

# SUPPORT UNIT FOR GENDER EQUALITY



SURGE Closure Plan 2025

**Preferred citation:** SURGE Closure Plan

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## Acronyms and Abbreviations

DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
FIMR	Final Investment Monitoring Report
GEB	Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion Branch
GEDSI	Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion
IMR	Investment Monitoring Report
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning
PBR	Payment By Results
SURGE	Support Unit for Gender Equality
TA	Technical Advice

# 1 Introduction

The Support Unit for Gender Equality (SURGE), which has been in operation since July 2022, is scheduled to end 17 July 2025.

This Closure Plan outlines the steps SURGE will take to effectively shut down the current program and transition services to the new GEDSI Support Unit during the final phase of the program. This includes completing contractual requirements, final reporting, effective management of the closure of the SURGE panel, and reconciliation of SURGE finances. This Closure Plan is a working document and will be amended as required based on changes in the operating environment. This Plan is accurate as of January 2025.

# 2 Program Background

SURGE commenced on 18 July 2022, with the remit of providing gender technical advisory (TA) services and knowledge management to DFAT in partnership with the Gender Equality, Disability, and Social Inclusion Branch (GEB). The investment is a three-year, \$3.6 million program with the overall goal of improving the outcomes of Australia’s international development program on gender equality and women’s empowerment through the provision of high-quality multi-sectoral technical expertise. SURGE is managed by DT Global on behalf of DFAT. Contextual Issues

To date, DFAT has had separate mechanisms for accessing TA for gender equality and disability equity. Both mechanisms are due to close in mid-2025, making way for a new GEDSI Support Unit that will provide DFAT access to TA on gender equality, disability equity and social inclusion, through a single mechanism.

This closure plan assumes that the GEDSI Support Unit will be contracted by March 2025, allowing for a three-month inception phase that overlaps with the SURGE closure phase. During this overlap period SURGE will work with DFAT and the incoming support unit to transition delivery of services as required.

# 3 Closure Schedule

The closure phase will be from April–July 2025. The schedule below articulates key action points for the closure phase and actions for transitioning services to the new Support Unit. This includes closure dates for TA and timing for key communication actions, governance, reporting and final MEL activities. A range of operational issues are also scheduled between May and July 2025.

**Table 1** Schedule for closure phase

Item	Sept 24	Oct 24	Nov 24	Dec 24	Jan 25	Feb 25	Mar 25	Apr 25	May 25	Jun 25	Jul 25	Aug 25
Final Closure Plan (November 2025)												
SURGE Steering Committee Meeting (13 February 2025)												
GEB Comms to DFAT on SURGE closure (February 2025)												
GEB Comms on TA draw down (Feb-Mar 2025)												
AidWorks Budget Reallocation (April 2025)												
Last date STNs accepted (1 April 2025)												
Last date regular tasking is accepted (29 May 2025)												
Operational shut down (May – July 2025)												
All regular tasking completed by 13 June 2025												
All Special Taskings completed by 30 June 2025												
Draft Completion Report (Jun 2025)												
Final Completion report (July 2025)												
Final Invoices paid (July – August 2025)												

### 3.1 Reporting, technical advice, and tasking

To enable financial and administrative closure of SURGE within the contract period (i.e. before 17 July 2025), and to accommodate the different modes of TA (i.e. special tasking, regular tasking, embedded TA) a staged approach is needed to the closing of taskings as outlined in the table above.

## 4 Contractors and Partners

All SURGE advisers' and partners' will continue to be contracted until 30 June 2025. SURGE advisers under long term service orders providing TA to Post will need to be recontracted under the new GEDSI Support Unit.

## 5 Communications and Online Presence

SURGE has maintained communication systems to support and promote the work of the investment that will be either shut down, archived, or handed over and rebranded as part of the program's closure.

### 5.1 LinkedIn profile

SURGE's LinkedIn profile has approximately 1,400 followers and has a primary remit of promoting DFAT supported gender equality investments. The page also highlights resources on the Knowledge Hub, resources SURGE has developed, and occasional employment opportunities. As the LinkedIn profile presents an opportunity for broad promotion of the new GEDSI support unit, SURGE will transition the LinkedIn page to the new GEDSI Support Unit as part of the closure process, as confirmed by GEB.

### 5.2 SURGE website

The SURGE website functions as a portal to submit tasking requests, allows DFAT officers to review panel members for tasks, provides a repository of gender equality tools and resources, and provides a direct channel for enquiries. All gender equality resources housed on the SURGE Knowledge Hub are publicly available resource materials. It is expected that the new support unit will curate its own knowledge library content.

DFAT have agreed to extend website hosting for three months, to August 2025. Keeping the website operational, with a landing page message providing information and contact details for the new support unit, will support continued provision of TA whilst the new GEDSI Support Unit website is established.

Management Information System

SURGE will undertake standard shut down procedures to close and securely archive all SURGE program information and cancel user licences for programs. All records will be maintained, securely and confidentially for seven years in accordance with DT Global policies and DFAT requirements so that they can be accessed if required.

### 5.3 Communications

Since inception, GEB has invested significant effort in raising awareness across DFAT of SURGE and the website as a portal for accessing gender equality TA. To ensure DFAT officers are kept informed on the SURGE closure, and how they can continue to access gender equality TA during the transition to the new support unit, proactive communication with DFAT staff will be required. SURGE will work closely with GEB through existing weekly meetings to ensure messaging is clear and consistent.

**SURGE roles and responsibilities:** SURGE will be responsible for drafting all key messages for all channels listed below, including providing support to GEB for internal DFAT communications. SURGE will be responsible for ensuring communications messages are consistent and cleared with GEB prior to distribution.

SURGE will be available to answer questions on its closure and distribute clarifying materials, such as FAQs, in coordination with GEB if required.

**GEB roles and responsibilities:** GEB will be responsible for the review and approval of communications, ensuring messaging is informed by any internal developments at DFAT. GEB will be responsible for DFAT internal communication of messaging including to Posts, desks and thematic areas.

**Table 2 SURGE communications**

Messaging	Recipients	Channels	Timing <sup>1</sup>
Online notification about SURGE closure and transition to new GEDSI support unit.	DFAT officers, LinkedIn followers, all site visitors.	SURGE website, possibly LinkedIn for closure/transition,	January/February 2025 (website) May/June 2025 (LinkedIn)

**Table 3 GEB communications**

Messaging	Recipients	Channels	Timing <sup>2</sup>
General statement on SURGE closure, key dates, encouraging recipients to utilise SURGE.	Selected desks, thematic areas and posts	Email, cables	February 2025 Update in May 2025
Communication to Post to confirm remaining STN days to be used during the FY by 30 April.	Posts with on-going draw down advisers or STNs <sup>3</sup>	Email	Early April 2025

## 6 Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning

Monitoring, evaluation and learning results will be reported in the program Completion Report.

## 7 Risk Management

SURGE monitors program risks through the program’s Risk Assessment and Mitigation Framework which is updated quarterly. Closure related risks will be addressed primarily through this Closure Plan.

<sup>1</sup> These timings are subject to changes in the closure process.

<sup>2</sup> Timings are subject to changes in the closure process.

<sup>3</sup> SURGE can support in identifying the applicable STNs