBHTE (or the new MoE) to put in place functioning core – specified – corporate systems must stand as a priority alongside the four Intermediate Outcomes which the team judge are achievable. This is discussed in section 9.

5 Findings - Gender equality, disability inclusion and social inclusion

Progress is variable

Pathways has implemented two studies to date; the GEDSI-Marginalization Study and the 20 Day 'Reach Every Child' Campaign. The Marginalization Study focuses on evidence of exclusion and its impact on learning, as well as options for increasing the participation of learners in basic education. It covers different dimensions of marginalisation including social, economic, political, security, geographic, disability, ethnicity, gender, religion, developmental, environment, and Covid impact. This study promises to enable the further development of the GEDSI strategy. However, the data needs further analysis to provide the basis of action plans which could be embedded in existing investments such as AKAP, Madaris, education for non-Moro Indigenous Peoples, and broader inclusive education including teacher development, curriculum development, and development of adaptive learning materials.

The 20 Day 'Reach Every Child' Campaign is a study to map out learners with special education needs. About 20,000 learners from across the BARMM were surveyed. Further analysis of the data will be necessary to develop a model for inclusive schools. Data will indicate the extent of the problem and the nature of barriers to accessing education, enabling more responsive programming and investment decision-making. Sex disaggregated data was shown in the preliminary results, but the intersection of gender and other dimensions of the learners' profile were not visible.

MBHTE initiatives

The MBHTE has put in place a policy for 'Protecting Children in Schools, Madaris, and other learning centres from All forms of Child Abuse, Exploitation, Violence, Discrimination, and Bullying'. This is an important milestone which was drafted with Pathways support. It provides the policy platform for GEDSI engagement within MBHTE and is designed to protect children from various forms of human rights violation including gender-based violence, violations as a result of disabilities, health, geographical location, cultural groupings, religion, and language.

Social inclusion is the most developed within the GEDSI framing

Pathways has played a critical role in the development of the AKAP initiative and recognition of Madaris education in delivering K-3 education in school-less barangays, conflict affected areas, geographically isolated and dispersed areas. In Pathways documents, disability inclusion perhaps is the most articulated aspect of GEDSI, with social inclusion less so. For instance, an extensive survey of children with disabilities was done in order to design an Inclusive Education Centre in BARMM while few cases of Indigenous or marginalised children were considered in the program. However, social inclusion has been implemented rather more strongly, across multiple strands of Pathways' work. The inclusion strategy as a set of conscious design choices needs to be better articulated. The program has yet to update its circa-2020 Inclusion Strategy, which was developed prior to the passage of the Bangsamoro Education Code and the IRRs.

Social inclusion as a design principle concretely manifests through the access / AKAP work and support to madaris. The RIF funds promising models for addressing social barriers to education, whether with combatant communities or amongst non-Moro indigenous peoples. However, they have yet to put these threads together to articulate a comprehensive social inclusion strategy. Pathways is waiting on the results of the Marginalisation Study. MBHTE and local government partners noted that several workstreams and discussions related to the needs of internally displaced learners were started by Pathways, but they have yet to follow through. Updating the program Inclusion Strategy is recommended, as is the development of a comprehensive Indigenous Peoples' Education Framework. The MTR team cannot overstate the Director Generals' statement that from the perspective of the Bangsamoro people, establishing a quality and accredited public madaris system is the ultimate inclusion strategy.

Disability

The Learners' Special Education Needs survey (the 20 Day 'Reach Every Child' Campaign) provides a sound baseline for disability inclusion. The participation of school superintendents, supervisors, principals, and

teachers has raised awareness regarding children with disabilities. The preliminary results show that about 35% of learners have some sort of disability or impairment. This has prompted school divisions to train school heads and teachers on data analysis and how to devise practical intervention programs (coined as ‘first aid’) for learners with disabilities. The design of prototype inclusive learning resource centre is in progress and has been co-designed with Pathways (through the service provider, The Teacher’s Gallery), together with the inclusive school coordinators, school heads, and special education coordinators.

The work of Pathways on the new guidelines, the ‘Inclusion Quotient’ (drafted but not yet implemented) and Alternative Learning Systems strengthen MBHTE mechanisms to cater for all types of learners. The Inclusion Quotient is an addition to the funding formulae that will see additional funding going to schools with identified learners with special needs.⁷ This will incentivise schools to identify learners with special needs and provide financial support to cater for the learning of disabled children as well as to develop capacities for Alternative Learning Systems.

The work on inclusive schools is an opportunity for BARMM to show DepEd a better way forward on disability inclusive education. MBHTE will be able to develop policies and model/s that will strengthen and sustain inclusive education in the BARMM.

Gender work is underdeveloped

Gender still seems to be viewed as a delegated task – an ‘add-on’ – in the Pathways program. While programs on social inclusion and disability are moving forward, systematic activities on gender are slated for future action creating the impression that the work on gender could be integrated after the establishment of other strategies in social inclusion and disability inclusion.

The MTR asked whether gender represents a narrative problem or an implementation problem. Gender is part of the inclusion plan of AWP 4 (Pathways Inclusion Strategy, Nov. 2020, pp 15-19), however, the gender narrative in the accomplishment reports of Pathways is not clear. Gender features in one paragraph only in AWP6. It raises the question of whether the gender strategy was implemented but not reported, or whether there was little implementation, thus leaving no story to tell. The MTR team was informed that gender mainstreaming is happening in a cross-cutting way e.g., in curriculum, teacher training, school-based management, etc. (BEMIS collects sex-disaggregated data). There could be some evidence of gender integration of concepts and principles in educational programs, but purposeful and meaningful programs, activities, and projects are not evident. Strategies for gender mainstreaming are not visible.

Of concern is that there is no serious gender analysis after five years of the program. The MTR team could find little evidence of systematic gender analysis in education which could form the basis for gender mainstreaming activity. Gender mainstreaming is critical to the integration of gender and development in policies and programs of all agencies of the government including development assistance programs / projects. The Philippine government requires that all government programs utilise gender analysis tools and evaluate gender mainstreaming outcomes in all phases of the program - planning and budgeting, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. The Magna Carta of Women requires that at least 5 per cent of an agencies’ budget be allotted to gender and development programs. The paucity of analysis on gender over the past five years explains why there is no gender narrative for Pathways for DFAT to report to Canberra.

Palladium proposed its GEDSI Strategy and Action Plan in the Inception Report (Annex 8). This plan was supposed to serve as a checklist to ensure that inclusion (gender, disability, geographic location, poverty, conflict type and prevalence, ethnicity and culture, language of learner, and religion) guides the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of all Pathways’ activities. This document underscores important gender policies (e.g., DepEd’s Gender Responsive Education Policy, gender mainstreaming in ARMM, ARMM Gender and Development Code, etc.) as the bases for the gender strategy. This was started during the DepEd

⁷ Pathways with the help of a service provider and experts in special education made use of the trial of Washington Group Questions, trained the special education teachers, and enumerators

ARMM era but became invisible in the BARMM. The MTR recommends updating the GEDSI Strategy and Action Plan.

An updated GEDSI Strategy and Action Plan can maximise the opportunities provided by the Bangsamoro Administrative Code, the Bangsamoro Education Code, as well as multiple policy anchors for GEDSI available at national and regional levels. The 2016 report of the Government of Philippines-MILF Transitional Justice and Reconciliation Commission provides extensive recommendations on inclusive curriculum development. Efforts to implement the findings of the report include the passage of national legislation integrating Filipino-Muslim and indigenous people's history, culture, and identity in basic and higher education. Regionally, these recommendations are embedded in the 1st Bangsamoro Development Plan, and its draft update for 2023-2028. For example, the first Bangsamoro Development Plan Chapter 6 has a good narrative on the role of MBHTE on gender. Specifically, it recommends that MBHTE, Philippine Commission on Women, National Commission for Culture and the Arts, and the Cultural Centre of the Philippines develop culturally and gender sensitive educational materials about the Bangsamoro and Indigenous Peoples for the national curriculum as well as the "creation of a joint, mixed and gender balanced technical working group" to work on curricula and education issues. With the creation of the Bangsamoro Women's Commission, the Bangsamoro Commission for the Preservation of Cultural Heritage, the Ministry of Indigenous Peoples Affairs, and the Bangsamoro Human Rights Commission, the architecture exists for grounded GEDSI work led by regional actors that can be supported by their national counterparts. This is something on which Pathways can help.

Planned levels of data disaggregation are good, but it remains to be seen if the data will be collected at that level. Sex disaggregated data provides initial demographic attributes of boys and girls, but there is a need to further use gender analysis tools to deepen the understanding of gender issues. The systematic investigation of gender data and its intersections, if successful, would provide a sound basis for framing the Gender and Development agenda of BARMM to include integration of Gender and Development core messages, gender concept and principles, learning outcomes in the curriculum, development of inclusive instructional materials, improve access and outcomes for boys and girls including improving the capacity of teachers and schools heads in using the perspective of GEDSI in their programs.

6 Findings – Efficiency (Management and Operations)

Program governance and oversight

The program governance arrangements are multi-layered and involve a complex four-way relationship, represented at the highest level by the DFAT-DepEd partnership, and at the regional level by the Pathways-BARMM-MBHTE relationships. These partners have their objectives and priorities and their own relationship with other partners outside of Pathways governance – in particular, the national-regional relationships (DepEd and MBHTE), and the DFAT-Pathways relationship. Pathways, as a program rather than a formal government institution, has less authority than others to convene and project an agenda and is therefore not an equal partner. Pathways Program Management Office can and should guide partners on the agenda to align with program scope and objectives.

At the Regional level, program governance seems to be working effectively, with some strong Technical Working groups (especially in AKAP and Madaris education), and the Program Advisory Committee facilitating regular dialogue between the Pathways senior management team and MBHTE. It is less clear how effective Pathways is in supporting engagement between MBHTE and DepEd. The MTR would suggest that this is not a legitimate role for a donor-funded sub-national program.

At the national level, formal governance arrangements have continued to function, but can be a source of tension. There is insufficient informal dialogue occurring to ease these tensions and smooth the way for effective formal program governance. Pathways as a program does not have the political clout or authority to undertake this but needs to support DFAT to undertake this role through briefing, advice, and prompting at the regional level. A more coordinated approach between DFAT and Pathways would support more effective advocacy and lobbying between DFAT and DepEd. With a new national administration in place, with high level (Vice President) political engagement both in education and in the peace process in Mindanao, and a new

leadership across DepEd, it is a good time for DFAT to reset their relationship with DepEd and lead policy dialogue for Pathways and other Australian investments in education in the Philippines.

MERL, reporting, and communications

While there is clear evidence that the Pathways program is delivering positive, sustainable outcomes in education reform, the program is hampered in telling this story and communicating positive messaging by inadequate MERL and limited strategic communications. The inadequacy of Pathways MERL framework and strategic communications feed into issues at the national governance level, with DFAT and DepEd having insufficient data, evidence, and key messaging to support meaningful policy dialogue. This has been highlighted in the three SMT reports to date. Despite the lack of strategic MERL, thematic leads are often making strategically sound decisions on activity design and investment choices.

The MTR team noted that the Pathways team are frequently requested to provide output level data and reporting to DepEd and DFAT, which skews their focus to an extent. The Pathways team are also dependent on service providers and grant recipients to generate data and evidence and thus they do not always have direct control over the quality and timeliness of data. That said, the program team is directly responsible for managing service providers and mitigating possible weaknesses and gaps of service provider and grant recipient reporting.

Palladium recently commissioned a Rapid Readiness Assessment of the Pathways MERL arrangements. Interviews with the Kibblewhite review indicate that the findings and recommendations from that process mirror the findings of the MTR team. Given the time allocated to the Rapid Readiness Assessment (20 days), it provides more comprehensive analysis and recommendations regarding Pathways MERL framework and systems than the MTR allows.

The Rapid Readiness Assessment reiterated the MERL related findings of the third SMT review, and provides the following key recommendations:

- Responsibility for lower-level data collection, learning, and adapting be shifted from the MERL team to the advisers so that the MERL team can better support decision-making at a higher level including at the strategy level;
- Given the significant contextual changes since the program logic was last revised (2020), the Theory of Change must be updated to reflect the next three years, the expected level of achievement, and how the MERL system will respond to updated decision needs;
- Developing and documenting program logics for each of Pathways' main interventions will be a good opportunity to develop a consistent understanding of immediate and intermediate outcomes and how they link with the Pathways' program logic;
- A review of performance indicators for intermediate outcomes will be important, retaining the current balance of quantitative and qualitative indicators;
- The cycle of identifying results > reflecting > learning > adapting needs to occur at the program level rather than in thematic silos, and strategy testing needs to occur annually; and
- Pathways to develop a consistent and systematic approach to assessing, planning, measuring, and adapting institutional strengthening and introduce Significant Incidents of Policy and System Influence.

Pathways Theory of Change does not make adequate distinction between the intended outcomes and indicators of success between what Pathways should achieve and what MBHTE should achieve. This conflation of theories of change means that there is inadequate monitoring and reporting against Pathways interventions and outcomes, and as a result, Pathways appears to make claims of success that go beyond their achievements. While any 'embedded' program can struggle to distinguish attribution for reform outcomes from that of their counterparts, there are examples of theories of change and MERL that more adequately track program (versus counterpart) outcomes.

The Pathways MERL does not provide sufficient performance indicators to guide the collection of data and evidence across all elements of program intermediate and end-of-program outcomes. Neither does it provide

adequate tools, templates or guidance for Pathways advisers and delivery partners to feed into the MEL team. There is significant missed opportunity for outcomes harvesting and stories of significant change.

It has been difficult for Pathways to establish a stable baseline given the fluid operating environment.

However, considerable elements of a baseline are in place, and will provide the program with sufficient benchmarking to report progress against intermediate outcomes over time. These include the Student Learning Assessment Baseline, the geo-mapping of schools and teachers, and the Learners with Special Education Needs mapping (disability inclusion), Teacher Education Institution mapping, among other research and analysis. The 1st Bangsamoro Development Plan, and the ARMM Transition Report provide good baseline data on education (enrolment, transition, completion rates, NAT scores, teacher: student ratios, simple literacy, functional literacy, etc.) as well as organisational development needs. Some baseline assessments such as in-classroom teacher observation have been stalled by the two-year hiatus in face-to-face teaching due to Covid. It is envisioned that the launch of BEMIS this year will contribute to addressing the baseline issue more definitively, although populating the madaris component will be a significant challenge.

There appears to be limited understanding within the Pathways senior management team of DFAT public diplomacy needs, and limited capacity to deliver on these needs given the issues outlined above with missed opportunities to deliver a clear, attributable outcomes narrative and stories of significant change. Missed opportunities in MERL and strategic communications are undermining confidence and credibility for a program that is delivering positive and sustained outcomes in education and institutional strengthening in the BARMM. The program should invest in retrospective outcomes harvesting, stories of significant change, and Significant Incidents of Policy and System Influence and could consider providing a monthly update to DFAT and DepEd on significant milestones, program achievements, and policy issues.

Budget, procurement, and spending

The Pathways program suffered significant budget cuts in the 2021/2022 financial year. This was due in large part to insufficient understanding within the Pathways senior management team of DFAT budget cycles and processes. Palladium and Pathways need a better understanding of DFAT budget cycles to avoid budget cuts in future. Program budget cuts undermine the team's ability to manage expectations and relationships with key counterparts and implementing partners.

There is limited detailed budget data and therefore limited ability for Pathways senior managers to make strategic budget decisions. It was difficult to establish whether this is a result of Palladium financial systems, the way these systems are utilised in-country, or the fact that much of the program is delivered through sub-contracting and granting arrangements which could be milestone (rather than inputs) based and are more difficult to change at short notice in response to emerging priorities. Regardless of the cause, there is limited ability for the senior management team to make quick and informed changes to investment allocations.

It was noted in interviews that Pathways is paying travel allowances and *per diems* for counterpart attendance at workshops, meetings, and events in excess of BARMM rates. Australian funding of *per diems* and allowances ceased in most other programs' years ago (Indonesia and Timor Leste, for example), and should be reconsidered by DFAT across the Philippines program. If it is judged that payment of *per diems* cannot be removed from programming, the rates payable should be the same as those granted by DepEd or the MBHTE.

Pathways team and ways of working

The Pathways team is seen as a valuable partner to MBHTE, and there are significant examples of effective working relationships delivering high quality, responsive support to key counterparts. Good advisors are deemed effective because they listen, are accessible and flexible, and invest in building relationships with counterparts. They are credible because they bring much needed technical expertise together with integrity. These are the same qualities that make an effective program. Some strategic capability gaps remain in the team, and recruitment is underway for a senior communications adviser. Additional resourcing in strategic MERL should also be considered, as well as in early learning.

Pathways leadership has worked hard to establish a sense of team and shared objectives during very trying times. Changes in the senior management team in the lead up to Covid meant that this needed to be done remotely, which is challenging. Remote working resulted in a thematically siloed approach to work and investments in previous Annual Work Plans. However, since being back in country, the team has worked hard to develop a more coherent delivery strategy via AWP6. The Pathways team notes that they will be investing more time in improved internal coordination of activities and events, and greater collaboration across their partners working on similar issues, which is needed.

Key members of the Pathways senior management and adviser teams are not based in Cotabato, but instead 'rotate' through to ensure that at least two senior managers are in Cotabato at any one time, and that advisers are available to counterparts. It was noted that some remote / part time advisers are highly accessible, while others are less accessible even when in Cotabato, suggesting that accessibility to MBHTE colleagues is less to do with location than with working style. Regardless, there seems to be little justification from a health or security perspective for senior management and adviser positions to be based anywhere other than Cotabato. These roles need to lead engagement and strategic direction setting and influencing with counterparts and collaborating internally with other pillar leads.

While 80% of the program team are from Mindanao, there are no senior managers or advisers from the Bangsamoro, leaving cultural competency gaps in the team. While attempts have been made to recruit Moro into senior roles and there have been several Moro and indigenous specialists in the program, more effort needs to be undertaken to source Moro advisers and / or develop and promote suitable Program Officers. Diversity will be key to ensuring program neutrality. Moro recruitment will require positive discrimination, local talent scouting, and internal promotion. Pathways will also need increasingly to use local service providers wherever possible.

Modalities and value for money

As a modality, the Managing Contractor model provides DFAT with the potential for enhanced strategic oversight, direct engagement with key counterparts, improved communications, and public diplomacy, and be responsive to context and emerging needs. However, given the weaknesses and missed opportunities outlined above in MERL and communications, some of these potential benefits are not yet being realised by DFAT through the Pathways investment.

The Pathways use of Service Delivery providers brings technical expertise, extends the reach of Pathways, and builds local capacity where the partners are local. However, it is less flexible when urgent budgetary changes are required. The program proved highly *responsive* to the onset of Covid. There is less evidence that it was *adaptive* – the term being used in the (correct) sense that it is being used in Pathways: revising activities and possibly outputs within the financial year as a result of deep reflection on what is either driving or hindering progress and thus the theory of change itself. Flexibility in implementation (spending slightly more or slightly less on agreed activities) and responsiveness (changing the overarching goal of the program) are frequently conflated in many development programs. They are different. Pathways scores well on responsiveness, but less well on both flexibility and adaptation.

The RIF is working well and has allowed for the piloting and testing of locally innovative approaches (from the user perspective) that deliver local solutions to local problems. The RIF extends the reach of Pathways – geographically, via grass roots organisations – and builds local capacity. The time has been taken to make this a modality with very high local leadership and ownership, enhancing the sustainability of investments. Outcomes are evident, with the majority of RIF projects related to the establishment of AKAP, although the outcomes story of the RIF needs elevating. One area for policy dialogue is over the intent of the RIF – while Pathways sees the RIF as a way to pilot initiatives, MBHTE sees it as a way to deliver outcomes – particularly under AKAP. Also, given the limited flexibility in the Pathways' budget, the RIF inevitably gets cut. This is not a strategic way to manage the budget or the RIF.

7 Scenarios

The MTR team were asked to consider alternative scenarios for the last three years of the program. Four scenarios were identified:

- **Recommit and replicate:** the status quo. Continue as of now with a few tweaks around the edges.
- **Revise and reconfigure:** this requires a significant refocus of the Pathways strategy, building on successes to date and increasing alignment with MBHTE priorities. The contract with Palladium would be extended but with a set of demanding conditions.
- **Redesign and rebrand:** this option is more demanding. The current contract holders will be given notice and a new 'design and implement' contract be taken to the market. While this would allow the investment to start afresh, the transactions costs would be extremely heavy and the handover to a new contactor would cause a real delay in implementation.
- **Reimagine and reconceptualise:** manage the program to a conclusion (either in 18 months' time when the current contract with Palladium ends, or when the program ends in 2026) and 'fold in' the Pathways component into a new national education program.

These options are spelt out in more detail, together with pros and cons, in Figure 6.

The four scenarios: a summary

Option 1: Recommit and replicate. The easiest and least challenging option – but it is the least strategically appropriate. It avoids addressing two of the big challenges facing the current program: first that Pathways will not achieve its EoPOs; and second, it will not allow the opportunity to address the usually unspoken but real issues of a lack of complete trust and confidence between MBHTE and some - but by no means all - Pathways' advisers. It will enable the program to continue delivering some strong and notable successes, but without securing a more effective relationship between the two key partners.

Option 2: Revise and reconfigure. This option offers a mix of continuity and change. Pathways will have a design update but within its current overarching framework. AWP6 will be revisited with a view to taking decisions regarding prioritisation and focus. Success areas will be scaled up and less successful or less crucial activities will be dropped. This will require close collaboration among DFAT, DepEd, the MBHTE and the Pathways team. Substantial changes are likely to be required in the office (structure, staffing, roles, and responsibilities) to drive a more focused agenda. The contract with Palladium will be extended, but with demanding conditions on staffing, place of residence for staff, budget, and the executive team.

Option 3: Redesign and rebrand. There are two possibilities here, following a decision to close the current Pathways program. The first would be to commission a new 'design and implement' DFAT contract, taking effect as soon as possible. The second is to commission a multilateral to take over the current program of work. The MTR team discounted this option as implementation would be seriously compromised by the delays and uncertainties that it would cause. There is now a two- or three-year window of opportunity to make a real difference on the ground in the BARMM, and institutionally in the MBHTE (or its successors). It will take at least 12 and probably 18 months to redesign Pathways and procure an appropriate implementing partner. The new program will thus be put in place just as 'electioneering starts, and the bureaucracy stops.' This would scupper plans for serious early political and technical engagement. Equally worryingly, the announcement of this option would undermine the current program. Staff would likely start looking for other opportunities. Both alternatives in this option carries the risk of a major hiatus in delivery, implementation, and thus in impact. For these reasons this option is not recommended.

Option 4: Reimagine and reconceptualise. This is the most radical option. It will see an end to DFAT's specific education program in the BARMM. The program would be 'managed to completion' by say mid-2024 when electioneering starts. The program would be 'folded into' a revised and newly designed program of national support to education or added to existing multi-lateral investments in the BARMM. Pathways experience as a modality could be used as a template for support to the newly revamped and reinvigorated Education Department under Vice President Duterte. The major cost is that DFAT loses its footprint and foothold in the

BARMM. The longer-term risk is that the peace process could be undermined, and Madaris education could become more marginalised – and the evidence shows just how critical education is for hearts and minds.

The MTR team consider that neither option 1 or 4 are technically desirable or politically appropriate. Option 1 would not provide scope for revision and option 4 constitutes a strategic risk to DFAT. Neither option 2 nor 3 *completely mitigates* that risk, but they *maximise the possibility for* mitigation. Option 3 creates a surfeit of transactions costs and delays that make it unviable.

The MTR therefore recommend option 2: a judicious mix of continuity and change. Option 2 will require significant DFAT oversight to restructure the team, agree which parts of the program will end, and to ensure the new revised and reset program meets the objectives and recommendations summarised in the next section. The Head Contract should be extended with heavy conditions imposed on Palladium. These are discussed in the next section.

Figure 6: Scenarios

Name	Outline	Pros	Cons
1 Recommit and replicate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the status quo a few tweaks around the edges: build on success prepare for follow on program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> continuity minimum disruption to relationships Pathways office in place builds on five years of experience demonstrates DFAT commitment to BARMM minimal transactions costs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> does not address strategic issues identified in MTR will not achieve EoPOs – doubling down poor evidence-base for continuation real and significant opportunity costs
2 Revise and reconfigure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> redesign Pathways with scale down of budget rigorous prioritisation of activities identify and drop non-priority activities in consultation with MBHTE renegotiate contract with Palladium with demanding conditions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a mix of continuity and change will be able to reflect the changed landscape since 2017 will enable alignment with MBHTE priorities recognises weakness of current program continues to signal commitment to the BARMM allows reset of relationship with the BARMM / MBHTE change will be intuitive to many stakeholders can ‘build on success and jettison failure’ will be welcomed by four MBHTE Directors General 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> may cause disquiet among staff will require a hard negotiation with Palladium
3 Redesign and rebrand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> decision now to close Pathways in 12 – 18 months tender for new design and implement contract starting late 2023 alternative would be to transfer resources to a multilateral 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> will allow a new brand to emerge, free of any Pathways baggage will allow new strategic approach allows a mix of strategic reset with continuity of commitment opportunity to reset relationship with BARMM / MBHTE will enable alignment with how the BARMM is now not how it was in 2017 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> huge transactions cost in redesign and retender high likelihood of losing program staff could raise questions of DFAT commitment to the BARMM will limit time for impact between now and 2025 difficulty in achieving the outcomes in shortened timeframe current program will be seen as a lame duck
4 Reimagine and reconceptualise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> close Pathways either in 12-18 months, or indeed in 2026 enfold Pathways into new nationwide education program re-tender the program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> possibly enable greater program coherence within DFAT should afford greater influence at national policy making level opportunity to forge deep relationship DepEd under the new VP replicate Pathways modality at national level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> may be perceived a reduced commitment to the BARMM may reduce DFAT access and influence in key strategic region maximum transactions cost could require DFAT to expend considerable political capital loss of one pair ‘eyes and ears’ in BARMM

8 Recommendations

This section is divided into three parts: strategic, programmatic, and operational, following the format of Figure 2 above. These recommendations are summarised in Figure 8.

Strategic

Recommendation 1: The program should continue through to 2026.

The program goal and EoPOs should remain as they are but be qualified in Pathways documentation.

Pathways should be held accountable for delivering Intermediate Outcomes 1 – 5, with a re-articulation of IO 5 to focus on the MBHTE. A revised Theory of change will need to make adequate distinction between the intended outcomes and indicators of success between what Pathways should achieve and what MBHTE should achieve. This would appear to be consistent with what the MTR team has heard regarding the results of the MERL Rapid Readiness Assessment.

AWP6 is overly ambitious and should be cut back to focus on five Intermediate Outcomes. These are IOs 1-4 in the current design, and a re-articulation of IO 5 to focus on the MBHTE. The MTR team judge that these are achievable over the remaining years of the program. These are shown in Figure 7.

Figure 7: Pathways revised 'deliverables' for 2026



These five IOs respond to MBHTE and DepEd's highest priorities and most pressing needs in the region:

learning recovery, institutionalisation of the Madaris education system, increased access to education for all communities, and institutional strengthening in MBHTE at the core of the program. The shift in IO 5 is subtle: the MTR team would suggest that the 'whole of stakeholder' approach be changed to focus on the internal functioning and effectiveness of MBHTE. Specific recommendations for each IO are in the next section.

Reduce the number of schools and learning centres intended as sites to test and pilot Pathways activities and outcomes from the current AWP 6 estimate of over 800 to a more realistic number.

Recommendation 2 Oversight arrangements

Oversight arrangements as noted in section 6 are well designed in principle but have not worked well in practice. The MTR team would therefore recommend that DFAT and Pathways work together to develop a shared policy dialogue agenda and key messaging for the program, and that Pathways provide suitable evidence, data and briefing for DFAT to lead on policy dialogue with DepEd. DFAT increase the level of informal dialogue with DepEd, and in particular, in advance of official program governance meetings and events to reduce the likelihood of misunderstandings and tensions at formal governance meetings. The program could consider providing a monthly update to DFAT and DepEd on significant milestones, program achievements and policy issues.

The MTR team would also suggest that DFAT to return to fortnightly meeting with Pathways Senior Management (currently monthly).

Programmatic

Recommendation 3 Intermediate Outcome 1: K-3 educators deliver integrated, inclusive contextualised and peace promoting curriculum

- **integrate approaches to curriculum, teacher professional development, and learning assessment** ensuring that they are understood as part of the same process of systems reform
- **ensure that teacher learning is focused on preparing teachers to respond to learning loss** and the learning crisis through research informed interventions, e.g., focus on teaching at the right level, foundational skills, and school readiness
- **ensure that teacher professional development reflects international good practice in preparing teachers to focus on key aspects of inclusive pedagogy** and creating inclusive welcoming schools and classrooms
- **develop MBHTE capacity to undertake a standardised, quality assured process for contextualised curriculum development and revision**
- **ensure that the curriculum is accessible to a diverse range of learners**, especially learners with special education needs

Recommendation 4 Intermediate Outcome 2: Improved quality, effectiveness, and management of K-3 teachers

- **ensure that the professional standards are operationalised and then institutionalised**, and are used as a basis for integrating in-service and pre-service teacher education curricula
- **build capacity of pre-service and in-service trainers to plan and deliver higher quality training programs** focusing on evidence informed approaches such as cluster based and school-based teacher learning groups, developing reflective practice and communities of practice focused on key priorities
- **prepare and operationalise learning materials that support teachers** in programs focusing on learning progression foundational skills, inclusive pedagogy and creating inclusive welcoming schools and classrooms
- **prioritise an increased supply of qualified and accredited teachers in Madaris education**
- **leverage wherever possible Filipino / Bangsamoro education specialists** who studied in Australia and Philippine higher education institutes through Australia Awards or similar schemes

Recommendation 5 Intermediate Outcome 3: More children access and participate in contextualised K-3 education

- **Focus on supporting MBHTE to rapidly formalise Madaris education**
- **entrench sustainable transition for children from AKAP community learning centres to formal schools**
- **prepare an inclusive education strategy** which aligns with international and national frameworks, policies, and guidance, and focuses on ensuring that *all* marginalised children, including girls and those with disabilities, are attending their local school or learning centre and following the same curriculum as their peers

Recommendation 6 Intermediate Outcome 4: Parents and communities contribute to reform and development of the education system

- **continue to develop and implement school-based management** with a clear focus on community engagement and parental participation in schools
- **ensure that the learning centres are sustainable** by encouraging MBHTE, within their own resource envelope, to procure and deliver furniture and materials
- **develop systems to institutionalise adult literacy opportunities** in learning centres and schools as a method of supporting children's learning at home and parental involvement in education

Recommendation 7 Intermediate Outcome 5: MBHTE effectively performing its planning, delivery, and oversight responsibilities

- **clarify which MBHTE systems and which processes are to be strengthened**

- **continue work on Human Resources and data management**
- **consider technical support to MBHTE processes and procedures** for everyday spending
- **increase support to the offices of the Directors General and the Office of the Minister for Education, BARMM – to achieve ISO certification**
- **support cross Directorate and division working** on scheduling meetings, diary management, regular meetings, and information sharing: the bureaucratic basics
- **enhanced role of DFAT and Pathways to support MBHTE to access technical support from DepEd – Pathways should not substitute this if it is available from DepEd**
- **continue skills and competencies focus**

Recommendation 8: provide direct and targeted support to ‘operational level’ financial systems operations in MBHTE

While this recommendation refers directly to the MBHTE and thus could have been included under recommendation 6, the MTR team concluded that it is sufficiently important to be given a recommendation of its own. Many of the problems of education planning and delivery in the BARMM are not due to a lack of resources – unlocking local financial resources will be critical for sustainability post 2026. Include transaction level Public Financial Management support in future – this is a significant barrier to sustainable reform in MBHTE / BARMM education.

- **provide technical support to procurement processes and other critical financial systems** in MBHTE and possible within Pathways budgets and capability, in the wider BARMM administration

Recommendation 9: Significantly enhanced gender analysis, investment, and reporting

DFAT internally assesses all programs annually on gender and disability (the Internal Monitoring and Review and Performance Assessment Framework exercises). The Pathways team need to enhance their focus on gender, and support DFAT to tell the gender story. The MTR team concluded that even while gender is underdeveloped, there are stories to tell about gender impact for boys and girls – for example in AKAP schools. This success story is rightly highlighted by Pathways but within this one headline story lie many other stories, including gender.

- **recruit a senior gender / education specialist**
- **invest in better indicators, better data collection methods** (including guidance and templates for adviser reports) and enhanced outcomes level reporting
- **invest in retrospective outcomes harvesting** and stories of significant change
- **consider a periodic (three monthly?) gender update or newsletter** to MBHTE, DepEd and DFAT to help elevate visibility
- **Update the GEDSI Strategy and Action Plan**

Operational

Recommendation 10: Significantly increased emphasis on monitoring, reporting, public diplomacy, and telling the story

Pathways has succeeded in monitoring at the activity and output level, but the program has struggled to tell the strategic story (Outputs to Intermediate Outcomes and on to the EoPOs. For this reason, the MTR team would recommend:

- **priority being given to the recommendations of the Kibblewhite review**
- **ensuring Pathways has the capacity to provide DFAT with its public diplomacy needs by prioritising the continue recruitment of senior communications person**
- **ensuring that Pathways has the capacity to provide DepEd, the Bangsamoro Planning and Development Authority, and the National Economic and Development Authority with relevant and timely data** to enable them effectively to track progress and report onwards
- the program should **invest in retrospective outcomes harvesting** and stories of significant change

- the program could consider **providing a monthly update to DFAT and DepEd** on significant milestones, program achievements and policy issues

Recommendation 11: Restructure and reconfigure the team

The Pathways team structure should be changed. It is currently thematically structured. Given the importance of MBHTE in the planning and delivery of education in the BARMM, the MTR team are of the view that it would be more intuitive and more impactful if the Pathways structure replicated the MBHTE structure. Each Directorate General would then have one point of direct contact with the program. The focus on K-3 should remain.

- **revise the team structure to align with MBHTE** – while the ‘Centres of Gravity’ do this to some extent, it shifts the focus of Pathways to the frontline of service delivery, rather than the key counterpart
- **reduce the formal Political Economy Analysis work** and ensure it is internalised along ‘Everyday Political Analysis’ lines. The MTR team saw that the most effective advisers do this every day in their work, often subconsciously
- **reconsider staffing profile to meet the priority needs of MBHTE.** After five years of implementation, the staffing composition needs to change: less political economy capability, more early school expertise and more strategic communications capability
- **there needs to be more strategic writing capability in the team** – the team leader cannot do it all
- **introduce 360-degree annual reporting** for all advisers

Figure 8: Summary of recommendations

Issue	Recommendation
<p>Strategic</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Program will not achieve EoPOs 2. Oversight arrangements sensible in principle but not functioning effectively or efficiently 	<p>Strategic</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pathways accountable for existing IOs 1-4 and revised IO5 2. DFAT to invest more time in ensuring oversight arrangements more meaningful and functional
<p>Programmatic</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. IO1: Leave unchanged. Pathways demonstrated progress here. Issue is focus and prioritisation 4. IO2: Leave unchanged. Issue is the extent of the need for pre- and in-service teacher training 5. IO3: Leave unchanged. Build on huge Pathways success here – the AKAP (community learning centres) program and the Madaris education system 6. IO4: Leave unchanged. The challenge of involving parents and communities in education reform should not be underestimated 7. IO5: Current IO5 unachievable, so revise to focus on principal partner – MBHTE 8. Bottlenecks in Office of the Minister – slows implementation and results in <i>ad hoc</i> requests to Pathways for small items 9. Gender is given insufficient attention in the Program, Disability and social inclusion progressing reasonably well. Stories need surfacing 	<p>Programmatic</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Retain Pathways focus on integration of contextualised teacher training and curriculum: “two sides of the same coin” 4. Intensify efforts to improve professional teaching quality through more effective oversight, training and learning materials 5. Focus on supporting MBHTE to rapidly formalise Madaris education and implement a sustainable long-term strategy for community learning centres in school-less Barangays. 6. Redouble efforts in school management to involve parents, provide modest resources to learning centres, and offer adults learning opportunities too 7. Specify which MBHTE systems to be improved, and how. Build skills and competencies 8. Introduce financial advice to e.g., procurement systems, basic financial management procedures, and improved paper flow processes 9. Redouble emphasis on gender and identify gender success stories within existing streams of work. Recruit senior gender / education specialist. Consider gender analysis, planning, activities, and periodic update
<p>Operational</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10. MERL system delivers only on Activity to Output level: but no convincing narrative on Output to IO level. Pathways not meeting DFAT or DepEd needs 11. The Pathways’ team needs more skills in some areas. Structure does not map on to that of the MBHTE 	<p>Operational</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10. Implement recommendations of the Kibblewhite review. Recruit senior communications person (underway). Understand and appreciate DFAT and DepEd needs more thoroughly 11. Team to be restructured to mirror Directorate Generals in MBHTE. Positions and skills sets to be reconsidered. Introduce annual 360-degree reporting

Annex 1: MTR Team Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Graham Teskey Team Leader and Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the Review is implemented according to the Terms of Reference and the Review Plan • Management of the Review Team and assignment of duties • Draft the Review Plan • Lead the development of reports and key deliverables • Take responsibility for liaison with Pathways and DFAT • Lead / co-lead workshops and other activities in line with the Review Plan • Coordinate and lead author of the deliverables, and ensure submission of high-quality deliverables
Chloe Olliver Education, program design and M&E specialist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead the coordination of selected components of the review • Lead / co-lead workshops and other activities in line with the Review Plan • Work with other Review Team members regularly to debrief and exchange information • Along with the Team Leader, generate findings, lessons learned and recommendations
Zenaida Reyes Gender Inclusion Specialist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead the team on its gender and social inclusion analysis • Guide the Review Team by providing local contextual knowledge, and technical GEDSI expertise • Undertake KIIs and other activities in line with the Review Plan • Work with other Review Team members regularly to debrief and exchange information • Review and add value to the Review's deliverables • Along with the Team Leader, generate findings, lessons learned and recommendations
Ica Fernandez Peace and Development Adviser	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead the team on its peace and governance analysis • Guide the Review Team by providing local contextual knowledge, and technical peace and governance expertise • Undertake KIIs and other activities in line with the Review Plan • Work with other Review Team members regularly to debrief and exchange information • Review and add value to the Review's deliverables • Along with the Team Leader, generate findings, lessons learned and recommendations

Annex 2: Key review questions and sub-questions

Review Criteria	Key Review Question	Proposed lines of enquiry/sub-questions	Key Informants
Relevance	<p>To what extent are Pathways' EoPOs (End of Program Outcomes), approach, focus and key activities relevant to the BARMM and the policy priorities of MBHTE, DepEd and the Australian development program in the Philippines?</p> <p>To what extent are Pathways' EoPOs, approach, focus and key activities relevant in the context of COVID-19 recovery and the transition in the BARMM?</p> <p>How can Pathways remain relevant to the future political and socio-economic context of the BARMM?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent do Pathways' EoPOs, its approach, focus and key activities remain relevant to the BARMM and the policy priorities of MBHTE, DepEd and the Australian development program in the Philippines? What changes should be made to the design of the program to improve effectiveness and sustainability? How does the program relate to other externally funded education programs? How is/was Pathways able to support the transition from DepEd-ARMM to MBHTE? To what extent has Pathways' institutional strengthening and flexible, adaptive, and responsive implementation approach address the changing needs of MBHTE? 	<p>DFAT education team</p> <p>DepEd colleagues</p> <p>Pathways TL (Team Leader) and staff</p> <p>MBHTE colleagues</p>
Effectiveness	<p>To what extent has Pathways been effective in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> reducing disparity by improving participation and performance in Kinder to Grade 3 education for boys and girls in BARMM, especially those experiencing disadvantage; and in sustaining positive collaboration among education stakeholders on providing conflict sensitive basic education services <p>To what extent has COVID-19 impacted on the overall effectiveness of Pathways towards achieving EoPOs?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What evidence has been collected to illustrate progress? What have the progress reports reported since the program began, particularly as regards: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learning and Development (L&D) systems Continuation/strengthening of Learning Action Cells to improve teacher quality through continuous school-based professional development Competency standards for teachers and their implementation How effective and efficient has the RIF been? What have been the major issues regarding establishing credible education baseline data? How can this be addressed? Has the program MEL delivered convincing and timely data regarding IOs and EoPOs? If not, why not, and how could this be addressed How effectively has Pathways built on 20 years of Australian educational support in the Philippines? 	<p>DFAT</p> <p>DepEd colleagues</p> <p>Pathways leadership MEL team</p> <p>MBHTE colleagues</p>

Review Criteria	Key Review Question	Proposed lines of enquiry/sub-questions	Key Informants
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interrogate the theories of change that have been used, and how they have been reviewed and revised over the life of the program • How can the MEL system be revised to improve communications and telling the story of the program? • Does the program need a communications plan? If so, what could it look like? • How effective is Pathways' coordination with EPCC, PSC and GPH oversight agencies? • How can Pathways use its resources effectively in helping MBHTE in budget execution – interfacing with the Bangsamoro Block Grant and the Bangsamoro Appropriations Act? • What are the arguments for and against the high dependence on of TA? • How is learning loss due to the COVID-19 pandemic being addressed? What strategies are being utilised to respond to these challenges and are they based on global evidence? 	
Gender equality	<p>To what extent has Pathways supported gender analysis and made a difference to gender equality and in empowering those who experience exclusion in basic education based on gender?</p> <p>To what extent has Pathways supported analysing and addressing barriers based on gender and its intersection with other inclusion/exclusion issues (e.g., religion, ethnicity and indigeneity, geographical location, political representation, etc.) in achieving its EoPOs?</p> <p>What are the viable future options for doing more?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent have gender issues been front and centre of program planning and design? • To what extent is gender priorities in MBHTE? • What are the barriers and constraints to further gender prioritisation? 	<p>DFAT education team</p> <p>Pathways TL and staff</p> <p>MBHTE</p> <p>Other donors in Cotabato</p> <p>Civil society in Mindanao</p>

Review Criteria	Key Review Question	Proposed lines of enquiry/sub-questions	Key Informants
Disability inclusion	<p>To what extent has Pathways enhanced participation and decision-making of people with disabilities in improving and benefitting from the basic education system?</p> <p>To what extent has Pathways supported analysing and addressing barriers based on disability and its intersection with other inclusion/exclusion issues (e.g., religion, ethnicity and indigeneity, geographical location, political representation, etc.) in achieving its EoPOs?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent are disability issues featured in program planning and design? To what extent is disability a priority in MBHTE? What are the barriers and constraints to further disability inclusion? Alignment to international disability-inclusion frameworks such as GC4: how far is the programme trying to respond to GC4 requirements? Evidence of impact - Where can we see evidence of impact of the work done in this area? 	<p>DFAT education team</p> <p>Pathways TL and staff</p> <p>MBHTE</p> <p>Other donors in Cotabato</p> <p>Civil society in Mindanao</p>
Efficiency	<p>To what extent has Pathways made good use of time and resources towards achieving EoPOs?</p> <p>To what extent has COVID-19 impacted on the overall effectiveness of Pathways towards achieving EoPOs?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are the Pathways office resources appropriately to deliver its remit over the final three years of the program? How could Pathways mitigate the effects of high staff turnover? Is the office structured in a way to maximise learning? What are the strengths and weaknesses of the annual planning and budgeting process? Why is expenditure uneven throughout the year? Is the program's procurement system working effectively and efficiently - what changes could be considered? 	<p>DFAT education team</p> <p>Pathways deputy team leader for operations, etc.</p>

Annex 3: List of documents reviewed

Government of Australia	
DFAT	Joint-Declaration-On-Australia-The-Philippines-Comprehensive-Partnership (2015)
DFAT	The Philippines Covid-19 Development Response Plan (Oct 2020)
DFAT	DFAT 2020-21 Philippines Development Program Progress Report
DFAT	DFAT Pathways Program Brief (2022)
DFAT	DFAT Australia's Education Assistance in The Philippines (2022)
DFAT	Strategy for Australia's aid investments in education 2015–2020
DFAT	Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Strategy (2016)
DFAT	Development for All: Strategy for strengthening disability-inclusive development in Australia's aid program 2015-20
DFAT	Disability Action Strategy 2017-2020
DFAT	Monitoring and Evaluation Standards (2021)
DFAT	Program Logic Standards (2022)
DFAT	Strategic review and management response of Australia's support for peacebuilding in conflict-affected Mindanao (2020)
Government of The Philippines	
National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA)	Updated Philippine Development Plan 2017-2022
NEDA	AmBisyon Natin 2040: A Long-Term Vision for The Philippines (2017)
DepEd	Basic Education Development Plan 2030 (2022)
GPH-MILF	Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro (2014)
GPH-MILF	Report of the GPH-MILF Transitional Justice and Reconciliation Commission (2016)
Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao	
Bangsamoro Planning and Development Authority	1st Bangsamoro Development Plan, 2020-2022 Draft framework and analysis – 2 nd Bangsamoro Development Plan, 2023-2026 ARMM Transition Report – Book One, Main Report (2019) BARMM Administrative Code Bangsamoro Education Code
MBHTE	MBHTE-BARMM Policy and Guidelines on Protecting Children in Schools, Madaris, and Other Learning Centers from all forms of Child Abuse, Violence, Exploitation, Discrimination, and Bullying
MBHTE	Guidelines for Implementing the Release, Use, Monitoring, and Reporting of the School Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses anchored on Moral Governance
Education Pathways to Peace in Mindanao – Program documents	
DFAT	Investment Design Document (including Annexes)

Pathways	Inception Report (including Annexes)
Pathways	AWP 2, AWP3, AWP5, and AWP6
Pathways	Six Month Progress Reports - SMPR 08 July to December 2021 SMPR Report Single Page (being revised), SMPR 07 Jan-June2021 v3-Print, 0921 Six Monthly Progress ReportJan-June2021 Spread (Email-friendly)
Pathways	2021 Pathways MELF
Pathways	Policy Review on Madrasah Education FINAL26022021
Pathways	BARMMTEI Mapping Study Final Report 1
Pathways	Governance and Organizational Capacity Study
Pathways	SLAB Field Trial Report FINAL
Pathways	RIP Education and Peacebuilding in BARMM -FINAL
Pathways	Pathways AWP6 Finance Summary & Forecast (22 August 2022 MTR)
Pathways	Project Management Manual-Pathways -v1-Master
Pathways	Pathways Operations Review Final report May 2020
Pathways	2020 Pathways Inclusion Strategy
Pathways	210120 – Guiding Program Strategy – DRAFT - final01
Pathways	Pathways HROD Strategy 08.016.2020 APPROVED
Pathways	Pathways Organogram 190722
Education Pathways to Peace in Mindanao – Program documents	
Strategic Monitoring Team	Three reports 2019, 2020, 2021
Institute for Autonomy and Governance	Research on Traditional Madaris in ARMM and Adjacent Regions (2019)

Annex 4: List of stakeholders interviewed

DFAT	Position
Richard Sisson	Deputy Head of Mission Australian Embassy
Thanh Le	Counsellor, Development
Georgina Harley-Cavanough	First Secretary, Development
Peter Carreon	Portfolio Manager, Education
Ariana Santoalla	Senior Program Officer, Education
Jen Bennett	Second Secretary, Political Section
E J Solis	Senior Program Officer, Political Section
Ezra Bayalan	Program Officer, Political Section
Glennie Lorico	Program Officer, Social Protection
DepEd	
Dir Milagros (Mila) T. Talinio	Director, Project Management Service
Erwin Yumping	Project Development Officer, Project Management Division
Jeremay Cervancia	Pathways Focal Person, PMS
Mariel C. Bayangos	Planning Service
Ana-Sol B. Reyes	National Educators' Academy of the Philippines
National Economic Development Authority	
William Ku	National Economic and Development Authority
MBHTE BARM	
Abdullah 'Junn' Salik, jR.	Director General for Basic Education
Sheikh Tahir Nalg	Director General for Madrasah Education
Ruby Andong	Director General for Technical-Vocational Education
Marjuni Maddi	Director General for Higher Education
Margie Pendulat	Division Chief, Quality Assurance
Jourdan Pangilan	Head, Planning Division
Camilo Bancola	M&E Officer
Yul Olaya	Curriculum Chief
Abe Talicop	Education Program Specialist, CID/Focal Person of ALM and 5Bs
Imelda Sombrito	Regional IPED Focal Person
Abdulraffi "Raffy" Abas	Lead, BEMIS Technical Working Group
Ust. Haron Sala	ICT unit
Ismael "Mike" Abdullah	Ittihadul Madaris Philippines
Moktar Salik	TWG Madrasah Curriculum
Maimona Bayan,	TWG ISAL Teacher Dev Consultant
Abehurayra Abdulgani	Senior Education Program Specialist
Jihan Unsi,	Senior Education Program Specialist
Norhaine Candao	Executive Assistant
Meriam Alug Macalangcom	Consultant, Inclusive School Approach (ISA) Regional Technical Working Group
Carmel Teodoro	Access Technical Working Group

Mirasol Teodoro Alih Anzo	Access Technical Working Group Office of the Minister for education, BARMM Consultant, member Access Technical Working Group
Faida H. Latip	Senior Education Program Specialist, TESDA-BARMM

Bangsamoro Transition Authority

Rasol Mitmug	Minister of Parliament, co-chair of Education Committee
Suharto Ambolodto	Minister of Parliament, former co-chair of Education Committee

BARMM – Other Ministries

Mohajirin Ali	Director General, Bangsamoro Planning and Development Authority
Paramisuli Aming	Executive Assistant, Bangsamoro Women’s Commission

Pathways team

Caroline Vandenabeele	Team Leader
Thomas Hertel	DTL for Operations
Rutth Gerochi	DTL for Programs
Louie Montalbo	Political Analysis Adviser, Policy and Legal Adviser
Rizalino Barandino	Institutional Strengthening, Access, and Planning Adviser
Bonna Duron-Luder	Curriculum Development and Delivery Adviser
Aydelfe Salvadora	MEARL Lead
Arnold Divino	Grants and Due Diligence Manager, Responsive Innovation Fund
Mokhamad Iksan	Senior Education Advisor
Resurreccion ‘Rechie’ Ventura Cruz	Information Systems Advisor
Bahrul Hayat	Islamic Education Adviser
Jerome Zayas	Disability Inclusion Adviser
Soledad ‘Cholette’ Lecaroz	Teacher Development Lead Adviser
Alih Bato	Program Specialist, Madaris
Dennis Amando	Program Specialist, Access
Rabia Mustapha	Program Specialist, Inclusion
Dexter Mancao	M&E Specialist
Angelo Tubac	Research Manager
Aiz	Program Officer
Pot	Program Officer
Jane	Program Officer
Andrew Kibblewhite	MERL Specialist, Independent Consultant

Pathways Consortium Partners

Jeaniene Spink	Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER)
Gina Gonong	Director, Philippine National Research Centre for Teacher Quality (RCTQ)

Pathways Responsive Innovation Fund partners

Sherrydine Fatima Kalimuddin	Project Officer, Tumikang Sama-Sama
Radin J. Taib	M&E Officer, Tumikang Sama-Sama
Beli H. Abdu	
Nolie Acosta	Executive Director, Teduray Day School Project, Inc. (TDSP)

Civil Society Organisations / Subgrantees

Guiamel Alim	Executive Director, Consortium of Bangsamoro Civil Society
Jenelyn Omar	Consortium of Bangsamoro Civil Society
Janifa Bangcola	Project Manager – Education, BRAC
Marilou Gonzales	BRAC Project Officer
Benny Bacani	Executive Director, Institute for Autonomy and Governance (IAG)
Mai Roble	Executive Director, The Teachers Gallery
Liza Duyao,	Project Staff, The Teachers Gallery
Melody Joy P. Decal	Program beneficiary: parent of learner with ADHD
Ramil Mama	Person with Disability Affairs Office, Municipality of Parang, Maguindanao
Lynito Tadle	Education Program Supervisor
Isy Faingold	Director of Education, UNICEF
Sam Chittick	Director, The Asia Foundation