

MANAGEMENT RESPONSE- MID-TERM EVALUATION OF THE STRENGTHENING FEMINIST COALITIONS AND PARTNERSHIP FOR GENDER EQUALITY: WE RISE PHASE 2 PROGRAM

Summary of management response

The mid-term evaluation of the 'Strengthening Feminist Coalitions and Partnership for Gender Equality: We Rise Phase 2' (We Rise 2) was conducted October – December 2018. We Rise 2 is a \$4.8 million, 3.5-year program (November 2015 – August 2019) led by the We Rise Coalition consisting of four feminist organisations working to advance women's rights: Diverse Voices and Action for Equality, Fiji (DIVA for Equality / DIVA); FemLINK Pacific (FemLINK); Fiji Women's Rights Movement (FWRM); and International Women's Development Agency (IWDA). The vision of We Rise 2 is a *Pacific where there is gender justice, ecological sustainability, peace, freedom, equality and human rights for all*.

The purpose of the mid-term evaluation (MTE) was to undertake an independent assessment of We Rise 2 three years into implementation in order to review progress and the effectiveness of strategies employed. The MTE examined three areas of inquiry: relevance, effectiveness and efficiency. Impact and sustainability will be explored at the end of program evaluation.

The MTE found We Rise 2 is relevant to meet the needs of diverse women, particularly those in rural areas, and those who identify as LGBTQI. We Rise partners have contributed to increased engagement between civil society and women's rights organisations and governments in Fiji and the Pacific. There is less evidence of engagement with women with disabilities. The We Rise 2 model has helped improved the efficiency and effectiveness of partners, although to differing extents.

Under effectiveness the MTE examined progress towards the program's immediate and intermediate outcomes and found We Rise 2 has: supported women and girls in leadership and decision making roles, and engagement of Pacific women in regional and international forums; contributed to policy reform in Fiji and the Pacific; contributed to movement building from local to global levels and enhanced the partnership practice and organisational practices of We Rise 2 partners.

The MTE found We Rise 2 is value for money when assessed against the *Pacific Women* value for money rubric and program criteria. The program is essential to support a Pacific women led movement to advocate for gender equality in the Pacific. The evaluation found, We Rise 2 has largely been well governed, managed and accountable (to the donor, We Rise partners and women themselves).

Recommendations are focused on: strengthening We Rise work at the regional – global level, to share learning in other Pacific countries; investing in deliberate communications about We Rise work including with policy and government stakeholders; strengthening inclusion of women with disability; We Rise to influence other DFAT and IWDA programs in the Pacific to achieve gender equality objectives; and that DFAT funding for We Rise 3 include flexible funding to respond to emerging opportunities that are in line with agreed to program objectives.

Overall, DFAT accepts all of the MTE recommendations. The management response represents DFAT's commitment to work with We Rise partners to achieve the broad goals of gender equality and progress towards fulfilling women's rights in Fiji and the Pacific. Recognising We Rise 2 ends 31 August 2019, the MTE provides recommendations on future program improvement. The end of program evaluation will examine impact and sustainability of program achievements, and inform DFAT, and We Rise partners, on future programming.

The following table outlines DFAT's individual response to the MTE recommendations.

Recommendation	Response	Explanation	Action plan	Timeframe
<p>Recommendation 1 That We Rise Coalition partners decide their own future direction(s) for the Coalition. Recognising the value-add of the coalition model to advancing the status of women in the Pacific, DFAT should continue to support a Pacific-led evolution of the We Rise Coalition that is mutually appropriate.</p>	Agree	<p>DFAT agrees that the future of the coalition is the decision of the We Rise partners.</p> <p>DFAT recognises the contribution of We Rise partners to promote gender equality in Fiji and the Pacific. DFAT's decision to continue support for We Rise 3 will be informed by the MTE, the end of program evaluation and discussions with We Rise partners.</p>	The MTE, end of program evaluation and funding availability, will inform DFAT's decision to support We Rise 3. DFAT will also consult We Rise partners to determine partner interest for a We Rise 3 phase.	July- September 2019
<p>Recommendation 2 That DFAT future support include elements as similar to We Rise Phase 2, but strengthen interlinkages of local-national-regional-international levels and interlinkages in women's lives.</p>	Agree		Should We Rise 3 eventuate, DFAT will maintain the current model of support to individual partner organisation (core funding, funding for specific organisational programming, and institutional strengthening); include activities that strengthen links across- local to national in Fiji, and nationally in other PICs; and national to regional Pacific. Support will also include activities designed to address multiple levels (formal/informal and norms/institutions) required to achieve transformative change.	TBC- Dependent on timeframe for We Rise 3
<p>Recommendation 3</p>	Agree		DFAT will continue its open and transparent partnership approach to funding, ensuring mutual accountability, flexible funding that responds to Coalition partner emerging opportunities and that	TBC- Dependent on timeframe for We Rise 3

That DFAT future support is inclusive of strengthened feminist financing principles and practices.		align to and contribute to agreed broad programmatic objectives.	
<p>Recommendation 4</p> <p>That We Rise Coalition Phase 3 strengthen its contribution to movement building within the contexts of local/national PICs and strengthen linkages of national feminist movement building to regional and international agendas supported by the We Rise Coalition.</p>	Agree	<p>DFAT agrees the We Rise coalition plays an important role in building a Pacific movement for gender equality and women’s empowerment. The following activities will be key to We Rise 3 to help achieve this:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mentoring and support of other Pacific coalitions. ▪ Mentoring, support or formal training activities in feminist practice; advocacy, policy engagement with stakeholders. ▪ Communications to Pacific women human rights organisations about achievements of We Rise Coalition and lessons learned about coalition practices. 	TBC- Dependent on timeframe for We Rise 3
<p>Recommendation 5</p> <p>That We Rise Coalition Phase 3 strengthen strategic coalition work at regional and global levels through sustained and coordinated action before and after key events (regional: Pacific Feminist Forum, Triennial; international: CSW).</p>	Agree	The design of We Rise 3 to ensure activities implemented at regional and global levels include sustained coordinated action before and after key events. This will also include integration of relevant monitoring and evaluation approaches to measure progress. DFAT to ensure activities are resourced accordingly.	TBC- Dependent on timeframe for We Rise 3
<p>Recommendation 6</p> <p>That We Rise Coalition Phase 3 continue to strengthen partnership</p>	Agree	As highlighted by the MTE, We Rise partners report varying benefits and levels of understanding of the partnership to their work and organisation. Should We Rise 3 progress, DFAT will continue support for We	TBC- Dependent on timeframe for We Rise 3

<p>practice ensuring that partnership principles are embedded within organisations and understood and applied, by all relevant staff (Board, strategic, operational staff).</p>		<p>Rise partner organisational strengthening and activities that promote ongoing review and reflection of the coalition partnership.</p>		
<p>Recommendation 7 That We Rise Coalition Phase 3 form an Alumni of past We Rise Coalition partner staff to contribute to continued development of the We Rise Coalition and partnership practice.</p>	<p>Agree in part</p>	<p>The interest (and benefit) to We Rise partners to establish an Alumni is untested and requires further discussion with We Rise partners.</p>	<p>Establishment of an Alumni to be determined should We Rise 3 progress and We Rise has interest (and capacity) to establish such a group.</p>	<p>TBC- Dependent on timeframe for We Rise 3</p>
<p>Recommendation 8 That the We Rise Coalition Phase 3 strengthen communication about the achievements and contribution of the We Rise Coalition to gender justice, to external stakeholders (particularly to other civil society organisations, women leaders, advocates and activists) through the development of relevant communication products.</p>	<p>Agree</p>	<p>Relevant communication related activities and products to be discussed should We Rise 3 progress.</p> <p>TBC- Dependent on timeframe for We Rise 3</p>		
<p>Recommendation 9 That the We Rise Coalition Phase 3 continues intentional inclusion of women in all diversity, with a</p>	<p>Agree</p>	<p>The inclusion and reach to women in all diversity is essential to achieve gender</p>	<p>Should We Rise 3 progress, the participation of women in all diversity will remain a key objective of the program.</p>	<p>TBC- Dependent on timeframe for We Rise 3</p>

particular focus on their participation in decision making roles and increasing inclusion of women with disability. The design of We Rise Phase 3 to include a disability inclusion strategy to ensure increased inclusion of women with disability.



equality and women's empowerment.

DFAT will also support We Rise 3 to design specific strategies to enhance reach to women with disabilities, including enhanced engagement with local disabled persons' organisations.