

Women's Fund Fiji Mid-Term Review

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Acronyms

AIR	Amplify Invest Reach Partnership
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
EOPO	End of Program Outcome
FWF	Fiji Women's Fund
FWRM	Fiji Women's Rights Movement
GEDSI	Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion
GESI	Gender Equality and Social Inclusion
IDS	Investment Design Summary
LGBTQI+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer, Intersex +
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MWCSP	Ministry of Women, Children and Social Protection
MEL	Monitoring Evaluation and Learning
MFAT	New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
MTR	Mid Term Review
OPD	Organisation of People with Disabilities
PFF	Pacific Feminist Fund
RBTR	Rise Beyond the Reef
SPC	South Pacific Commission
TOC	Theory of Change
UAF AP	Urgent Action Fund Asia Pacific
VAWG	Violence against Women and Girls
VfM	Value for Money
WFF	Women's Fund Fiji

Executive Summary

In 2017, Australia committed to funding for the establishment of the Fiji Women's Fund (FWF), to provide financial and capacity building support to women's groups, feminist movement and local networks in Fiji. Starting as a program managed by an external Managing Contractor, it transitioned into a fully local, independent entity in 2021, renamed the Women's Fund Fiji (WFF or the Fund). It successfully registered under Fiji's Charitable Trust Act.

Australia's contribution to the Fund is both Fiji bilateral A\$3 million over three years (January 2022–2024) and a contribution of A\$1.8 million from the Gender Equality Branch through the Amplify–Invest–Reach (AIR) Partnership (January 2022–2025)¹, which represents around 56 per cent of the Fund's budget.

The WFF 2022–24 Strategic Plan outlines the intended purpose and outcomes of the organisation for the period until end 2024:

Feminist and women's rights organisations are empowered through enhanced capacity to contribute to gender justice.

Feminist and women's movements are diverse, vibrant and have critical spaces to enhance their spheres of influence.

The Fund has secured long term and core support from donors, private sector and philanthropic organisations to advance women's human rights.

The Fund has contributed to influencing support to the larger, global feminist funding ecosystem.

The Fiji Women's Fund is established, empathetic and adaptive in its resources, operations and programs.

The DFAT Investment Design Summary repeats these outcomes.² Australia's support is directed to both core organisational costs as well as to a range of the grants provided to women's organisations in Fiji.

Mid Term Review

This Mid-Term Review of the Fund was undertaken in July–August 2024. The scope of the MTR includes the whole-of-program implementation under the WFF Strategic Plan (January 2022 – December 2024). The major objectives of the review were two-fold³:

Assess progress towards end of program outcomes

Asses the efficiency and effectiveness of the organisation in its delivery of services.

The results and lessons from the Review are intended to guide any future phases of support.⁴ Towards this end the review focused primarily on the work of the Fund with women's groups and the value of grants and capacity building work undertaken with these groups. A second focus was on the organisational effectiveness and efficiency of the Fund in so far as this impacted the program of grant making and capacity development.

Findings

The MTR TOR directed the review to focus on four criteria: effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, and sustainability.⁵

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- 1 The A-I-R Partnership is a DFAT initiative to increase engagement with and support to four feminist women's Fund – Women's Fund Asia (WFA), Women's Fund Fiji (WFF), Pacific Feminist Fund, and Urgent Action Fund for Women's Human Rights – Asia and Pacific (UAF A&P). It is a four-year investment, initially valued at A\$10 million, that intends to contribute to the achievement of gender equality and the creation of an environment in which the human rights of women, girls, and LGBTQI+ people are fulfilled.
 - 2 There are no additional strategic or other outcomes presented in the IDS underpinning the rationale for Australia to make this investment.
 - 3 These overall objectives were further detailed through a range of evaluative questions, and directions in the TOR to focus on four areas of relevance, effectiveness efficiency and sustainability (see Evaluation Plan, Annex 3).
 - 4 Women's Fund Fiji, Mid Term review, Terms of Reference, July 2024, and MTR inception meeting, 22 July 2024.
 - 5 The MTR TOR included several directions about the focus on the review. The MTR team used its judgement to provide the most useful grouping of the findings based on further conversations with DFAT and the actual evidence that was able to be collected during the review.

WFF is relevant to stakeholders (including DFAT and Government of Fiji) and has worked effectively in the Fiji current context. The Fund supports women's and feminist organisations alongside organisations led by LGBTQI+ representatives and organisations working for the rights of people living with disability. It supports connection between these organisations, helping to build networks and contribute to the overall development of the women's movement in Fiji. This is closely aligned to DFAT policy for gender equality and gender transformation

Going forward however, community and grantees respondents in particular suggested the Fund will need to prioritise resourcing for communication and connections between partners and other groups, in order to remain relevant to movement building. This aligns with the MTR findings and the Fund is encouraged to explore options to support this going forward.

WFF is providing an effective program of support, consistent with the findings of the previous review. The Fund is making good progress towards the empowerment of feminist and women's rights organisations (EOPO 1⁶). It is contributing to a diverse women's and feminist movement in Fiji (EOPO2). WFF has made progress towards diversifying its funding (EOPO 3). This wider support base, together with participation in the AIR Partnership has provided the Fund with increased opportunity for influence, especially beyond Fiji (EOPO 4). However, more attention is required to further develop and consolidate the organisation in order to maintain effectiveness going forward (EOPO5).

The MEL system is well developed but with there is opportunity to grow this system to better align with the intentions of a Women's Fund. Going forwards further consideration could be given to understanding the broader impacts of WFF in contributing to improved gender equality in Fiji. Given the careful work undertaken to listen to partners and grantees and be directed by their local analysis and locally relevant strategies for change WFF is well placed to demonstrate its contributions to such long term, systemic change. This will have implications for the Fund Theory of Change and the Fund MEL systems, as it matures and understands the change processes which work most effectively in different locations.

WFF is increasing its program efficiency but is still developing its capacity and direction as an organization. The percentage of total Fund income allocated directly to grants has increased from 60 per cent in 2021, to 70 per cent in 2022 and in the latest report for 2023, has further increased to 74 per cent. The same reports show a steady increase in income and in the number of grants and diversity of grants managed by the Fund. The Fund has in place well documented systems for grant making and grant management from applications through to acquittal and reporting. It has clear and appropriate policies for areas such as environmental and social safeguarding, risk management and financial management. It appears to have good processes in place for granting and partner assessments. However, the Fund's capacity to achieve ongoing results will depend in part on its ability to address various operational issues, including further systems development, strengthening of internal capacity and attention to leadership and governance development. There are also important strategic issues such as maintaining organisational priorities within multiple donor expectations, ensuring sufficient core funding to maintain capacity building alongside grants, and how best to contribute to movement building for women's organisations in Fiji, for consideration as the Fund develops its next strategic plan.

The Fund is working towards a more sustained state but a strategy for organisational sustainability should be a priority for the next strategic plan.

WFF participation in the AIR Partnership is benefitting the Fund in several ways. There has been clear value in the additional funding provided through the Partnership by DFAT and the extra resources facilitated by other partners. This has supported the value of the longer-term work of the Fund, particularly its contribution to movement building. It has also been core to the Fund resource diversification. The Partnership has facilitated capacity building between comparable staff in the Fund and other women's funds. This has been particularly effective in enabling the smaller national fund to manage donor requirements and to work proactively to improve its systems.

⁶ Noting that the Fund Strategic Plan EOPO are those adopted by DFAT for its investment support, they are used here as the agreed measure of effectiveness.

From the perspective of other AIR Partners, having the on ground and detailed experience of women, available through a national Fund, has strengthened the evidence and demonstration of value for Women's Funds. The AIR Partners report that they have utilised WFF experience in regional and international reporting and advocacy.

Recommendations

For WFF

Utilise the new strategic plan to focus on organisational development, considering the operational and strategic issues identified in this review.

For the next strategic plan, it is important that the Fund is able to succinctly articulate its intent and distinct contribution to women's empowerment and gender transformation in Fiji.

The Fund should consider updating its systems further and introduce standard operating procedures against all of its organisational policies.

there is opportunity, possibly requiring some additional resourcing, to improve the M&E for the Fund to more deliberately include learning; to better represent the views and experiences of grantees and partners; and to begin to adopt assessment approaches more in line with understanding progress towards long term impact.

For DFAT

DFAT redevelop its Investment Design Summary to more accurately identify its rationale for funding and ongoing support to WFF, including the value of core funding for Women's Funds.

DFAT continue funding to WFF until at least 2029 in order to realise the full value of its investment in the Fund.

Going forward there is strong rationale for DFAT to continue its support, including core support, across a further 4-to-5-year period.

A new period of funding would provide for the Fund to explore and demonstrate its longer-term impact (based on more developed pathways for change with its various grantees and partners). It would increase the learning for DFAT and build on the value of the investment made to date.

WFF be incentivised and supported to further develop its Fiji based collaborations to increase its overall contribution to change.

DFAT is well positioned to encourage and support the coming together of Fund Board members, management and technical staff and, as appropriate, partners and grantees with other program and organisations supported by Australia.

The Fund has a good relationship with the Government of Fiji and could be encouraged to expand this partnership in ways which will amplify the voice and experience of partners and grantees and to Government.

DFAT and the fund could leverage stronger relationships with the Fiji government and local partners in order to strengthen links with communities. WFF can work more with partners such as Itaukei Affairs to work with communities in translations and protocols, noting WFF does not have the capacity to meet all the village and community expectations alone.

1 Introduction

The Women's Fund (Fiji) formerly known as the Fiji Women's Fund provides funding and capacity development support to women's groups, organisations and networks in Fiji to expand and enhance their work on women's empowerment and gender equality. It operates through direct grants and partnerships to achieve its goals.

In 2024, DFAT initiated a Mid-Term Review (MTR) of Women's Fund Fiji (WFF), primarily to:
Assess WFF's progress towards the End-of-Program Outcomes (EOPOs), including identifying areas that require improvement.

Assess the effectiveness and efficiency of the Fund in delivering services in accordance with the DFAT funding agreement.

The MTR was requested to use the findings to compile lessons learned and recommendations for:
the potential next phase of DFAT investment; and
the Strategic Vision and Plan [of WFF] for the next three years (2025–2027).

This document reports on the Mid-Term Review (MTR).

2 Background

In 2017, Australia committed to funding for the establishment of the Fiji Women's Fund (FWF), to provide financial and capacity building support to women's groups, feminist movement and local networks in Fiji. The Fund was designed to improve the lives of women in Fiji, particularly marginalised women and those living in rural and remote locations. It transitioned into a fully local, independent entity in 2021, renamed the Women's Fund Fiji (WFF or the Fund), and successfully registered under Fiji's Charitable Trust Act.

Australia's contribution to the Fund is both Fiji bilateral A\$3 million over three years (January 2022 – 2024) and a contribution of A\$1.8 million from the Gender Equality Branch through the Amplify-Invest-Reach (AIR) Partnership (January 2022–2025)⁷, which represents around 56 per cent of the Fund's budget. In addition to DFAT funding, WFF has received NZ\$1.5 million from the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (NZ MFAT), from April 2023 – June 2026. The Fund also receives funding support from private sector and philanthropic organisations, which amounted to FJD1.43 million in 2023.

The purpose of WFF is to enhance progress towards gender equality and the empowerment of women in Fiji, through resource mobilisation. Its objective is to reach women in rural and remote areas, and those who are marginalised, including women with disabilities and those facing discrimination based on their sexual orientation or gender identity.

To achieve this, the Fund supports networks and organisations across six thematic areas:

Women's Economic Empowerment

Ending Violence Against Women

Women's Leadership and Decision Making

Strengthening Women's Groups and Coalitions for Change

Climate Justice and Humanitarian Action; and

Influencing Aid and Philanthropy.⁸

The Fund's approach has been to pair grant-making with capacity development support and to provide mandatory capacity development in the areas of gender equality and social inclusion (GESI); financial management; monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL); and child protection. Grants are categorised into three types:

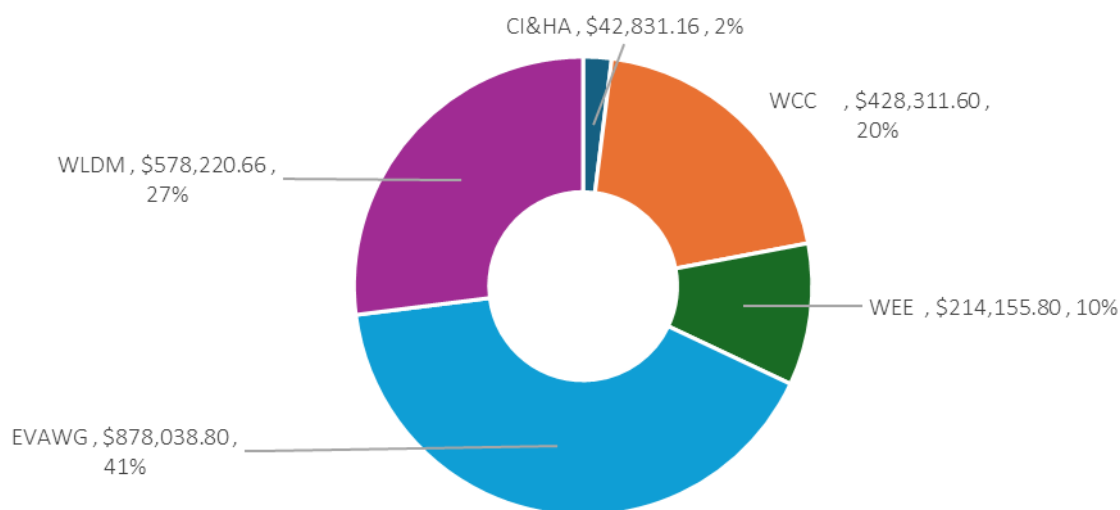
⁷ The A-I-R Partnership is a DFAT initiative to increase engagement with and support to four feminist women's Fund – Women's Fund Asia (WFA), Women's Fund Fiji (WFF), Pacific Feminist Fund, and Urgent Action Fund for Women's Human Rights – Asia and Pacific (UAF A&P). It is a four-year investment, initially valued at A\$10 million, that intends to contribute to the achievement of gender equality and the creation of an environment in which the human rights of women, girls, and LGBTQI+ people are fulfilled.

⁸ The last two thematic areas (Climate Justice & Humanitarian Action and Influencing Aid and Philanthropy) were introduced in 2022 as part of 2022-24 Strategic Plan.

Sustainability Grant
 Movement Building Grant
 Resilience Grant.

In 2023 WFF reported that it allocated 30 grants to 28 grantee partners of which 21 were new grants (including 20 sustainability grants and 1 resilience grant). As shown in Figure 1 and Figure 2, these grants were across five of the thematic areas although primarily directed to activities for ending violence and enhancing leadership and decision making.

Figure 1 % of Grants disbursed by primary area of impact, 2023



Source: Women’s Fund Fiji, Annual Report, January -December 2023

The 2022–24 Strategic Plan identifies 5 intended outcomes (which align with three Strategic Objectives⁹): Feminist and women’s rights organisations are empowered through enhanced capacity to contribute to gender justice.

Feminist and women’s movements are diverse, vibrant and have critical spaces to enhance their spheres of influence.

The Fund has secured long term and core support from donors, private sector and philanthropic organisations to advance women’s human rights.

The Fund has contributed to influencing support to the larger, global feminist funding ecosystem.

The Fiji Women's Fund is established, empathetic and adaptive in its resources, operations and programs.

DFAT support provided for both core organisational costs as well as for grants to partner organisations. DFAT funding to WFF is supported by a DFAT Investment Design Summary (IDS).¹⁰ The IDS outcomes repeat those of the WFF Strategic Plan, and the Theory of Change and monitoring and evaluation plan for the IDS draws directly from the WFF documentation. There is no identification of specific DFAT funding intentions, nor the

9 The Fund Strategic Objectives include:

- To Fund and build the capacity of diverse groups of feminist and women's rights organisations and movements in Fiji to deliver gender justice outcomes and enhance their spheres of influence.
- To contribute to influencing support to the larger, global feminist Funding ecosystem and secure financial and non-financial resources from diverse Funding sources to support feminist and women's rights organisations and movements working to enhance women's human rights in Fiji.
- To build the governance and operational capacity of the Fiji Women's Fund to establish it as an empathetic and adaptive Fund.

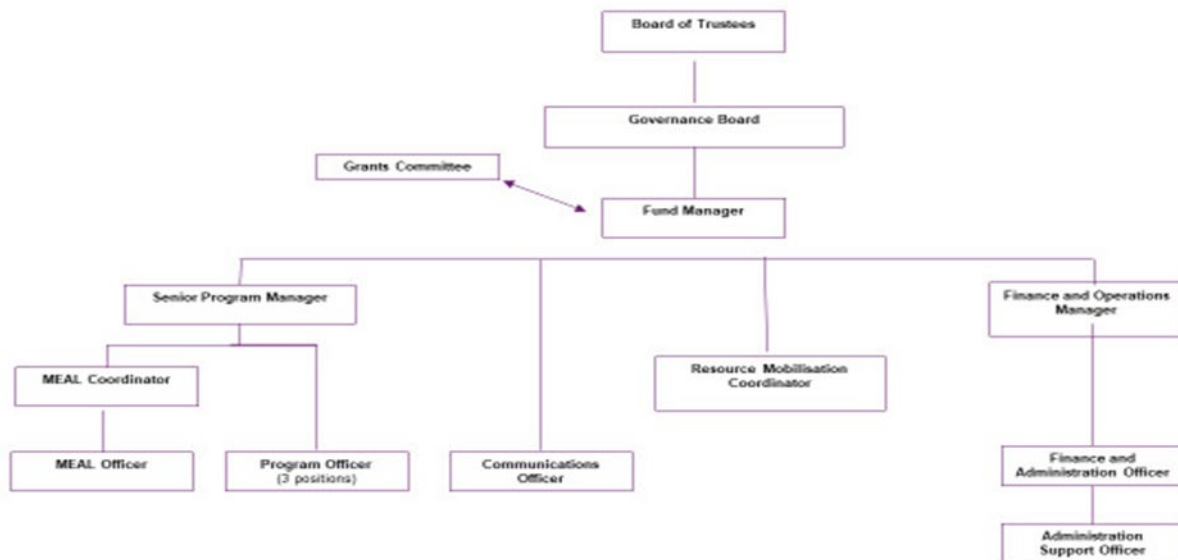
10 The IDS should acknowledge the objectives and intended outcomes of a partner such as the Fund and in addition, identify the strategic rationale for DFAT support. It should also identify the specific aspects/ outcomes of the partners work that the DFAT resources are directed to and how these will be monitored and evaluated over time. The IDS should build on the partner design Theory of Change and include a revised TOC specific to DFAT areas of support.

way in which DFAT will particularly assess the value of its support for WFF. The IDS contain additional ambition for the work of the Fund which does not appear in the WFF Strategic Plan.¹¹

A summary of the grantee partners supported by Australian funds in 2023 is attached at Annex One.

The WFF governance and management structure aligns with requirements under the Fiji’s Charitable Trust Act.¹² Fig 3 summaries the structure.

Figure 2 WFF organisational structure



Board of trustees above Governance Board, above Fund manager’ Two-way line between Fund Manager and Grants Committee. Senior Program Manager, Communications officer, Resource Mobilisation coordinator and Finance Operations manager report to Fund Manager. Reporting to Senior Program Manager are MEAL Coordinator, MEAL Officer and Program Officer (3 positions). Reporting to Finance and Operations Manager are finance and Administration Officer, Administration Support Officer.’

WFF is governed by an independent Board of Trustees. Under the direction of the Trustees is a Governance Board that provides oversight, policy formulation, decision making, and relationship building for the Trust, and appoints the Fund Manager. The Fund Manager is responsible for operationalising the WFF strategic plans, work programs and budgets, risk assessments, and other matters. There is also an independent Grants Committee responsible for selection of grants based on the agreed criteria outlined in the Grants Manual.¹³

The Fund has well established systems for grant making and management, clearly outlined in a series of program manuals.¹⁴ The WFF has established policies which align with DFAT requirements and those of the Charitable Act in Fiji.¹⁵ Notwithstanding these systems the MTR notes the opportunity for further development and establishment of strong internal MEAL system as discussed later in this report.

11 There is additional detail in the IDS about likely activities under each outcome area although it is not clear if these were agreed with WFF or that they only represent DFAT perspectives on expected activity.

12 Trust Deed for Women’s Fund Fiji, 2021.

13 Fiji Women’s Fund Grants Manual, Version 1.00, May 2022.

14 These include the Grants Manual and the Financial Policies and Procedures Manual (updated 22/10/2021).

15 These include policies for environmental and social safeguards, gender equality and social inclusion, risk management, and a reserves policy.

2.1 WFF Evaluation objectives and scope

The purpose of the Mid-Term Review (MTR) was to:

...undertake an independent assessment of Women’s Fund Fiji and identify key achievements and lessons under the new WFF design from January 2022 – December 2024.

The MTR was directed to:

Assess WFF’s progress towards the End-of-Program Outcomes (EOPOs), including identifying areas that require improvement.

Assess the effectiveness and efficiency of the Fund in delivering services in accordance with the DFAT funding agreement.

The MTR was requested to use the findings to compile lessons learned and recommendations for: the potential next phase of DFAT investment; and the Strategic Vision and Plan [of WFF] for the next three years (2025–2027).

The scope of the MTR includes the whole-of-program implementation under the WFF Strategic Plan (January 2022 – December 2024). A review of the Fiji Women’s Fund was conducted in 2020, and served as a comparison for the MTR, with consideration of how the present work has accommodated previous recommendations and lessons learnt. The MTR TOR directed the review to give particular attention to relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability. Additional evaluation questions were included in the TOR to define the focus under each of these headings, and the MTR team used these for overall guidance rather than seeking detailed answers to each question.

Simultaneous with the MTR, DFAT is also undertaking an evaluation of the AIR Partnership. While the primary focus on the MTR is on WFF, where relevant, it has considered the Fund experience of the AIR Partnership and the value of that Partnership for the work and approach of WFF. Relevant information will be shared with the AIR Partnership evaluation to reduce duplication of inquiry and minimise the burden on implementing partners. Likewise, the AIR evaluation is expected to share relevant information about the WFF as this is collected during its inquiry.

2.2 Methodology

The Review Team, consisting of Ruth Maetala (SURGE) and Linda Kelly (Praxis), utilised a mixed method approach including consultation with a wide selection of Fund grantees and partners (this included all but one of the partners funded with Australian support by WFF), civil society organisations in Fiji and staff and board of WFF. Consultations were also undertaken with funding organisations including DFAT, MFAT and other Women’s Funds, including those active in the AIR Partnership. The team ensured it consulted with organisations representing people who live with disability and those representing LGBTQI+ people. The review team reviewed a range of relevant documentation with particular attention to the program theory of change and assumptions and the alignment between these and the reported results.

Finally, a Talanoa survey, focused on organisational strengths and challenges, was administered to a selection of Fund staff and partners, providing an additional confidential means for people to share their views and experiences. While response rates to the survey were low, it provided an opportunity to cross check the in-person data collection through a culturally sensitive, anonymous process. The low return and the alignment of the surveys that were returned with other findings suggests the strong consistency among stakeholder responses is indicative of the majority experience.

A full list of data sources (groups consulted and locations, the distribution of the Talanoa survey and the documentation reviewed) is attached at Annex 2.

This approach, triangulating information from several sources and interrogating the reasons behind difference and alignment, is drawn from a critical evaluation approach. This approach to evaluation aims to

provide insight into ‘what has been achieved?’ And ‘why?’ It also focuses the enquiry to consider how future activities can be improved.

The evaluation was guided by several principles. In particular, consideration was given to ensuring a safe and confidential space to ensure a broad range of views and experiences were able to be freely communicated to the review team.

Data analysis was undertaken throughout the data process, with regular feedback provided during interviews and group discussions to ensure accuracy of interpretation and daily review by team members of emerging themes and issues. Where possible additional interviews and enquiries were undertaken to address gaps in data collection. The Talanoa survey was useful as an additional source of cross-referencing. As far as possible, the data analysis privileged the views and experiences of women and other grantees. This reflected the direction by DFAT to focus on understanding the value of the work for women and their representative organisations. It aligned with the principles outlined for the Review (see Evaluation Plan) and also the standards of good evaluation practice for programs supporting feminist movements.¹⁶

The review team are ultimately responsible for conclusions and recommendations in the MTR report. However, this draft report also provides an opportunity for stakeholders to examine and contest the findings and analysis and further develop and enrich the final document report.

The full evaluation plan is attached at Annex 3, along with the consultation questions and the Survey in Annexes 5 and 6.

2.3 Limitations

Given the dynamic implementing context and challenges for WFF, this short review (which included a two-week country mission) will not necessarily cover all relevant aspects of Fund operations and interactions across Fiji. While the sample of grantees and partners is a good cross-section of those groups funded through DFAT support (see annex 2 for list of grantees and partners consulted), it was not possible to make contact with all organisations receiving grants and there was no opportunity to follow up on. In addition, only a small number of organisations which did not receive a grant from the Fund were able to be identified and interviewed. Despite repeated attempts it was not possible to arrange interviews with the Government of Fiji Ministry of Women, nor the Grants Committee of WFF. The following report should be read with due consideration of these limitations on data collection.

The MTR team were accompanied in some locations by representatives from DFAT and the Fund. While all efforts were made to ensure confidential discussions were undertaken with communities and local organisations, it is possible that people’s responses were limited by this accompaniment.

Finally, the MTR team includes high-level skills and knowledge in evaluation and gender equality, but the team does not have expertise in all the WFF thematic areas, nor experience of all locations and contexts where the Fund provides grants. The following findings and conclusions need to be understood in line with these limitations.

3 Findings

Given the directions of the MTR TOR, the findings are grouped under the core areas of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability. In order to focus those broad areas, the evaluation questions were utilised for further focus, where relevant information was able to be collected. As requested by DFAT, an overall judgement based on the sum total of the findings, compared to the previous review, is included at the beginning of each section. Corresponding explanation and evidence sources are provided in accompanying text.

¹⁶ Parry, B. (2020). Feminist research principles and practices. In S. Kramer, S. Laher, A. Fynn, & H. H. Janse van Vuuren (Eds.), *Online Readings in Research Methods*. Psychological Society of South Africa: Johannesburg. <https://doi.org/10.17605/OSF.IO/BNPFS>

3.1 Relevance

In line with the findings from the 2020 review, WFF demonstrates relevance to stakeholders (including DFAT and Government of Fiji) and has worked effectively in the Fiji current context. Going forward however, respondents identified some likely emerging challenges.

3.1.1 Alignment with Government of Fiji and Government of Australia's development priorities?

In line with DFAT priorities, the Fund supports women's and feminist organisations alongside organisations led by LGTQBI representatives and organisations working for the rights of people living with disability. It supports connection between these organisations, helping to build networks and contribute to the overall development of the women's movement in Fiji, with attention to intersectional disadvantage. This is closely aligned to DFAT policy for gender equality and gender transformation.¹⁷

The Fund acts as an intermediary organisation to allow DFAT and other donors to direct funding to locally led development. This includes funding to community-based women's organisations as well as to partner organisations working across Fiji in areas of women's rights and rights for people with disability and diverse genders and sexualities. The risk management systems established by the Fund address the fiduciary and other risks on behalf of DFAT and other donors. The Fund approach ensures that local grantees and partners are able to determine and lead the work that is required and adapt it as appropriate to their context. This aligns with DFAT policy for development to be, as far as possible, locally led.¹⁸

WFF holds current policies on gender equality, disability inclusion, and child protection. As noted, it partners with organisations that support people who live with disabilities and organisations that support people who identify as LGBTQI+.

The Fund supports work which is relevant to the government of Fiji, particularly the Ministry of Women.¹⁹ The Fund works with community groups which are registered with the Ministry as a precondition of Fund support. Respondents reported that the Fund is presently negotiating a memorandum of understanding to manage funding directly on behalf of the Ministry. In addition, the Fund supports rural development across Fiji in line with National Government priorities.²⁰

3.1.2 Relevance to context

Gender inequality remains a key challenge in Fiji despite the Government of Fiji's commitment to promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. Women continue to lag behind men across all key development spheres, and women are subject to serious human rights violations such as gender-based violence²¹ and poor health outcomes. There are significant gaps in women's formal labor force participation with women's participation rates at 38 per cent lower than men.²² Women and girls with disabilities experience multiple disadvantages and are often amongst the most disadvantaged due to intersecting factors such as poverty, gender, and age, which increase their vulnerability. Gender non-conforming people are also often amongst the most marginalised.

17 DFAT, (2023) Australia's International Development Policy, <https://www.dfat.gov.au/sites/default/files/international-development-policy.pdf>.

18 Ibid

19 The Fiji Ministry of Women, Children and Social Protection has six strategic priorities that align with the Fiji National Development Plan, including '*Empowering women to reach their full development potential*'. Particular services of the MWCSP include administration of grants to Women's Institutions and NGOs and advocacy, coordination and monitoring of women's empowerment and gender development work at National, Divisional and District levels (MWCSP, Corporate Operational plan, 2023–24).

20 The Fiji 5 year and 20-year National Development plans both commit to the development of rural and maritime communities. This includes support for women's programs and support for further business development for women. (Ministry of Rural and Maritime Development and Disaster Management, 10 Year Strategic Plan, 2021-31.)

21 Fiji Women's Crisis Centre (2013). *Somebody's Life, Everybody's Business* report. Retrieved from: <https://www.fijiwomen.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/National-Survey-Summary.pdf>

22 Female participation in the formal labour market is 38.5 percent compared to 76.5 for men. Fiji Bureau of Statistics. Retrieved from: <https://www.statsfiji.gov.fj/index.php/census-2017/census-2017-release-1>

International evidence consistently shows that autonomous women’s movements are one of the most significant and effective ways to advance gender equality²³, and to address violence against women and children.²⁴ Working through women’s organisations is an effective way to ensure good quality service delivery.²⁵ In humanitarian response, support to women’s organisations has been identified as a key driver of gender transformation within crisis situations.²⁶ However, the 2019 FWF and Urgent Action Fund Asia and Pacific’s scoping study on the funding realities for women’s organisations in the Pacific region found that there is an unequal flow of financial and non-financial resources to feminist and women’s rights organisations and movements in the Pacific.

Grantees at community level consistently reported that the Fund was relevant to their interests and priorities. All grantees and partner organisations responding to this review reported that the Fund thematic areas provided a wide scope for activities relevant to locally identified needs. Several respondents positively contrasted the enabling approach of the Fund with the experience of grants and funding from other organisations. In every comparison the Fund is considered more relevant, more appropriate in its approach and more in line with support for locally driven change. Some of the larger partners noted that the Fund had supported them in new and adaptive work which other funders either did not recognise or understand.

The Fund appears to have worked effectively in the Fiji context, establishing relationships with women and feminist organisations and clarifying its specific contribution alongside these other organisations and programs. It appears to have engaged with a broad range of women’s organisations across Fiji including those drawn from religious, rights-based and service delivery orientations. As noted, it has partnered deliberately with organisations representing people of diverse genders and organisations supporting the rights of people with disability.

3.1.3 Ongoing relevance

Several respondents at community level and also the larger partners noted that more recently the Fund has not been able to maintain regular communications and networking with its own partners or other groups. While this has been mostly attributed to current staff turnover and other internal challenges, there is some concern that the Fund is struggling to remain in close cooperation with its diverse range of partners, especially within its current resources. Partner organisations suggested that going forward the Fund will need to prioritise resourcing for communication and connections between partners and with other groups, in order to remain relevant to movement building and amplifying the voices of women’s organisations and representatives in Fiji.

DFAT reports that it supports the Fund to address both short to medium term service delivery outcomes (for example increased income for rural women, local health service delivery, etc.) and longer term movement building outcomes.²⁷ As DFAT increases its cooperation with the Government of Fiji and likely increases its support for government led service delivery, and as the Fund develops and focuses more clearly on supporting the agendas and interests of its partners and grantees to support movement building, there is a risk that the Fund will *appear* less focused on DFAT (and other donor) short to medium term interests.

From the perspective of the Fund, there are some risks that in order to retain funding it will need to focus on areas or issues where resources are available. Various respondents identified these risks, acknowledging that as a resource mobilisation organisation the Fund has responsibility to identify all potential funding sources, balancing this against the priorities identified by partners and grantees. Going forward this balance is likely

23 Mama Cash. 2020. Feminist Activism Works: A review of select literature on the impact of feminist activism in achieving women’s rights. https://www.mamacash.org/media/publications/feminist__activism_works_mama_cash.pdf

24 Diakite, S. and Elizaire, D. (2023), Learning from Practice: Final Synthesis Review of the Practice Based Knowledge arising on the Prevention of Violence against Women and Girls (New York, United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women).

25 The Foundation Center and Women’s Funding Network. (2009). ‘Accelerating Change for Women and Girls: The Role of Women’s Funds.’ Women’s Funding Network. Retrieved June 2019 from <<http://www.womensfundingnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/TheRoleofWomensFunds.pdf>>

26 Dietrich Ortega, L.M., Skakun, Z., Cabezas Pino, A., and Novelo Duarte, M.F., 2020. ‘Who holds the microphone?’ Crisis affected women’s voices on gender-transformative changes in humanitarian settings: Experiences from Bangladesh, Colombia, Jordan and Uganda, New York: UN Women

27 The Investment Design Summary which underpins DFAT Funding for the Fund notes support from both the AIR Partnership through the Gender Equality Branch in DFAT and from DFAT Suva Post.

to be nuanced and complex to maintain. For example, several respondents pointed to climate change as an area of concern for women's organisations in Fiji and external donors. However, the focus and interest that women's organisations might have around this issue may not align in a *straightforward way* with those of bilateral donors and external supports. In these situations, the Fund will need to work carefully with its primary stakeholders, grantees and partners, to ensure resources mobilisation is aligned with their approach to change. The Fund might also consider how it continues to communicate its contribution to change, including the value of long-term movement building and locally led and adapted change.

Beyond this, respondents identified other possible tensions and challenges in regard to relevance which the Fund might consider. These included how to maintain effective relationships with the broad range of organisations located in Fiji, including regional organisations which are also concerned with support for women's organising and women's movements? There were also questions about how to broaden the relevance of the Fund to increase its engagement with religious groups, including women's organisations located in Muslim and Hindu faiths. Finally, there were some questions around how the Fund could more effectively engage with men, particularly male leaders in rural communities to mitigate risks relating to pushback to women's organising and empowerment. Reflecting the diversity of gender equality issues different grantees engage with men in different ways. Rainbow Pride for example works with men, including on how to prevent violence against LGBTQI communities. Other grantees undertake consultations with men to understand the gendered impacts of climate change on women and men. Engaging with men is done with the intent of enabling women's leadership and advocacy to develop within safe spaces.

Beyond the immediate Fiji context, AIR Partners noted that the wider regional and international context is not supportive of women's funds or funding for women's rights organisations.²⁸ While this has been less of an immediate problem to the Fund, it is likely that these trends will impact its context in the future. AIR Partners suggested that it will be important for the Fund to resource regular analysis and assessment of its context and relationships. Based on this information it can regularly assess its relevance and value to different stakeholders and improve its forecasting and management of risks.

3.2 Effectiveness and outcomes

WFF is providing an effective program of support, consistent with the findings of the previous review. However, there is opportunity to further develop and consolidate the organisation in order to maintain effectiveness going forward.

3.2.1 Progress towards end of program outcomes

The Fund is making good progress towards the empowerment of feminist and women's rights organisations in line with End of Program outcome (EOPO) One²⁹. This includes a well-developed and administered program of grant making and accompaniment for rural and remote women's groups. It also includes support to a wide range of partners who in turn provide an expanded reach into rural and remote areas on behalf of the Fund.

Confidential discussions with grantees, community members and partners confirm that the program funding and capacity building support has assisted with both improved opportunities for women and rural communities (for example increased economic empowerment, improved health services, increased skills development et cetera) as well as strengthening the governance and organisational capacity of organisations supporting women's rights, LGBTQI+ led organisations and organisations supporting people who live with disability.

Based on the review of program reporting and discussion with a wide sample of people in women's organisations in rural areas, it appears that the Fund support has resulted in short-term and ongoing change for people. Respondents are able to identify the immediate value of their particular activities as well as the cumulative and longer-term benefits of ongoing support and accompaniment. The Fund is popular across Fiji

²⁸ This is supported by other research. See for example, Dolker, T. (2021) 'Where is the money for feminist organising?', AWID.

²⁹ As noted, EOPO refers to the outcomes in the WFF Strategic Plan. These are also the EOPO outlined in the DFAT IDS.

and demand considerably outweighs current resources.³⁰ Support has been provided to a range of organisations, including those that represent people who live with disability and people who identify as LGBTQIA+.

Empowerment and Capacity Building for Marginalised Women Project

Before joining the Confident Woman training, I was shy and hesitant to speak in public. The training helped me become more confident, to express myself freely and manage my family better. The training also provided me with a deeper understanding of gender-based violence, laws, and rights, which I have applied in my roles as a community health worker and community police.

For me the training had a significant impact on my ability to advocate for my community. Living in a drug-affected area, I have become an advocate against drug use and have engaged with community leaders to address the issue. The training has changed how I interact with my daughters, telling them about respect and appropriate behaviour.

The training has improved my business operations, and I am now encouraging other women to attend the training as well. WFF Grantees responses in focus group discussion

Trauma-Informed and Resilient Communities Project

We have attended workshops for three years, and these sessions have strengthened our women's group and brought a sense of community. The training has helped us solve our challenges collectively, reinforcing the importance of working together. For me the workshops have helped me overcome my fear of public speaking. I am now serving as a community advocate, speaking out about the village's challenges when government officials or visitors come.

WFF Grantees responses in focus group discussion

Grantee Responses

But through the fund, we have been exposed to a lot of training and a lot of partnership that has enabled our women to be exposed to leadership roles outside of the sector. So, we have one woman with a disability who sits as a Commissioner on the Human Rights and Discrimination Board. And we have another woman sitting on the Fiji Women's Crisis Centre Board.

I guess it's through training, leadership training, that the Women's Fund has built the capacity of the OPD for women with disabilities to push for their issues in spaces outside of the disability sector. WFF Grantee response

I guess another area that the Women's Fund Fiji has supported the OPDs is in the area of the audit reports, financial auditing of the reports. Usually for the OPDs, these are some of the areas that we did not know we needed to have in place. So, through the Fund, we came to realise the importance of having due diligence documents in place to strengthen the capacity of the OPDs, and to also give our donors the confidence to fund us in the different areas that we deal with.

WFF Grantee response

To carry out the project, to ensure its sustainability, we need to have the organisation itself to be strong.

³⁰ For example, in the latest round of grant Funding, approximately 90 applications were received for Funding and program staff report approximately 20 of these are likely to be funded.

The sustainability grant provides us the much-needed core funding, which covers three staff roles and enables us to conduct an HR audit, a strategic plan, undertake a governance review, develop annual plans, and institute a formal audit system.

The grant core funding is enabling us to strengthen the organisation and this is enabling us to improve the quality of service and assistance that we provide to our LGBTQI members.

WFF Grantee response

Throughout the MTR, respondents identified a range of opportunities for further development of the Fund grant making and capacity development strategies. These are noted here for information.

Women's economic empowerment – WFF is a member of the secretariat for the Fiji National Action Plan (NAP) for Women's Economic Empowerment. This potentially provides a good opportunity for the Fund to extend its collaboration with the Government of Fiji and utilising its learning to date to inform the NAP.

Ending violence against women - the Fund has the opportunity to further enhance its work to prevent violence by more active engagement with specialist organisations such as Fiji Women's Crisis Centre and Fiji Women's Rights Movement (FWRM) to accelerate attention to addressing violence against women and children.

Women's leadership and decision making - there are opportunities for more systematic support for women's leadership, particularly to enhance leadership among rural women. This could be achieved through utilising the grantee curriculums already developed by partners such as BREAD and FWRM, and making these available more widely and in accessible forms including virtually.

Coalitions for change - working with cluster grantees with like-minded objectives and activities would strengthen networking with and between those groups and increase opportunity for impact.

LGBTQI+ collaboration - The Fund experience in collaborating with LGBTQI+ representative groups could be shared to extend and improve awareness on inclusion and effective collaboration across diversity. For example, LGBTQI+ representative organisations report the Fund has been especially helpful because staff take the time to sit with them, understand their challenges and adjust support in ways which are practical and timely. They also reported that they were keen to extend their work with the Fund to share their experience and insights across other CSOs and local organisations in Fiji.

Individual women entrepreneurs - presently the fund only supports groups, but regularly receives applications from individual women entrepreneurs including from rural and remote areas. The Fund might consider how to open-up opportunities to engage with and support these individuals.

The Fund is making good progress in contributing to a diverse women's and feminist movement in Fiji (EOPO2). As noted, it has a wide range of partners and grantees, including some religious organisations, health and well-being services, human rights organisations, organisations supporting LGBTQI+ populations and people living with disability, as well as women's groups in rural and remote areas of the country. This diversity was identified by respondents as a strength, expanding the women's movement in Fiji and providing opportunity for dialogue between different women's organisations and women's rights groups. It reflects DFAT experience in other countries, where long-term support for diverse coalitions of women's organisations has been identified as a significant contribution to expanding the women's movement and in turn supporting change towards gender equality.³¹

Respondents identified opportunities for the Fund to further extend its reach and build a wider network, with particular attention to faith-based groups. There was also strong support for more networking, activity and communication between grantees, partners and other actors. Respondents saw these as opportunities to extend capacity building opportunities, share experience and create opportunities for joint voice and shared strategies for change.

WFF has made progress towards diversifying its funding (EOPO 3), in line with the recommendations from the previous review. Since establishing itself as an independent organisation it has attracted funding from the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT), other Women's Funds including MamaCash

31 See the review of the DFAT MAMPU program in Indonesia, 2019.

and Equality Institute, and private organisations including the Foundation Channel (see Fig. 4). As noted, there are discussions underway with the government Fiji for the Fund to administer grants on behalf of the government. While DFAT remains the largest donor, the diversity of sources is a positive sign given the international experience that funding for women’s and feminist organisations is reducing.

Table 1 Cost comparison and percentage of funding received from each donor in 2022 and 2023

Donors	2022	%	2023	%
DFAT	2,644,343.76	65%	2,287,501.10	45%
MFAT	-	0%	698,344.00	14%
Fenomenal Fund Resilience	87,412.20	2%	170,454.55	3%
WFA–LFS	-	0%	126,588.35	2%
Prospera Asia and the Pacific	-	0%	116,089.06	2%
Prospera RM	52,275.41	1%	-	0%
Prospera Steering Committee	-	0%	3,107.34	7%
Mama Cash	489,585.55	12%	339,438.34	7%
Equality Fund	536,355.95	13%	1,039,966.17	20%
Fenomenal Fund-Collective CARE	-	0%	29,137.37	1%
Fondation Channel	-	0%	268,937.70	5%
Reserve–WFF	255,555.00	6%	-	-
Total	4,065,527.87	-	5,079,563.98	-

Source: Women’s Fund Fiji, Annual Report, January–December 2023

Discussion with a selection of the funding organisations indicates positive support for the work of WFF. While noting that the Fund is experiencing current challenges around staff changes and organisational establishment, these are mainly understood as being part of the normal development and organisational growth for a new civil society organisation. Funders are keen to support and work with the Fund as it develops and value clear communication about areas of challenge and how the Fund is working to progress and improve its organisational structure.

This wider support base, together with participation in the AIR Partnership, has provided the Fund with increased opportunity for influence, especially beyond Fiji (EOPO 4). Respondents suggested that the most valuable contribution from the Fund to date has been to amplify and communicate the lived experience of women and marginalised people, especially those living in rural and remote communities. Funding bodies and AIR partners identified the value of bringing this direct experience into regional and international advocacy and representation, connecting external decision-makers and groups to what women experience and value.

There is also opportunity for the Fund to represent and further amplify women’s voices in Fiji. Several respondents, particularly community members, saw this as an important contribution the Fund could make directly or in cooperation with them. Respondents particularly pointed to opportunities to influence Fiji Government policy and to advocate to donors and regional organisations located in Fiji about the needs of women and marginalised people.

WFF is still to fully realise these opportunities. While it has actively participated in the AIR Partnership and networking with other Women’s Funds and women’s organisations in Fiji, the Fund Board and management assessed that it is still developing its capacity to capture and amplify the views of its partners and grantees.

Finally, the Fund has established many of the functional aspects of an independent organisation, but still requires further consolidation and development (EOPO 5). The particular challenges facing the Fund as an evolving civil society organisation are discussed in greater detail in the following sections. In large part they

revolve around the shift from policy to practice, especially in regard to internal procedures expectations and values. They are also related to the challenges of attracting and retaining staff with the relevant experience and skills.

3.2.2 Monitoring and evaluation

The previous review recommended revisions for the WFF monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) framework. This included attention to streamlining and standardising the assessment system and providing increased support to grantees, particularly small women's organisations, to increase their capacity to undertake their own monitoring and evaluation.

The MTR reviewed all of the Fund reporting and found that the Fund now has a set of well-established and well-managed monitoring and evaluation systems. These are largely designed to serve accountability requirements of donors but do give good attention to developing assessment capacities in partners and grantee groups and ensuring that the reporting and monitoring requirements were accessible and understandable to those groups.

While the evaluation team was not able to directly audit program records³², indications from policy manuals and review of program reporting indicates that core information is regularly collected on all activities, partners and grantees. There is a good balance of qualitative and quantitative information and good attention to financial and other risk areas. Information is well-managed and regular and detailed analysis is provided in Fund reporting.

Traditional reporting approaches grounded in a linear understanding of social change and predetermined expected outcomes have proven ill-suited to capturing the true impact of Canada's international assistance programming ... it will be important to consider alternative approaches to measuring and communicating the results of social change programs, especially those with a strong locally led approach.

Global Affairs Canada, April 2024

The MTR team explored this area with all of the grantees and partners who receive funding from WFF. While it was reported that Fund monitoring templates are lengthy and have been difficult for some community groups to complete, all respondents acknowledged that, as required, the Fund has supported them through training and individual support to manage this reporting and improve their systems for monitoring. Some community-based respondents pointed to additional learning and insights obtained through participating in regular monitoring as required by the Fund.

Organisations funded by WFF, consulted for this review, reported particular value in the annual reflection and networking meetings which are convened by the MEL team. People reported that this supported their cross-group learning and improved their ability to understand the value of their work.

There continue to be some areas for improvement in MEL. The Fund is well-positioned to increase its focus on amplifying the voice of its grantees and partners, drawing on MEL information. It could also consider expanding its accountability to stakeholders beyond donors. Respondents from communities and women's organisations are keen to know more about how the Fund operates and makes decisions, how it uses the information they provide and how it represents their experience in other settings.

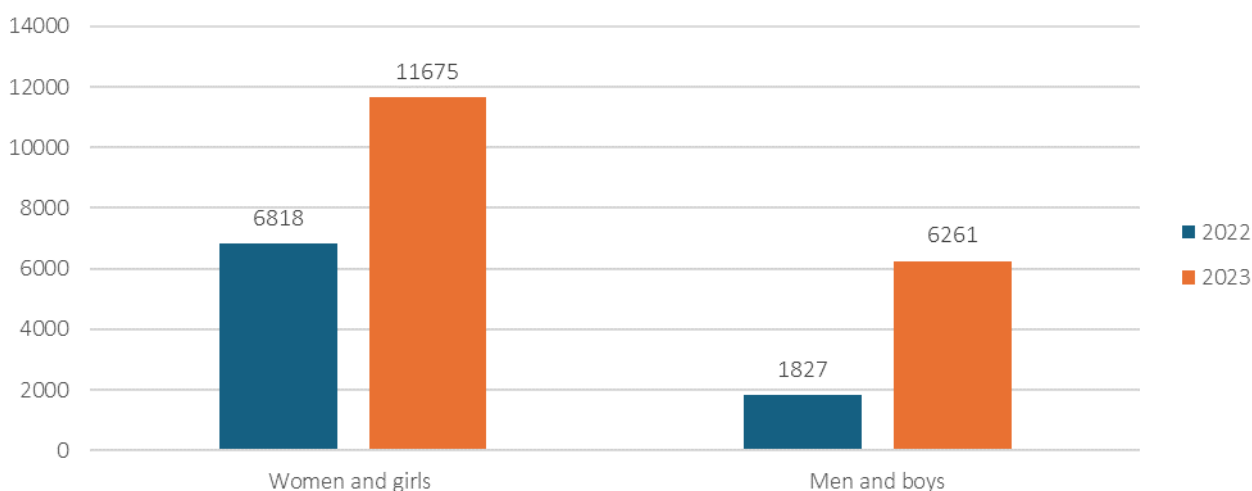
There is opportunity to strengthen the learning from the Fund activities to support wider advocacy and influence, and ongoing program and organisational improvements. While there are past examples of the Fund undertaking research for learning, there is not yet a systematic research process in place. This is possibly a missed opportunity for Fund influence. It is also a missed opportunity for DFAT. Having detailed and systematic insight into the lived experience of women and marginalised groups including their ideas for how change might be achieved, could be valuable in wider DFAT programming in Fiji and the Pacific.

³² DFAT advised that they will undertake a due diligence check of the Fund systems at a later date to complement the observations and findings of the MTR. This will be the correct opportunity for detailed examination of program records and processes.

There are also some fundamental challenges for the Fund MEL system. Most significantly there is a tension between accountability to donors, who generally require quantitative and short to medium term results, and the process required to track and capture the long-term value of the Fund’s work and its eventual *impact*.³³

WFF provide various demonstrations of their ‘impact’. These include the overall number of beneficiaries per year (Fig 5.), which shows an increase in the number of people served by the Fund across the last two years of operation. And information about the geographic scope of their work (Fig 6), which demonstrates their reach outside of Suva and Central District.

Figure 3 Women's Fund Fiji, total number of beneficiaries



A total of 6,818 women and 1,827 men were recipients of Women’s Fund Fiji grants in 2022, compared to 11,675 girls and 6,261 boys who were beneficiaries in 2023.

Table 2 Geographical distribution of grantee partners in Fiji (2023)

Fiji Division	No of grants
Northern Division	13
Western Division	14
Central Division	16
Eastern Division	9

There are also detailed figures about the focus of grants and a range of impact stories which identify the changes achieved through various activities. These are useful for understanding the scope and the changes in the work of the Fund. However, they do not fully explain or demonstrate the impact of the work.

Impact is an ambiguous term, with considerable discussion in aid and development literature about how to define and measure it. Most practitioners agree that it refers to **sustained shifts** in an existing system such that **relationships and power are transformed**. For WFF this would possibly equate to sustained shifts in gender equality in Fiji. This is unlikely to be achieved in the short to medium term. However international research strongly suggests that the combination of resourcing, capacity development and movement building, provided consistently and adapted to need and context over time, will likely lead to substantial impact for women and others.³⁴

³³ While this was not an area of focus under the MTR TOR, the repeated reference to impact throughout the review consultations indicate it is an area of interest both to DFAT and the Fund as well as other stakeholders.

³⁴ Jiménez Thomas Rodríguez, D., Harper, C. and George, R. (2021) Mobilising for change: how women's social movements are transforming gender norms. ALIGN Report. London: ODI (<https://www.alignplatform.org/resources/reportmobilising-for-change>).

This is a common problem for women’s funds,³⁵ and for many programs and organisations working towards long-term systemic change. Assessing the impact of gender lens investing, across a highly diverse portfolio, in a dynamic context with multiple other actors, is not possible through short to medium term monitoring and evaluation systems that utilise only traditional methodologies. Recent experience from UNDP³⁶ suggests it requires tracking emergent change, over the long term, utilising methodologies such as action research and contribution analysis to better understand the interaction between activity, context and emerging changes and shifts. That experience, and experience from other DFAT programs, suggests that evidence-based impact, particularly related to sustained change in women’s lives and sustained value of women’s organising, is likely to take 10 to 15 years to be reliably identified. The Fund ought to consider, with DFAT and other donors, how it might establish the approach and systems that would enable this evidence to be collected going forward.

This has implications for the Fund Theory of Change, as it matures and understands the change processes which work most effectively in different locations. The Theory of Change that is included in the Fund Strategic Plan was a well-articulated starting point for the WFF work and reflected the development and learning from a program to that date. Now as the Fund matures and regularly assess the value of its work, there is an opportunity to consider how it might start to understand and identify the desired impact of its work and what sustained shifts it is seeking to achieve. This in turn will influence the assumptions articulated in the MEL framework and the focus for ongoing learning and reflection. It should over time also influence the areas that are reported to others including donors.

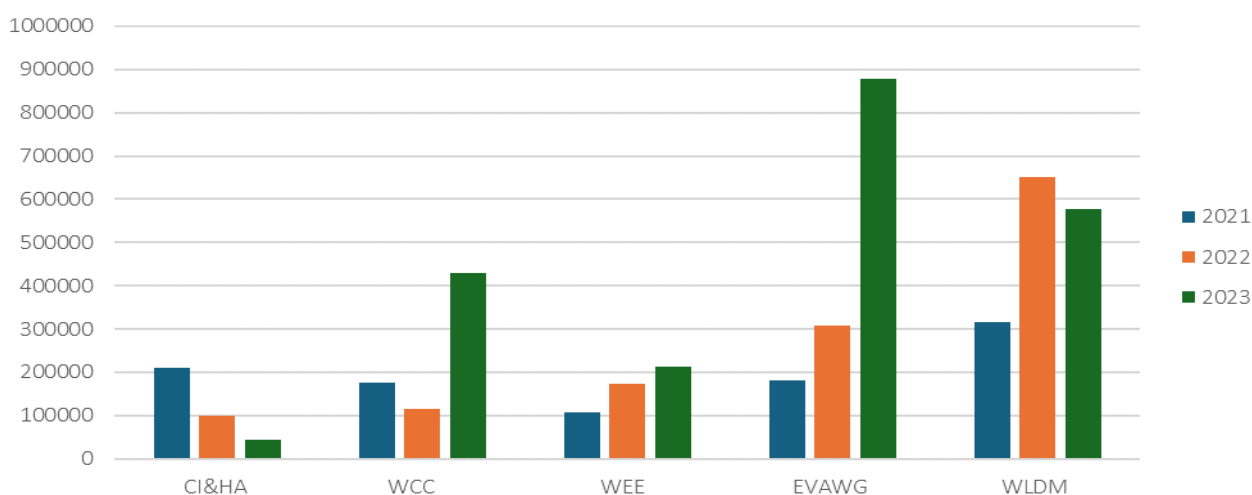
3.3 Efficiency and modality

Similar to the findings from the 2020 review, the MTR found that WFF is increasing its program efficiency but is still developing its capacity and efficiency as an organisation.

3.3.1 Efficiency of grant funding and targeting

Figures from annual reports show an increased capacity to efficiently utilise and distribute resources for grant making and capacity building. The percentage of total Fund income allocated directly to grants has increased from 60 per cent in 2021, to 70 per cent in 2022 and in the latest report for 2023, has further increased to 74 per cent. This is reflected in a steady increase in the grant funding across themes (Figure 4).

Figure 4 Distribution of grant funding by year across themes



In 2023, total grants of FJD2,141,558 grants were disbursed in the following areas: \$42,831.16 for Climate Justice & Humanitarian Support related work, \$578,220.66 for Women’s Leadership & Decision-making projects, \$878,038.8 for Elimination of Violence

35 Global Affairs Canada (2024), Formative Evaluation of the Partnership for Gender Equality, Evaluation Division, April.

36 <http://medium.com/@undp.innovation/learning-by-doing-sharing-new-steps-and-reflections-on-our-systems-mle-learning-journey-d1ad71735f80>

against Women and Girls projects, \$214,155.8 for Women's Economic Empowerment related activities, and \$428,311.6 for Women's Coalition for Change related projects. In 2022, total grants of FJD1,348,570 grants were disbursed in the following areas: \$100,000 for Climate Justice & Humanitarian Support related work, \$652,141 for Women's Leadership & Decision-making projects, \$307,721 for Elimination of Violence against Women and Girls projects, \$173,378 for Women's Economic Empowerment related activities, and \$115,330 for Women's Coalition for Change related projects. In 2021, total grants of FJD1,460,932 grants were disbursed in the following areas: \$309,388 for Climate Justice & Humanitarian Support related work, \$465,580 for Women's Leadership & Decision-making projects, \$266,534 for Elimination of Violence against Women and Girls projects, \$158,770 for Women's Economic Empowerment related activities, and \$260,660 for Women's Coalition for Change related projects.

There is also a steady increase in income and in the number of grants and diversity of grants managed by the Fund (see Fig 4). Significant for DFAT the figures show a steady decrease in dependency on Australian funds

The targeting of resources appears well directed, given the extensive positive feedback from grantees and partners, as reported above. It is significant that interviews with the organisations that were not funded or have had funding reduced, were satisfied with the Fund and understood it to be reputable and reliable. While this was a small sample, all of these respondents assumed given the good processes in the Fund, that the resources denied to them would have been correctly prioritised elsewhere.

The good thing about WFF is that they come and do their field due diligence to check how we work in our system, our financial system and the policies that we have, finance policies and all those things and also, they organised a finance training right at the beginning, finance and program and project awareness training.

WFF Grantee response

The Fund has in place well documented systems for grant making and grant management from applications through to acquittal and reporting. It has clear and appropriate policies for areas such as environmental and social safeguarding, risk management and financial management. It appears to have good processes in place for granting and partner assessments and staff and board are very conscious of the need for the grant application, selection and management process to be transparent and high quality.³⁷

The Fund has a strong reputation as reported by all respondents for directly reaching rural and remote communities itself or working with partners who have established relationships and well-regarded work in these communities. The MTR team was able to meet with a cross sample of all partners and verified the diversity and scope of partners being covered across rural locations.

3.3.2 Organisational capacity for ongoing results

Program documentation indicates that the Fund is not fully on track against its targets for organisational development. The 2023 annual report reported delays and failure to achieve outputs.

In strategic objective 1, there have been delays in grant management and partner capacity development. In the area of grant management some outputs planned for later this year will be deferred to next year ... For the partner capacity development, the Fund's progress has been impacted by the turnover in staff.

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The staff, Governance Board and senior management of the Fund have a good understanding of the issues that require attention within the organisation. Based on inquiry with them, the following issues were identified as requiring attention to support the further capacity of the Fund.

Systems development. The Fund has range of good policies in place, but these are now being tested in practice as original staff and Board members move on and new people engage with the Fund. Many of its current policies will soon be due for redevelopment (all are dated to 2024) and should be renewed in light of the recent experiences in the organisation and its better understanding of its operating environment. In addition, and in particular, internal respondents (and some external respondents with good knowledge of the way the Fund works) suggested that the Fund should now consider development of Standard Operating Procedures to accompany its policies. This will establish for all staff, governance members and external

³⁷ It should be noted that the MTR team was not able to directly access program records to verify these observations. It is understood that DFAT will undertake a due diligence study in the near future to test the rigor of existing Fund systems.

audiences the Fund ways of working. It would provide internal clarity, particularly for new staff and demonstrate to external audiences how the Fund is practically operationalising its feminist and rights-based values.

Internal capacity development. As the Fund matures, new skills and capacities will be required, particularly as it establishes its unique contribution as a women's fund in Fiji. Documenting internal capacity needs and the additional capacity required to take the Fund through its next strategic plan, will provide a good basis for communication to donors and supporters and for resource planning.

Leadership and governance clarity. Core to the Fund continued development is strong leadership and governance. It has a well-articulated trust deed which spells out the respective responsibilities of the different levels of governance and management for the organisation. However, similar to other organisational policies, these responsibilities now need to be translated into practical agreements and procedures. This will ensure all stakeholders have confidence in the developing organisation and will provide a solid foundation for further organisational growth.

In addition, partners and community grantees also identified other areas for possible expansion or further development in the work of the Fund.

Advocacy and influencing approach. As discussed earlier in this report, there is considerable support from respondents in partner organisations for the Fund to grow its ability to be an advocate and to influence government policy and other areas towards better support for gender equality in Fiji and the Pacific region. The Fund is now well-positioned to develop a mature and detailed strategy for this work, with attention to data collection and research systems, and the additional capacity required in communications, advocacy and campaigning. If the Fund does see this as an extension of its role, the work required would have to be balanced against ongoing grant management and capacity development work.

Grant and financial systems. The recent shift to the Xero system for finance reporting has been welcomed by grantees and partners. Respondents had additional suggestions to further improve the grant management and reporting systems including streamlining of templates and some clarifications throughout the system. There is support for further digitisation and streamlining overall. It would be timely for the Fund to undertake a review of its granting systems and identify pathways towards ongoing improvement of these systems.

Relationships and networking in Fiji and the Pacific region. There are obvious synergies and opportunities for efficiency in increased collaboration between the Fund and other women's and feminist organisations in Fiji. This includes for example, graduating partners to larger grants available from other programs (such as Pacific Women Lead), sharing reporting and monitoring templates, sharing research and learning. The Fund has collaborated previously in these ways, but partner organisations identified this cooperation has reduced. Partners attributed this to staff turnover and gaps in filling positions. In order to maximise these synergies and opportunities partner organisations were keen the Fund should reinvigorate its working relationships and partnerships with programs and organisations in Fiji and the region. It could also establish how it will work strategically with these and other organisations on shared issues, for example on supporting women's leadership in Fiji. This is likely to require collaboration at board level as well as senior management through to program and technical staff such as finance and monitoring and evaluation personnel.

There are potential supports available to assist WFF capability development. These include opportunities through the Prospera (the International Network of Women's Funds). It also includes the opportunities available through the AIR Partnership. As part of its new strategic planning, the Fund has the opportunity to identify its priorities for systems and capacity development and plan how to use these available resources. For its longer-term consolidation and development, there are several strategic issues the Fund could consider as it develops its new organisational strategic plan:

Competing organisational priorities. To date the Fund has balanced the priorities of donors, particularly DFAT, with the interests and priorities of its partners and grantees. In part it has managed this through its five broad thematic areas which cover a diverse range of possible activities. Going forward there may be different interests between grantee partners and those of donors, at least around short-term priorities. Anticipating this possible divergence, the Fund could start to craft a strategic approach to Fund presentation and communication, particularly to donors.

Absorptive capacity. The Fund is attracting additional donor support (in line with its current resource mobilisation plan), which potentially allows it to expand its number of grants and/or expand its influencing

and advocacy. On the other hand, the Fund is by its own account, stretched and lacking the staff and other resources to achieve all of the capacity building and relationship maintenance it seeks to provide, especially to small and remote grantees.³⁸ It must consider its capacity to manage an increased number of grants effectively, if there is no corresponding increase in core support, to ensure it does not grow beyond its ability to maintain its current effective approach.

Diversity and movement building. As discussed, the Fund has demonstrated its ability to bring together diverse sections of the women's movement in Fiji and support effective networking across that diversity. Given the recognised association between diverse women's movements and increased gender equality outcomes, this is an important contribution to long-term gender equality in Fiji. There would be value in the Fund further broadening its reach, including to a greater range of religious groups and also to more remote and maritime communities. However, facilitating constructive dialogue across diverse groups is challenging and time-consuming and the Fund will need to determine the resourcing it can reasonably make available, and the likely boundaries of its movement building work over the next strategic plan period.

Relationship with the Government of Fiji. As noted, Fund already has several connections with the Government of Fiji, primarily through the Ministry of Women but also with district governments and ministries such as agriculture and economic development. As it moves forward the Fund should consider how it can use these opportunities to amplify the voice and experience of its grantees and partners to government.

3.4 Sustainability

The Fund is working towards a more sustained state but a strategy for organisational sustainability should be a priority for the next strategic plan.

3.4.1 Capacity within the Fund

In line with the 2020 review recommendations, the Fund has developed and implemented a transition strategy and is now a fully autonomous organisation with a solid base of policy and effective grant management and administration systems.

As discussed above, the Fund currently faces a range of strategic and operational issues. As it addresses these it will likely strengthen its value to women and women's rights and feminist organisations in Fiji. These developments will also increase the confidence of current and potential future donors, particularly as they seek to support the Fund as an effective local grant making mechanism. The AIR Partnership in particular has enabled the Fund to interact with regional and international women's funds and grow its capacity and resources base. There is potential for further capacity building support from these other Funds as well as potential for further funding.

Nevertheless, the Fund will continue to require core support, in addition to funding for grant making, for at least the next stage of its development (assumed to be 4–5 years). This includes funding to continue to develop as an organisation, and support to build internal capacity and extend its work in response to opportunities and challenges. This is not an unusual issue for Women's Funds and international research suggest that WFF is at a reasonable stage of progress towards organisational sustainability given the experience of other funds.³⁹ The WFF approach to resource mobilisation for the next strategic plan should clearly outline how it will utilise core funding from donors to increase its internal capacity.

Longer term the Fund should give attention to resource strategies to support its independence and eventual organisational sustainability. This means a way of maintaining the required level of core funding while continuing to attract resources for grants and capacity development from a range of external sources. These might include for example, developing an endowment Fund, attracting private investment and/or developing a commercial arm. These and other strategies are now being explored by several international organisations and civil society groups around the world and the Fund would benefit from tracking and engaging with these debates.

³⁸ Interview notes, WFF staff and management.

³⁹ Sillis, K. *et al* (2019) 'A Leap of Faith. Conversations with Funders of Women's organisations', Oxfam Great Britain, IG Advisors.

3.5 Lessons learned

The 2020 review identified several lessons which the Fund has addressed. The previous review noted feedback from grantees that training can be useful but needed to be minimised to ensure it did not overburden women and their organisations. The Fund has responded to this and shortened training opportunities, streamlined information sessions and tried to provide more hands-on support rather than formal training. The 2020 review noted that short term grants were not necessarily of lasting value (apart from emergency situations). In response the Fund has restructured its grants and given careful attention to ongoing support to partners as appropriate. Finally, as discussed earlier, the previous review noted the importance of maintaining networks and relationship building. Respondents to this review, especially at community level, have identified the close working relationships they enjoy with the Fund and the regular support and contacts maintained for grant management.

These lessons continue to be relevant alongside emerging lessons from the Fund's experience as a new organisation:

Leadership. Based on observation of the Fund development to date, several respondents talked about the significance of values driven leadership as core to the Fund effectiveness. WFF staff and Board members all spoke about the importance of WFF governance and senior management which embodies feminist principles and commitment.

Learning. External respondents pointed to the value of learning from the Fund experience. This included learning about how to grow an effective and independent national feminist fund. It also included the likely lessons from the work being undertaken by the Fund, for example how its work is contributing to addressing violence against women. This learning is happening. The Fund requires a system to capture and share such learning.

Empowerment. The Fund experience is that empowerment and development happen at a different pace for different groups. By working with this understanding, the Fund has been able to tailor its support to the pace and position of different partners and grantees.

Whole of situation understanding. In line with a with a feminist perspective, the Fund supports grantees and partners to take a whole of situation approach, addressing the intersection of issues that limit gender equality and development for women. This analysis goes beyond focus on themes and issues and could provide rich insights relevant to other programs and organisations supporting gender equality in Fiji.

Core Funding. A specific issue which emerged across many discussions with partners and grantees was the difficulty of attracting funding for core costs and the limits this places on independent organisational action. The Fund is well placed to explore this issue among its partners and provide informed advice for bilateral and other donors.

3.6 The AIR Partnership

WFF participation in the AIR Partnership benefited the Fund in several ways.⁴⁰ There has been clear value in the additional funding provided through the Partnership by DFAT and the extra resources facilitated by other partners. This has supported the value of the longer-term work of the Fund, particularly its contribution to movement building. It has also been core to the Fund resource diversification. As a result of connections facilitated by the AIR Partnership WFF has attracted and retained several other sources of support including from MamaCash and Equality Fund.

Beyond this, the Partnership has connected the Fund to a central DFAT branch, providing an excellent opportunity to have its lessons and experience shared more broadly across the Australian aid program.

The Partnership provides a space for examination of regional and international contexts and some consideration of how these might impact the context for the Fund either directly or as part of future developments. It adds to the capacity of the Fund to anticipate and plan for risks and changes in context.

As noted above, the experience of WFF, as a national Fund with close on ground understanding of women's experience, is valued by the regional and international funds. It provides examples of the lived experience of

40 A separate summary of findings relevant to the AIR Partnership review will be provided by the MTR team.

women and women's rights organisations and increases the credibility of their advocacy and influencing efforts.

The Partnership has facilitated capacity building between comparable staff in the Fund and other women's funds, for example discussions between finance and monitoring and evaluation staff. This has been particularly effective in enabling the smaller national fund to manage donor requirements and to work proactively to improve its systems. The Partnership appears to have the potential to provide more structured capacity development for WFF staff and also for volunteers including the Board. This would include sharing experience and approaches to leadership development, organisational growth and addressing the multiple challenges of an emerging women's fund.

To date this full potential of the Partnership for WFF does not seem to have been realised. According to the other AIR partners, WFF has not yet been able to take up what they see as the opportunities for both formal and informal capacity sharing and exchange. Clearly, the Fund participation has been limited by its changes in leadership and internal capacity challenges. Plus, as a small Fund, there are limits to the time and resourcing it is able to dedicate to an additional network external to Fiji. Nevertheless, there is potential in the AIR Partnership for WFF, particularly as it considers how to best resource its internal capacity development and its strategies for advocacy and influence. This includes the opportunity to share experience across the different levels of the organisation, e.g., dialogue between WFF Board members and those of other Funds, dialogue at technical level - expanding the conversations and exchange that has happened between MEL and Finance staff. There are also more formal training and capacity development processes offered to women's funds through Prospero. And at least one of the AIR Partners indicated that it was able to structure formal capacity development support as required by WFF. All of this dependent to some degree on the Fund identifying its capacity needs (what, how and what timeframe) and then aligning this with available resources. This would also highlight gaps which cannot be addressed through AIR or other Funds, where WFF might require additional support to build its core capacity.

While there is provision for a Program Coordinator, this position is currently vacant. Noting that the Partnership Coordinator contributes supports coordination across the Partnership Agreement and other areas. One observation of the AIR partnership is that additional coordination support would support the AIR partnership to improve its coordination activities. This could be explored in the next evaluation.

4 Discussion and Recommendations

4.1 WFF Strategic Plan

Utilise the new strategic plan to focus on organisational development, considering the operational and strategic issues identified in this review.

The Fund is clearly at a significant point in its development. With the near end of its current strategic plan, the Fund has established itself as a legal independent entity. It has maintained and further developed its core program of grant making and capacity building. The next steps in the Fund's development are emerging. Attention to these areas in the new strategic plan will provide good opportunity to consolidate the organisation and support its further development.

For the next strategic plan, it is important that the Fund is able to succinctly articulate its intent and distinct contribution to women's empowerment and gender transformation in Fiji. The current Plan has many objectives and several (overlapping but different) statements of intent. This has contributed to difficulty in communicating the value of the Fund. The new strategic plan is an opportunity to clearly articulate intent and the likely pathways towards those ends (including setting realistic timelines for sustained change).

Accompanying the new strategic plan should be a thorough analysis of opportunities and constraints within the Fiji context. This includes drawing from lessons learned, assessing stakeholders' power and influence and critically assessing the value and likely outcomes of the various possible directions for further Fund development. This will underpin a more relevant and informed theory of change and support the Fund to communicate its approach to change.

The Fund is maturing as an organisation and should consider how to consolidate its systems and ways of working. This review has drawn from the experience and feedback of the Fund stakeholders, both partners and internal stakeholders, to highlight particular areas for review and reform. The new Strategic Plan is an excellent opportunity to act on these areas and better position the Fund to continue its mission.

As discussed, there is opportunity, possibly requiring some additional resourcing, to improve the M&E for the Fund to more deliberately include learning; to better represent the views and experiences of grantees and partners; and to begin to adopt assessment approaches more in line with understanding progress towards long term impact. This might require some further negotiation with the donors presently supporting the Fund.

4.2 DFAT IDS

DFAT redevelop its Investment Design Summary to more accurately identify its rationale for funding and ongoing support to WFF, including the value of core funding for Women's Funds.

Alongside the Fund strategy development, DFAT have the opportunity to update their IDS and articulate more clearly why Australia should continue to fund this work and what expectations are reasonable for bilateral funding of a national women's fund.

This requires an informed theory of change from the donor perspective and an assessment approach which clearly specifies the areas of DFAT interest. It likely requires internal DFAT discussions to identify the different priorities within DFAT and how these can be resolved internally rather than being imposed on the Fund.

DFAT could consider, as part of the updated IDS, how it might more broadly use the experience and learning from WFF and the AIR partnership across the agency. This would include both working with women's organisations for change and using the experience of MEL of the Women's Funds in other situations of complex systems change.

4.3 DFAT funding

DFAT continue funding to WFF until at least 2029 in order to realise the full value of its investment in the Fund.

In the short term (till end 2024) the Australian support for the Fund is timely and relevant. It is supporting activities which underpin rural and remote area development in Fiji and provides direct support for economic and other opportunities for women.

Going forward there is strong rationale for DFAT to continue its support, including core support, across a further 4 to 5-year period. This would enable the Fund to consolidate its development as an organisation and provide time for DFAT and the Fund to understand its full value and potential as a mechanism to support gender equality in Fiji. As part of any future support questions of locality and scale need to be addressed. The number of applicants is increasing every year which impacts on effectiveness and efficiency of the Fund grant management. DFAT, together with other donors ought to engage in discussion with the Fund about its most effective size and how to manage demand beyond that scale. One management strategy for this is building pathways and referrals, which is being built through the AIR Partnership.

The Fund experience has clearly shown that impact is felt here and there but the implementation timeframe has not reached a point where sustained impacts are visible. Changes are evident at the local level, but challenges remain in terms of sustained empowerment of women and development of leadership pathways and sustained shifts in the opportunities for women's economic empowerment and skills development.

4.4 Partnerships and collaboration

WFF be incentivised and supported to further develop its Fiji based collaborations to increase its overall contribution to change.

WFF complements the work of several other DFAT investments such as Pacific Women Lead, Fiji Woman's Crises Centre, Fiji Women's Rights Movement and the We Rise coalition. The next strategic plan period provides the opportunity for the Fund to work more deliberately in this shared space identifying shared issues and opportunities for coordination. Ideally this would increase the value of DFAT support for gender equality and gender transformation in Fiji and possibly more broadly in the Pacific. Collaboration does need to be incentivised and resourced. DFAT is well positioned to encourage and support the coming together of Fund Board members, management and technical staff and, as appropriate, partners and grantees with other program and organisations supported by Australia.

The Fund has a good relationship with the Government of Fiji and could be encouraged to expand this partnership in ways which will amplify the voice and experience of partners and grantees and to Government. This would serve the purpose of the Fund and better position the Fund in line with DFAT's renewed partnership with the Fiji Government and more clearly demonstrate how the Fund aligns with Australian development policy.

Annex 1 Grantee Partners supported with Australian funding in 2023

Central Division

Grantee partner	Project Details
WEBC	<p>Project: Achieving Economic Empowerment through inclusive, sustainable gender focus approaches</p> <p>Description: Amidst, the humanitarian grant implementation, WEBC noticed that remote rural women lack access to information on entrepreneurship. To address this there is an urgent need for agencies, gov. ministries, the private sector, the disability sector, and regulatory agencies officers to come together and develop an information booklet. To address challenges by women in business, WEBC through this funding from the Fund (WFF), will implement Achieving Women Economic Empowerment through an inclusive, sustainable, gender focus Approaches Project. The project includes activities such as the Women's National Forum, Toastmaster's Program, stakeholder consultations, mentoring sessions, the Women Entrepreneurs Toolkit, and assessing the supply chain.</p> <p>Amount: \$120, 000</p> <p>Duration: 01/01/22- 30/08/23</p>
Rainbow Pride Foundation	<p>Project: Organisational Development & Strengthening</p> <p>Description: RPF is one of the few registered organisations that solely focuses on LGBTQIA+ issues in Fiji. However, it has faced problems with core funding, staff capacity, and organisational development. Not having proper governance structures, a strategic plan, and adequate staff affects RPF's ability to deliver impactful initiatives for the LGBTQIA+ community in Fiji. This grant encapsulates the following priorities: (1) HR needs (2) Strategic Plan (3) Annual plan & external audits (4) governance review.</p> <p>Amount: \$150, 000</p> <p>Duration: 01/09/23- 31/12/24</p>
Fiji Cancer Society	<p>Project: Community Palliative Care Program (CPCP)</p> <p>Description: To address the lack of support for female palliative cancer patients, FCS through this funding will procure palliative kits and supplies, review the training manual on non-clinical palliative care, set up of MEL system, and organisational strengthening.</p> <p>Amount: \$150, 000</p> <p>Duration: 01/09/23-31/08/24</p>
Fiji Women's Rights Movement	<p>Project: The Young Feminist Rise project</p> <p>Description: FWRM was established in 1986 as a multi-ethnic and multicultural NGO committed to removing all forms of discrimination against women through institutional reform and attitudinal change. FWRM believes that a cornerstone of young women's leadership is inter-generational learning. Through the grant, FWRM will implement Young Feminist Rise Project closely working with two cohorts of diverse young women between the ages of 18-35 from Fiji. By the end of the program, young women will be able to adopt a feminist and human rights lens and individually and collectively work towards dismantling hegemonic power relations and address existing patterns of inequalities and discrimination in their families, communities, networks, workplaces, and the wider local and national socio-political processes and systems.</p> <p>Amount: \$450, 000</p> <p>Duration: 01/07/2022- 31/08/2025</p>
Medical Services Pacific	<p>Project: Advancing Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights and Social Services in Fiji through MSP's National Programme</p> <p>Description: (MSP) plays an important role in the implementation and advocacy of Sexual Reproductive Health Rights in Fiji. Through this grant, MSP will deliver mobile outreach clinics including Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights, Sexual and Gender-Based Violence and post-rape care, psychosocial support, legal advice, and critical referral services in central, Western, and Northern divisions. MSP will also consult and coordinate with various stakeholders to ensure the program fits gaps and to raise awareness about services.</p>

Grantee partner	Project Details
	Amount: \$450, 000 Duration: 01/01/23- 31/12/24
Fiji Disabled People’s Federation	Project: Organisational Strengthening Project Description: Fiji Disabled Peoples Federation (FDPF) is an umbrella organization consisting of 4 affiliated organizations namely the Fiji Association of the Deaf (FAD), United Blind Persons of Fiji (UBP), Spinal Injuries Association (SIA), Psychiatric Survivors Association (PSA). Through this project, FDPF aims to build the capacities of women with disabilities as future leaders to help them address the problems and make decisions at various levels. The project will specifically focus on placing more women with disabilities in positions of power within their organizations and communities, so they are meaningfully represented and engaged in leadership bodies. The funding from Women’s Fund Fiji (WFF) will enable FDPF to implement the Organisational Strengthening project to achieve the following: (1) To build capacity and strengthen policies and processes of FDPF affiliates. (2) Enhance the knowledge and skills of FDPF members in areas of leadership and income generation. Amount: \$180, 000 Duration: 01/04/23- 31/03/26
House of Sarah (unsuccessful applicant in last grant call- 2022)	Project: Organisational Strengthening Project Description: HOS is registered under the Charitable Trust Act of Fiji will a major focus and mission to have a community where women and girls are free from fear of violence and relationships between women and men are built on respect, equality, and dignity. Since its establishment in 2009 has been instrumental in engaging the church to spread the gospel that violence is a sin. Apart from working with the Anglican Church, other denominations have been actively participating through the Christian Talanoa Network (CTN), an initiative by the House of Sarah. In 2016 the Fiji Council of Churches with support from the HoS and UN Women Fiji MCO, church leaders from other Christian denominations participated in the television message ‘Gender-based violence is a sin’ that was shown on national television and also in cinemas during the 16 Day of Activism to end violence against women. The proposed project will primarily be informed by the work that the HoS has been engaged in on preventing VAWG and intervention & services to survivors of VAWG. (a) empower and build the capacity of the House of Sarah to be a policy and issue-based research organization to influence policy development at the community and national levels. (b) It will strengthen its networking with other ecumenical organizations and thereby strengthen the advocacy and voice of faith-based organisations at all levels. (c) It will also enhance its monitoring and reporting capability of the government’s commitments to UN instruments and conventions on human rights, gender equality, and violence against women and girls. Amount: \$450, 000 Duration: 3-year proposed project
femLinkPacific	Project: Beyond the Rural Women Convenings: Transformative Feminist Media Association of Diverse Fijian Women Description: The program proposes to centre work in the provinces of Nadroga/Navosa, the informal urban and semi-urban settlements around Lami and the Northern Division and complement these with the current feminist rural women leaders’ network convenings that are conducted in eleven other districts in Fiji. Young women in these localities would be brought into these safe spaces and would also be offered their "Cool Club Collectives" through feminist media training with femLINK and would be introduced to other feminist allies such as the Fiji Women's Rights Movement (FWRM). Amount: \$450, 000 Duration: 01/02/23- 31/01/25

Western Division

Grantee Partner	Project Details
Rise Beyond the Reef	<p>Project: Economic Resilience & Leadership Development Program for Rural & Remote Women in Fiji</p> <p>Description: Rise Beyond the Reef was established to address rural remote Pacific communities' unique development needs. RBTR program supports rural remote women as they build agency, voice, choice, and resilience women through economic and leadership development. Building trust through economic development partnerships with rural remote women and their communities through the following activities: (1) Online market access- e-Commerce platform (2) e-Commerce strategy development (3) Capacity support for village and district coordinators (4) Leadership opportunities for village-based coordinators.</p> <p>Amount: \$450,000</p> <p>Duration: 01/07/22- 30/06/25</p>
Save the Children Fund	<p>Project: Ending Violence Against Children in Fiji</p> <p>Description: Save the Children Fiji is registered as a charitable trust organization in Fiji and was established in 1972 to create sustainable and lasting change in the lives of Children in Fiji. As a Child Rights Organisation, Save the Children Fiji works from the ground level to the policy level and with various stakeholders to ensure Children realize their rights. The Grant will support Save the Children Fiji to implement the project titled "Ending Violence Against Children in Fiji (EVAC)". The project will focus on building collective action, working with women, men, boys and girls, and the community to end violence against children in Fiji.</p> <p>Amount: \$150,000</p> <p>Duration: 01/02/23- 30/03/24</p>
Lifebread	<p>Project: Empowerment and Capacity Building for Marginalised Women Project</p> <p>Description: Lifebread Stay Connected Foundation (Fiji) is a registered, non-profit organization formed in Oct 2014. The Almanah Hope Centre is the Training "Arm" of the Foundation and administers Training Programs that include the Confident Woman training program (6 weeks), Basic Financial Management skills for personal and business finances, and Craft Work.</p> <p>Amount: \$150,000</p> <p>Duration: 01/02/23- 31/01/25</p>
TISI Sangam	<p>Project: Economic Empowerment of Rural Maathar Sangam Women</p> <p>Description: The Then India Maathar Sangam was formed in 1939 and is an affiliate of the parent body The Then India Sanmarga Ikya Sangam. The group is governed by the Women's wing of the parent body. The Maathar Sangam has been very active in the establishment of schools in rural areas around the country as well as managing the Temples and carrying out all preparatory works for the major religious festivals and functions. Through this grant, the Then India Maathar Sangam will implement Economic Empowerment of rural members of the Maathar Sangam. The Maathar Sangam will also partner with local organizations such as Bee Keeping organizations to develop knowledge, skills, and income-generating projects for their members.</p> <p>Amount: \$80,700</p> <p>Duration: 01/03/23- 30/07/24</p>
BIRTH Fiji	<p>Project: For Psychological Support and Advocacy for Women and Children</p> <p>Description: Due to COVID-19, social and mental problems have escalated to another level requiring more support from service providers in Fiji. As an emerging organisation, BIRTH Fiji needs more resources to provide holistic support to clients i.e. counseling, home visitation, and equipping people with tools to cope and heal from trauma. This grant support is for organisational support.</p> <p>Amount: \$20,970.60</p> <p>Duration: 10/04/22- 31/07/24</p>

Northern Division

Grantee Partner	Project Details
Transcend Oceania	<p>Project: Trauma-Informed and Resilient Communities (TIRC)</p> <p>Description: The Transcend Oceania (TO) is a non-governmental peacebuilding organization, committed to advancing sustainable peace and development through justice and non-violence in Fiji. The funding from Women’s Fund Fiji (WFF) will enable Transcend Oceania to implement the Trauma-Informed and Resilient Communities (TIRC) project in Northern, Western, and Central Divisions to achieve the following: (1) To raise awareness about Psychological and Emotional Trauma; its causes, impacts, and healthy ways of responding to those results in healing and high levels of resilience in selected communities and schools in Fiji. (2) To provide psychosocial support through a Community Approach to Trauma Healing in communities affected by Disasters. (3) To develop local capacities for peace through the Training of Community Trauma Facilitators in two Divisions in Fiji. TO will collaborate with government departments and civil society organisations to implement key activities of this project</p> <p>Amount: \$450, 000</p> <p>Duration: 01/02/23- 31/01/25</p>

Annex 2 Data Sources

Interviews and Focus Group Discussions

DFAT

- DFAT Suva Post
- DFAT Gender Equality Branch

MFAT

- Suva Post

WFF

- Acting Executive Director
- Program Officer
- Monitoring and evaluation officer
- Ex-Program Officer
- Governance Board members

Women's Funds/ AIR Partners

- Equality Fund
- Mama Cash
- Pacific Feminist Fund
- Urgent Action Fund
- Women's Fund Asia

Grantees and partners

- Fiji Women's Rights Movement
- Save the Children Fiji
- femLink Fiji
- House of Sarah
- Medical Services Fiji
- Fiji Disabled Person Association
- Rainbow Pride
- Transcend Oceania
- Lifebread Stay Connected Foundation
- Women Entrepreneurs Business Council
- Rise beyond the Reef
- TISI Sangam

Community representatives/ members

- Mantawa Women's Cooperative, Ba
- Lonelali Women's Representatives
- Nalotawa Women's Representatives Rara
- SaviSavi Community, Savusavu
- Vunidoqoloa Community, Savusavu

DFAT programs

- Pacific Women Lead

Government of Fiji

- Request to meet was made.

Talanoa survey distribution

- Staff WFF
- Governance Board, WFF
- Selected WFF Partners

Documents reviewed

- Women's Fund Fiji Final Trust Deed
- AIR Partnership 2023 Annual Report _FINAL
- DFAT Proposal Design Document Women's Fund (Fiji)
- AIR-Design, FINAL November 2021
- DFAT Design -Monitoring-Evaluation standards
- Due Diligence Report Women's Fund Fiji, FINAL
- FWF_Mid_Term_Report_FINAL, 2020
- Due Diligence Checklist, _FINAL
- WFF Grant Manual
- AIR Annual Partnership Report, _FINAL
- Meeting Notes (DFAT) with AIR Bangkok 16-19 February
- Meeting Notes Online February 2024
- Fiji Women's Fund Strategic Plan _FINAL _ 1 June
- WFF Annual Report 2023_FINAL
- WFF Annual Report 2022_FINAL
- WFF Six-Monthly Report _June-July 2022_Second Submission_
- WFF Six-Monthly Report,_December, 2022_ FINAL
- FWF MEAL Plan _ 2022–2024_FINAL
- Final AIR Partnership Report for 2022
- WFF Environmental and Social Safeguard Policy 2022–2024
- WFF Gender Equality and Social inclusion Strategy 2022–2024
- WFF Resource Mobilisation_ Finance Strategy 2022–2024_ENDORSED 30 June 2022.
- WFF Risk and Safeguard Screening Tool
- WFF Risk Management Policy 2022–2024
- WFF HR and Admin Policy and Procedures
- WFF Financial Management Policies and Procedures, 2021
- WFF Reserves Policy, 2022.

Annex 3 Evaluation Plan

Women's Fund Fiji Mid-Term Review - Evaluation Plan

July 2024

Introduction

The Women's Fund (Fiji) (WFF), formerly known as the Fiji Women's Fund (FWF) provides funding and capacity development support to women's groups, organisations and networks in Fiji to expand and enhance their work on women's empowerment and gender equality. It operates through direct grants and partnerships to achieve its goals.

The vision of the WFF is to have a feminist future for diverse women, girls, and gender non-confirming people in Fiji.⁴¹ In 2024, DFAT initiated a Medium-Term Review (MTR) of Women's Fund Fiji (WFF). This document outlines the evaluation plan for the Mid Term Review (MTR) which also includes input for the AIR Partnership evaluation.

Background

In 2017, Australia committed to funding for the establishment of the FWF, to provide financial and capacity building support to smaller women's groups, feminist movement and local network. FWF was designed to improve the lives of women in Fiji, particularly marginalised women and those living in rural and remote locations. It transitioned into a fully local, independent entity in 2021, and successfully registered under Fiji's Charitable Trust Act.

Australia's current contribution to WFF is both Fiji bilateral A\$3 million over three years (January 2022 – 2024) and contribution of A\$1.8 million by the Gender Equality Branch through the Amplify-Invest-Reach (AIR) Partnership⁴² (January 2022 – 2025), which represents around 56 per cent of the Fund's budget. In addition to DFAT funding, WFF has received NZ\$1.5 million from the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (NZ MFAT) for the progress of its Strategic Outcomes, from April 2023 – June 2026. The Fund also receives funding support from private sector and philanthropic organisations, which amounted to FJ\$1.43 million in 2023.⁴³

The purpose of WFF⁴⁴ is to enhance progress towards gender equality and the empowerment of women in Fiji. Its objective is to reach women in rural and remote areas, and those who are marginalised, including women with disabilities and those facing discrimination based on their sexual orientation or gender identity.

To achieve this, the Fund supports networks and organisations across six thematic areas:

Women's Economic Empowerment
Ending Violence Against Women
Women's Leadership and Decision Making
Strengthening Women's Groups and Coalitions for Change
Climate Justice & Humanitarian Action; and
Influencing Aid and Philanthropy.⁴⁵

41 210528 Women's Fund Fiji Final Trust Deed p1

42 The A-I-R Partnership is a DFAT initiative to increase engagement with and support to four feminist women's funds – Women's Fund Asia (WFA), Women's Fund Fiji (WFF), Pacific Feminist Fund, and Urgent Action Fund for Women's Human Rights – Asia and Pacific (UAF A&P). It is a four-year investment, initially valued at A\$10 million, that intends to contribute to the achievement of gender equality and the creation of an environment in which the human rights of women, girls, and LGBTQI+ people are fulfilled.

43 Special Tasking Note 24_Women's Fund Fiji_Mid Term Review_2024 p2.

44 As in [1] above.

45 The last two thematic areas (Climate Justice & Humanitarian Action and Influencing Aid and Philanthropy) were introduced in 2022 as part of 2022–24 Strategic Plan.⁴⁶ The Fund Strategic Objectives include:

WFF approach has been to pair grant-making with capacity development support and to provide mandatory capacity development in the areas of gender equality and social inclusion (GESI); financial management; monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL); and child protection. Grants are categorised into 3 types:

Sustainability Grant

Movement Building Grant

Resilience Grant.

The 2022–24 Strategic Plan identifies 5 intended outcomes (which align with three Strategic Objectives⁴⁶): Feminist and women’s rights organisations are empowered through enhanced capacity to contribute to gender justice.

Feminist and women’s movements are diverse, vibrant and have critical spaces to enhance their spheres of influence.

The Fund has secured long term and core support from donors, private sector and philanthropic organisations to advance women’s human rights.

The Fund has contributed to influencing support to the larger, global feminist funding ecosystem.

The Fiji Women's Fund is established, empathetic and adaptive in its resources, operations and programs.

Extensive program governance arrangements include regular meetings with and non-financial assistance to grantees and regular updates are in place to ensure the effective governance of the grants.

WFF Evaluation objectives and scope

DFAT requires the MTR to:

Assess WFF’s progress towards the End-of-Program Outcomes (EOPOs), including identifying areas that require improvement

Assess the effectiveness and efficiency of the Fund in delivering services in accordance with the DFAT funding agreement; and

Compile lessons learned and recommendations for the potential next phase of DFAT investment and the Strategic Vision and Plan for the next three years (2025–2027).

The scope of the MTR includes the whole of program implementation under the new WFF design from January 2022 – December 2024. It is noted that a review of the Fiji Women’s Fund was conducted in 2020, under the previous design. The MTR will build on that review and consider how the present work has accommodated recommendations and lessons learnt.

Simultaneous with the MTR, DFAT is also undertaking an evaluation of the AIR Partnership. While the primary focus on the MTR will be on WFF, where relevant, it will also collect information about the Fund experience of the AIR Partnership and the value of that Partnership for the work and approach of WFF. With the permission of interviewees, relevant information will be shared with the AIR Partnership evaluation in order to reduce duplication of inquiry and minimise the burden on implementing partners.⁴⁷ Likewise, the AIR evaluation is expected to share relevant information about the WFF as this is collected in the course of its inquiry.

46 The Fund Strategic Objectives include:

- To fund and build the capacity of diverse groups of feminist and women's rights organisations and movements in Fiji to deliver gender justice outcomes and enhance their spheres of influence.
- To contribute to influencing support to the larger, global feminist funding ecosystem and secure financial and non-financial resources from diverse funding sources to support feminist and women's rights organisations and movements working to enhance women's human rights in Fiji.
- To build the governance and operational capacity of the Fiji Women's Fund to establish it as an empathetic and adaptive fund.

47 This will be guided by reference to the AIR Partnership evaluation proposed evaluation questions as noted in Table One, Data Collection Plan.

MTR Methodology

Approach

The MTR notes the transition from FWF to WFF in 2020 where a Mid Term Evaluation was conducted. This earlier review provides a baseline indication of the program which will be the starting point for this subsequent MTR. In particular the MTR will assess progress against previously identified challenges and lessons. Building on this existing evidence, the MTR will triangulate existing and emerging findings through additional evidence collection. This will include consultation with a wide selection of CSO partners, Government of Fiji personnel and other organisations working with the Fund and/or its grantees. It will also include independent review of the wider context and the relevant changes and influences within that context. Data collection will also include examination of the program theory of change, assumptions and the alignment between these and the reported results.

This approach, triangulating information from several sources and interrogating the reasons behind any identified changes, represents a critical evaluation approach. Such an approach to evaluation aims to provide insight into ‘what has been achieved?’ and ‘why?’ to this point. It also focuses the inquiry on how future activities can be improved through any future support by Australia and other donors.

Principles

The MTR will be undertaken with due reference to the principles of good quality and ethical evaluation practice.⁴⁸ In particular for this review these include:

Respectful engagement – ensuring that the MTR team members uphold local protocols and ensuring that all review respondents are informed fully about the purpose of the MTR and their right to choose to participate or not in the MTR proceedings. This includes explaining how the information will be used. It also includes ensuring the confidentiality of all inputs and that reported information is de-identified and presented in a form so that information sources are not able to be recognised.

Support for diverse views and participation – giving attention in particular to supporting the voice and inclusion of women and people with disability. This includes actively inquiring about and reflecting their experiences, and actively including them in reviewing and analysing MTR conclusions and findings.

Attention to rigour and validity – ensuring that all evidence and information is triangulated insofar as this is possible, and/or presented with due caveats if required. For example, at the community level, non-grantees will be interviewed to triangulate data gathered from community level interviews. Also ensuring that there is a sound and reasonable connection between evidence and findings, and that these connections are clearly explained in MTR reports.

Maintaining review independence – while seeking a broad range of stakeholder and other evidence and welcoming contestation and debate around MTR findings and conclusions, the review will remain an independent assessment. In line with DFAT Monitoring and Evaluation (MEL) Guidelines there will be a focus on safeguarding.⁴⁹ For example, where relevant the MTR team members will request other team members to kindly step out of the room during an interview. The MTR team will be responsible for the content of the final report.

Ensuring a safe and confidential space – the review is deliberately seeking broad range of views and expects that there will be difference in experience and response to several questions. All information will be treated confidentially, and reporting will ensure that sources are deidentified unless respondents give express permission that their views and responses can be publicly identified. Raw data and initial analysis will not be made available to anyone outside the evaluation team.

48 [AES Guidelines web v2.pdf](#)

49 DFAT, Design and Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Standards, September 2023, p7.

Data collection

As noted, the MTR will utilise a range of data sources in order to triangulate findings. Data sources will include:

Document analysis: Document analysis will provide a framing for initial inquiry and help to define the scope, include narratives collection and analysis, and focus of further data collection. It is expected that document review will be very relevant to initial findings around program effectiveness relevance and efficiency.

Document analysis will include review of implementing partner reports, reports from complimentary DFAT programs and implementing partner research reports. It will also include review of independent research reports as these are relevant, and other documents from DFAT and Government of Fiji that help define the issues and parameters relevant to the context for this program (see Annex One for list of initial documents).

Document review will be undertaken prior to the in-country mission but will be continued throughout the life of the review as further information becomes available.

Key Informant interviews

Key informants were identified following initial document analysis and in line with the intention to gather multiple sources of data and experience. Interviews will be semi structured, drawing from the issues identified in the document analysis and further exploration of the review focus and priorities.

Stakeholder interviews will be progressive, building a cumulative evidence base about WFF and its value. This will start with program governance and overall scope, to more detailed program operations through interviews with implementing partners and then triangulating and further exploring program effectiveness in interviews and discussions with CSO, personnel from relevant Government offices and departments from the Government of Fiji.

Stakeholder interviews will be conducted in the four Districts of Fiji – Northern, Southern, Western and Central Fiji. Comparisons will be made between central and subnational perspectives on program implementation and issues relevant to advancement in both locations. Where possible non-Grantees will be consulted to provide their perspective on the value of Fund supported activities and their contribution to improvements in women's lives in Fiji.

A *Talanoa Survey* will be administered for volunteers from WFF and its grantees. Participants are expected to only spend 10-15 minutes on the survey. The survey results will complement information gathered through other sources and provides an alternative method for people to confidentially express their views.

During the in-country data collection mission, end of day summaries and analysis of the interviews will be undertaken to capture the key findings throughout.

Wider informant interviews and discussions: program stakeholder interviews will be complemented by semi structured interviews with Government of Fiji representatives, representatives from DFAT programs operating in complementary areas to WFF and other informants. Information and experience will also be sought from relevant women's rights organisation, government, private sector and inclusion experts within Fiji at both national and subnational locations where this is feasible within the time available. (See Annex Two for list of proposed stakeholders to be interviewed/consulted)

Data will be collected through in country meetings and virtual discussions. (see Annex Three for draft of proposed in country meeting schedule). Interviews will be recorded where appropriate and with the permission of interviewees. Systematic notes will be taken during the interviews to allow team members to cross reference findings at daily during the data collection process. The evaluation team will share their end of day summaries with team members for consolidating and analysis.

At the commencement of every interview/discussion the purpose of the review will be explained and verbal consent sought from the people concerned to use their responses in a confidential manner to inform the review (see attached explanation and consent agreement at Annex Four).

A data collection plan corresponding to the Key evaluation questions, with identification of data sources and expected focus of enquiry is outlined in Table 3.

Table 3 Data Collection Plan

The review will focus on four criteria: effectiveness; efficiency; relevance; and sustainability.

The review will explore the following questions, in line with DFAT's own Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Standards and the OECD Development Assistance Committee (OECD DAC) evaluation criteria:

Evaluation Questions

Relevance, policy linkages and adaptability

- How well is the Fund adapting to the changing context?
- How well does the investment align with Government of Fiji and Government of Australia's development priorities? Australia's policy priorities include gender equality; disability inclusion; child protection; and climate change and disasters

Areas of inquiry

- Value of work from the perspective of Australia's policy on gender equality?
- Value of the work from the perspective Australia's policy on localisation?
- How is the investment aligned to Government of Fiji policy on women economic empowerment and gender equality?
- Identification of government of Fiji support to WFF and its capacity building within the fund itself
- Identification of significant changes in context, in particular those relevant to Australian interests, and how well the Fund has adapted to these changes.
- Identification of shared issues between Australia and Fiji, opportunities for collaboration around these issues at both government and civil society level, and contribution of the Fund to such collaboration.
- How has the Fund responded to previous recommendations and lessons learned as identified in the 2020 review?
- How well has the program identified and managed risks?

Evidence sources/tools

- DFAT interviews.
- Input from complimentary DFAT programs.
- Expert input from Fiji fund specialists
- Relevant research in Fiji and globally on women's funds.
- Australian government policy and emerging Australians interests as communicated by Australia's Foreign Minister and others.
- Government of Fiji gender equality policy and communications strategy.
- Program governance and communications.
- Interviews with Government of Fiji and private sectors stakeholders.

Evaluation Questions

Effectiveness and sustainability

- How well is the Fund progressing towards its five intended outcomes?
- How has the Fund revised its Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) framework to support ongoing data and information collection and overall decision making?
- Has the Fund built the potential or capacity for ongoing results?

Areas of inquiry

- What is the actual program theory of change? What analysis have implementing partners utilised in order to develop their work programming? How have key assumptions and activities been contested throughout the life of the program?
- Intended scope and shape of outcomes? Do all stakeholders share this perspective? What evidence has been collected against outcomes versus activities and outputs?
- Differences and experience for men and women? Differences in experience for people living with disability? Differences and experiences for younger people?
- Definition and scope of capacity? Capacity to do what? Capacity from what perspective?
- Capacity versus relevance and scope?
- Capacity gain for women and men? Capacity gain for people with disability? Capacity gain for young people?

Evidence sources/tools

- Document review and analysis.
- Program review and analysis with program implementing partners.
- Interviews with implementing partners, and with CSO and Fiji government departments with whom they
- Interviews with DFAT program management.
- Input from complimentary DFAT programs
- WFF MEAL Plan
- *Talanoa* Survey
- Document review, including reporting against Risk Management Plan

Evaluation Questions

Efficiency, modality, and innovation

- Has the Fund built the potential or capacity for ongoing results?
- How efficiently is the Fund operating?
- How well are Fund resources being used to target grantees and beneficiaries most in need? How well is the Fund being managed and governed?
- How well is the Fund enabling results for grantees and delivering results for the Fund in an economic and timely way?
- How well does the Fund coordinate internally and with other partners for program delivery?

Areas of inquiry

- How well has the program identified and addressed core assumptions?

- Timeliness and effectiveness of reporting to DFAT and grantees to WFF?
- EOPO progress in relation to timeframes and budget?
- Clarification of definitions of success in regard to Strategic Plan and MEAL plan implementation
- Clarification of DFAT expectations around complimentary programming.
- Clarification of governance arrangements for WFF and how these have supported complimentary programming.
- Different outcomes in different locations??
- Clarification of value for money model to be applied.
- Clarification of available evidence for value for money assessment.
- What changes would be required for future programming based on these assessments?

Evidence sources/tools

- Review of 6 monthly reports and annual reports.
- Programme governance reports.
- Interviews with relevant Government and CSOs.
- Analysis of data collected.
- Relevant documentation on women’s fund documents available globally.
- DFAT value for money policy and approach documentation.

Evaluation Questions

Lessons learned

- Is the design and modality of the investment fit for DFAT’s purposes or objectives around strengthening voice and advocacy in Fiji?
- What lessons are emerging from the pilot program?

Evaluation Questions

Sustainability

- Has the Fund built the potential or capacity for ongoing results?
- What evidence is there that the Fund is building capacity within the Fund itself, with grantees and more broadly within the feminist and women’s rights movement in Fiji?

Areas of inquiry

- Clarification around DFAT immediate and longer-term objectives for strengthening gender equality in development and elimination of Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) in line with Australia’s policies and Fiji’s alignment with Global and National gender equality priorities.
- Clarification of DFAT scope and alignment between development programming and other interests.
- Identification of additional lessons beyond those already noted in program reporting.
- Definition of sustainability within this area of work?
- How well is the fund adapting to partners financial and capacity needs?
- Identify wins, challenges and opportunities for the WFF in relation to women’s rights organisations in Fiji and their advocacy and voice.

Evidence sources/tools

- Interviews with DFAT stakeholders
- Expert input from Women’s Fund specialist and Gender Development Specialists
- Interviews with government of Fijian representatives.
- Interviews with Women’s rights organisations in Fiji and CSO representatives (CSOs including faith based and other marginalised groups).
- Relevant research documentation.
- Program documentation review.

Evaluation Questions

AIR Partnership

- The review will also include a component to collect data to inform the AIR Partnership Independent Evaluation.
- This will include relevant information from the MTR key evaluation questions as above as well as attention to the following questions where appropriate (note the A-I-R Partnership evaluation questions are found below).
- How well is the A-I-R Partnership as a whole tracking towards achievement of the objectives of DFAT and of each of the Women’s Funds as set out in the related agreements?
- How well is each A-I-R partner tracking towards expected outcomes? Are these achievements greater than the sum of its parts? What are the barriers to and enablers that support progress?
- How well is the partnership being embedded at an institutional level in DFAT and within Women’s Funds?
- What lessons have partners learnt about how collaboration through this partnership can improve outcomes for gender equality, both as individual organisations and as a partnership?
- What have partners learnt about power dynamics in this partnership?
- How well are individual partners and the partnership managing risk, including safeguarding risk and political risk? What are the risks (including safeguarding and political risks) of not engaging with Women’s Funds?
- What are the potential challenges and opportunities relevant to the implementation of the Partnership going forward?
- What potential options could be considered for a future phase of the partnership? Could the partnership be expanded beyond its current membership?

Areas of inquiry

- What works between WFF and its AIR partners? What didn’t work well?
- What are the key challenges to implementing the AIR partnership concept? What enabled the partnership to work from the perspective of WFF? How can it be improved?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of the AIR Partnership from the perspective of WFF and how can these be addressed in future programmes?
- How are risks managed, as they are relevant to WFF?
- What communication strategies work for the AIR Partnership and WFF in particular?
- What lessons can be learnt from the current partnership to improve future partnerships with the WFF?

Evidence sources/tools

- AIR Partnership documents and notes.
- Interviews with stakeholders, as above.

Data analysis

Data analysis will be ongoing throughout the MTR. As information and evidence is identified, the review team will analyse this in relation to previous information and update findings and conclusions accordingly. In line with ethical practice, the review team will check their interpretation and understanding of information provided at the conclusion of each interview/discussion. This provides informants, particularly women and people living with disability the opportunity to correct any miscommunication or interpretation of their experience.

The evaluation team will meet daily to identify major themes and issues, grouping these against the evaluation questions and assessing the substance and significance of the evidence for the findings against each question. In line with a critical approach the aim is not to simply aggregate responses but to understand why particular responses were received and why these might vary from one informant to the next. This process will be undertaken progressively and in detail at the conclusion of the in-country mission, to test relevant findings and develop conclusions. In line with the purpose of this program the experience and views of grantees and community members, especially women and people living with a disability, will be prioritised in drawing any evaluative conclusions about the progress, value and impact of WFF. For other areas of the MTR, evaluative conclusions will be based on analysis of the power, context and interests of the informants or the document authors.

The evaluation team will provide a draft report to DFAT for feedback. While the review team are ultimately responsible for any conclusions and recommendations, the presentation and drafting processes provide the opportunity for a wider audience to examine and contest the analysis undertaken by the MTR team and potentially added additional insight and further analysis that will improve the overall value of the review findings.

MTR limitations and risks

WFF is a localised organisation supported by DFAT and other funding sources to reach and improve the status of women in Fiji. Given the dynamic implementing context and the particular challenges throughout the COVID pandemic, the value of some results will be only partially understood at this time. The MTR will therefore face some limitations in making a definite assessment of the progress towards end of program outcomes. This will be noted in the review report and any assessments will be presented with due caveats.

The MTR will be undertaken over a short period (including in country mission of approximately 2 weeks). While this (together with some virtual interviews and discussions) will provide time for a good range of inquiry with various stakeholders, there is limited opportunity to “tok stori/talanoa”⁵⁰ with non-grantees at the community level as a means of triangulating findings. This means that there will be a constrained perspective on both program achievements and its ongoing relevance and value across subnational areas. This limitation will need to be considered alongside any conclusions and recommendations particularly as they pertain to future program development.

The MTR team includes high level skills and knowledge in evaluation and specific areas of development approaches. However, the team does not include expertise in all areas of the program nor experience from all geographic areas of Fiji relevant to the program. The team will work to utilise additional expertise and insight as far as possible, however any findings and conclusions will need to be understood with this limitation in mind.

MTR roles and responsibilities

Evaluation team

The evaluation team comprises two people:

An evaluation team leader with wide Pacific experience, who is particularly responsible for the technical review and analysis of program achievements and for identification of potential future program focus areas.

50 The Pacific way of storytelling

A monitoring and evaluation expert, who is particularly responsible for data collation, analysis and presentation.

The team members will collaborate with DFAT and WFF personnel to ensure we maximise our timeframes against the relevant objectives. The team will cooperate to identify conclusions and recommendations drawing on the individual team expertise and strengths.

The MTR team will request assistance of an interpreter if necessary, in order to facilitate clear understanding across *ITaukei* and English in all discussions and interviews.

Evaluation governance

As outlined in the MTR TOR, the review has been commissioned by DFAT in Fiji. DFAT Fiji is responsible for the overall management of the review and will be the primary recipient of the review reports. DFAT’s Development Evaluation Section will be involved in quality assuring the Evaluation Plan and Report. The TOR for the MTR state that the review report shall be confidential to DFAT, however a full verbal report will be made to both DFAT and WFF as part of the finalisation of the review.

DFAT are responsible for publication and wider dissemination of the final MTR report.

MTR Timelines

The review commenced on 1 July 2024 and is expected to be completed by 30 September 2024. The proposed timeline for key review activities is outlined in Table Two.

Table 3 **Timing for key MTR Activities**

Activity	Due date	Responsibility
Submission of the review plan	July 11 2024	MTR Team Leader
Deadline for receipt of feedback on review plan	July 17, 2024	DFAT
Document review	early-mid July, 2024	MTR Team
Review in-country in Fiji	July 20-August 2, 2024	MTR Team
Aide memoir presentation	7 August 2024	MTR Team
Submission of draft review report for review and comment	16 August 2024	MTR Team Leader
Deadline for receipt of feedback on review report	19–23 August 2024	DFAT
Submission of final review report	Early September 2024	MTR Team Leader supported by SURGE
presentation on final report to DFAT	-	MTR Team leader
Publication of report & management response on DFAT website	-	DFAT

Annex One: Documents for review

- AIR Partnership 2023 Annual Report _FINAL
- Attachments_ A-WF-AIR-Design_FINAL November 2021
- DFAT Design -Monitoring-Evaluation
- Due Diligence Report Women’s Fund Fiji_FINAL
- FWF_ Mid_ Term_Report_FINAL 2020
- Due Diligence Checklist _FINAL
- WFF Grant Manual
- AIR Annual Partnership Report _FINAL

Final Meeting Notes (DFAT) with AIR Bangkok 16-19 February
 FINAL Meeting Notes Online February 2024
 210528 Women’s Fund Fiji Filtrms of refe
 NAL Trust Deed
 Fiji Women’s Fund Strategic Plan _FINAL_ _ 1 June
 WFF Annual Report 2023_FINAL
 WFF Annual Report 2022_FINAL
 WFF Six-Monthly Report _June-July 2022_ Second Submission_CLEAN.
 WFF Six-Monthly Report_December, 2022_DFT_FINAL
 FWF MEAL Plan _ 2022–2024_FINAL
 Final AIR Partnership Report for 2022
 WFF Environmental and Social Safeguard Policy 2022–2024
 WFF Gender Equality and Social inclusion Strategy 2022–2024
 WFF Resource Mobilisation_ Finance Strategy 2022–2024_ENDORSED 30 June 2022.PDF
 WFF Risk and Safeguard Screening Tool
 WFF Risk Management Policy 2022–2024

Additional relevant resources

Annex Two: Proposed list of stakeholders to be consulted

Agency Type	Organisations
Government and Duty Bearers	– Ministry of Women
Global Women’s Funds	– Women’s Fund Asia – Urgent Action Fund Asia – Pacific Feminist Fund – Mama Cash
DFAT	– Suva Post – DFAT Gender Equality Branch
Civil Society Organisations)	– Rural/Remote Community based organisations – Faith based organisations / settings – Fiji Disabled People’s Federation – Rainbow Pride Foundation
Service Providers	– Fiji Chamber of Commerce
Other Donors/Funders	– Pacific Partnership to End Violence Against Women and Girls – Equality Fund – Emma Christopher, Former MFAT staff
Organisation for People with Disabilities (OPD) and Women's organisations	– Save the Children Fiji – Fiji Women’s Rights Movement (FWRM) – UN Women – Pacific Women Lead
Fund experts	– Michelle Reddy PFF – Virisila Buadromo UAF A&P
WWF staff and Board	– MEL Coordinator – WFF Interim Executive Director – Program Officer WFF – WFF Board – WFF grant-making committee
WWF beneficiaries and partners in Fiji	– femLink HR Manager – Rise Beyond the Reef its and community members

Agency Type	Organisations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Medical Services Pacific – House of Sarah – Transcend Oceania and beneficiaries – femLinkPacific – WEBC – Fiji Cancer Society – TISI Sangam – Lifebread – BIRTH Fiji and its beneficiaries

Annex Three: In-country Schedule (draft version) and Meeting Contacts

Meetings schedule as at 20/07/2024

Date	Time	Interviewees
July 22	8.15am-8.45am	Suva meetings (Ruth and Linda) Suva Post (confirmed)
	10.15am-10.45am	Fiji Chamber of Commerce – awaiting confirmation
	11.15am-11.45am	Pacific Women Lead – confirmed (meeting at SPC HRSD campus in Nabua)
	12.15pm-12.45pm	FWRM (confirmed)
July 22	6.00pm-6.30pm	Online interview (Linda Kelly) Save the Children Fund – (confirmed)
July 23	9.15am-9.45am	Suva meetings (Ruth) UN Women – awaiting confirmation
	10.15am-10.45am	Fiji Disabled People’s Federation (confirmed)
	11.15am-12.15pm	Transcend Oceania (30 mins interview + 30 mins M&E) – confirmed
July 23	8.15am-8.45am	Online interviews (Linda) Women’s Fund Asia – awaiting confirmation
	9.00am-9.30am	Mama Cash – awaiting confirmation
	10.30am-11.00am	Emma Christopher (Former MFAT Program Coordinator) – awaiting confirmation
	2pm–2.30pm	Urgent Action Fund, Asia & Pacific (confirmed)
July 24	8.15am-8.45am	Online interviews (Linda) WFF Board (confirmed)
	9.00am-9.30am	WFF Grant making committee (confirmed)
	9.45am-10.15am	DFAT Gender Equality Branch (awaiting confirmation)
	10.30am-11.00am	Equality Fund – awaiting confirmation
	12.45pm-1.15pm	House of Sarah (confirmed)
	2.30pm-3.00pm	Ministry of Women (face-to-face interview with Linda) – awaiting confirmation
	4.15pm-4.45pm	femLinkPacific (confirmed)
July 24	8.45am-9.15am	Central Division Interviews with Ruth (30min interview + 30min M&E) Type AB – WEBC – confirmed
	9.45am-10.45am	Type AB – Fiji Cancer Society – confirmed
	11.15am-12.15pm	Type C – Rainbow Pride Foundation – awaiting confirmation
Flight to Nadi		
July 25	10.15am-10.45am	Interview (Linda) Fund Program Officer (confirmed)
	11.00am-11.30am	Fund MEL Coordinator (confirmed)
	11.45am-12.15pm	Fund Interim ED – Victoria Yee (confirmed)
July 25	8.15am-9.15am	Western Division (30min interview + 30min M&E) Type AB – Rise Beyond the Reef – awaiting confirmation
	9.15am	Rise Beyond the Reef – interview with community members – awaiting confirmation

Date	Time	Interviewees
July 26	8.15am-9.15am 10.30am-11.00am 11.00am-11.30am 1.00pm-1.30pm 1.30pm-4.00pm	Western Division (30min interview + 30min M&E) Type AB – TISI – confirmed Type AB – Lifebread – confirmed Lifebread beneficiaries – confirmed Type C – BIRTH Fiji – confirmed BIRTH Fiji – Interview with community members – confirmed Flight to Suva
July 28	-	Flight to Savusavu 1-night stay at Daku Resort
July 29	12.00pm	Northern Division Type AB – Transcend Oceania community members (Savusavu) – awaiting confirmation
July 30	11.30am-12.00pm	Flight back to Savusavu Online interview (Linda) Medical Services Pacific (confirmed)
Aug 1	9am-9.30am	Online interview Pacific Feminist Fund (confirmed)

Annex 4 Information and Consent forms

Participant Information Sheet

July 2024

Dear Research Participant

You are invited to participate in the evaluation process being undertaken as part of the Women’s Fund Fiji Mid Term Review (MTR) in Fiji. The research is being conducted in order to better understand the views and perspectives of WFF and its partners that have direct experience and indirect experiences with WFF in the tenure of the fund program since its inception. This will assist in drawing conclusions and lessons that will contribute to further program design. The overall objective of the fund is to improve the situation of women groups and other socially marginalised groups including grantees throughout the regions of Fiji.

What does participation in the research entail?

The study involves one-on-one interviews and stakeholder consultations in the four (4) regions of Fiji, as well as government and civil society representatives, and will be conducted by an evaluation team of regional M&E experts, under the guidance of Australian-based SURGE, which can be found on their website; <https://surge4genderequality.com.au>.

You are invited to participate in either an individual interview, which will take about one hour and will be facilitated by a member of the evaluation team, or a short talanoa survey, which will take about ten to fifteen minutes. The talanoa survey will involve WFF staff and management and their partners or grantees. This is an internal exercise to help the evaluation better understand the situation better and answer to the question, how far has WFF come and why? You can share your views and experiences about the grant.

Please note that the interview is not a test, and you do not need to worry about giving the wrong answer. We are seeking your honest opinions and please talk freely with others in the group.

The interviews will focus on questions relating to your experiences and perspectives on the fund.

Depending on your consent, the discussion/interview may be recorded.

Confidentiality

Your answers and opinions will be treated in a strictly confidential manner and please know that whatever information you provide will never be used against you in any way. If what you share with us is used as a 'quote' in the report, we will use a pseudonym (another name) so no one will know it was attributable to you (unless you explicitly consent for your name to be used).

Use of information and Storage

The information collected from the interviews and small group discussions will be used to write the draft relocation guidelines. Any information that you provide to us will be de-identified and stored in a secure password-protected computer.

Voluntary Participation and Withdrawal

While we would greatly appreciate your kind participation in this study, it is entirely voluntary, and you may withdraw or decline to take part at any time. If you are uncomfortable with a question, you do not have to answer. You do not need to provide an explanation for your withdrawal, and this will not result in any negative consequences for you.

Thank you very much in advance for your participation in this evaluation exercise. If you require further information or have any concerns or questions about the study, please contact us using the following details:

Ms. Ruth Maetala Review Team Leader (SURGE)

Email: rmaetala@gmail.com

Ms Linda Kelly, Research Coordinator (PRAXIS)

Email: linda.kelly@praxisconsultants.com.au

Tagio tumas.

Consent Form

I understand the information about the research being conducted for the 'Women's Fund Fiji Mid Term Review (MTR), which was explained by the researcher. My questions and concerns about the project have been addressed to a satisfactory level and I understand that withdrawal from the Study is possible at any time.

Researcher to tick relevant box:

Noting the above, I agree to participate in the project YES NO

Consent for participation is given through:

Oral Consent

Written Consent

Participant Name and signature:

Date:.....

Researcher's signature :

Date:

Annex 5 MTR Consultation Questions

Category	Respondents	Questions
DFAT	– Suva Post – (Linda and Ruth)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Why did DFAT choose to support this Fund? What value does it have for Australia? – How well does the investment align with Government of Fiji and Government of Australia’s priorities? – How does it advance Australia’s ambition for locally led development in the Pacific? – How has it developed over time? What changes have you seen that are positive? Ongoing challenges? – What evidence is there that the Fund is building capacity within the Fund itself, with grantees and more broadly within the feminist and women’s rights movement in Fiji? Can you share a little bit about the governance arrangements for WFF (there seems to be several layers and many roles) and how these have supported the Fund to develop and progress towards its Vision? – What difference have you observed since the inception of the AIR partnership? How has this strengthened the work of the Fund? – What lessons are emerging from the program? – What would you like to recommend as an option for improving the next phase of the Fund? – where do you see the fund in 10 years?
DFAT	– DFAT Gender Equality Branch – Linda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Why this partnership? What was the expected benefit for the Funds and for DFAT? For the women’s movement more generally? – How will you know? – What lessons are emerging from the WFF that have had relevance for the whole partnership? – What works between WFF and its AIR partners? What didn’t work well? – How have the relative sizes, experiences and focus/scope been negotiated between the partners? – What are the key challenges to implementing the AIR partnership concept , esp. at a country level? – What enabled the partnership to work from the perspective of WFF? How can it be improved?
Fiji Government	– Ministry of Women – Linda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – How well does WFF align with Government of Fiji priorities? – What are the strengths of the Fund? How has it helped progress women’s equality in Fiji? – what opportunities exists for collaboration around women’s issues, both in government and civil society spaces? – What is/should be the contribution of the Fund to such collaboration – What lessons are emerging from the program? – What would you like to recommend as an option for improving the next phase of the Fund
Other informants/NGOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Fiji Chamber of Commerce – both – Pacific Women Lead – both – FWRM –both – Save the Children Fund – Linda 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Please tell us about your connection/ interaction with WFF? – What are the strengths of the Fund? How has it helped progress women’s equality in Fiji? – Can you give some examples of what the Fund did – to strengthen gender equality in development and elimination of Violence Against women and Girls (VAWG)

Category	Respondents	Questions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – UN Women – Ruth – Fiji Disabled People’s Federation – Ruth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – examples of wins, challenges and opportunities for the WFF in relation to women’s rights organisations in Fiji, advocacy and increased voice – What do you know about how the fund works, e.g. Its priority areas? How well did the fund distribute resources to its partners? What other support does WFF give to its partners/grantees? – what opportunities exists for collaboration around women’s issues, both in government and civil society spaces? – What is/should be the contribution of the Fund to such collaboration – What lessons are emerging from the program? – What would you like to recommend as an option for improving the next phase of the Fund? – where do you see the fund in 10 years?
Partners and grantees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Transcend Oceania –Ruth – House of Sarah – Linda – femLinkPacific – Linda – WEBC – Ruth – Fiji Cancer Society – Ruth – Rainbow Pride Foundation – Ruth – Rise Beyond the Reef – Ruth – Rise Beyond the Reef – interview with community members –Ruth – TISI – Ruth – Lifebread – Ruth – Lifebread beneficiaries – Ruth – BIRTH Fiji – Ruth – BIRTH Fiji – Interview with community members – Ruth – Transcend Oceania community members – Ruth – Medical Services Pacific – Linda 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Please tell us about your connection with WFF, how long have you worked together, in what areas? – Tell us about the highlights, what has this support helped you to achieve? – What have been the challenges? – What ideas do you have to improve the support provided to you? the relationship you have with the Fund? – What lessons are emerging from the program?

Category	Respondents	Questions
Other donors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – MFAT Program Coordinator – Linda – Mama Cash – Linda – Equality Fund – Linda 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Why did your organisation/ government choose to support this Fund? – How does it align with your gov/organisational policies and objectives? – How well does the investment align with Government of Fiji priorities? – How does it advance locally led development in the Pacific? – How has it developed over time? What changes have you seen that are positive? Ongoing challenges? – What lessons are emerging from the program? – What would you like to recommend as an option for improving the next phase of the Fund? – where do you see the fund in 10 years?
AIR partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Urgent Action Fund, Asia & Pacific – Linda – Pacific Feminist Fund – Linda – Women’s Fund Asia – Linda 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Tell me a little about your organisation and its connection to WFF (only thru AIR? Beyond AIR?) – What lessons are emerging from the program? – What would you like to recommend as an option for improving the next phase of the Fund? – where do you see the fund in 10 years?
WFF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – WFF Board – Linda 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Tell me a little about yourself and your role in WFF – What are the most significant achievements of the Fund to date? what are you most proud of? – What evidence is there that the Fund is building capacity within the Fund itself, with grantees and more broadly within the feminist and women’s rights movement in Fiji? – Considering the Strategic Plan comes to an end this year, what have you achieved and what gaps remain? What are the strategic issues to address going forward? – Can you share a little bit about the governance arrangements for WFF (there seems to be several layers and many roles) and how these have supported the Fund to develop and progress towards its Vision? – What have been the external challenges for the Fund, from Fiji, Australia, others? How has the Fund adapted and addressed these challenges? – What are some of the risks the organisation has experienced? How well did the Fund managed these risks? – What lessons are emerging from the program? – What would you like to recommend for improving the next phase of the Fund? – where do you see the fund in 10 years? – AIR partnership – What works between WFF and its AIR partners? What didn’t work well? – What lessons have partners learnt about how collaboration through this partnership can improve outcomes for gender equality, both as individual organisations and as a partnership? – What have partners learnt about power dynamics in this partnership? – What are the key challenges to implementing the AIR partnership concept? What enabled the partnership to work from the perspective of WFF? How can it be improved? – What are the strengths and weaknesses of the AIR Partnership from the perspective of WFF and how can these be addressed in future programmes?

Category	Respondents	Questions
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – How are risks managed, as they are relevant to WFF? – What communication strategies work for the AIR Partnership and WFF in particular? – What lessons can be learnt from the current partnership to improve future partnerships with the WFF??
WFF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – WFF Grant making committee – Linda 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Tell me a little about yourself and your role in WFF – What are the most significant achievements of the Fund to date through is grant making? what are you most proud of? – What evidence is there that the Fund is building capacity within the Fund itself, with grantees and more broadly within the feminist and women’s rights movement in Fiji? – Can you give some examples of what the Fund did – to strengthen gender equality in development and elimination of Violence Against women and Girls (VAWG) – examples of wins, challenges and opportunities for the WFF in relation to women’s rights organisations in Fiji, advocacy and increased voice – Considering the Strategic Plan comes to an end this year, what have you achieved and what gaps remain? What are the strategic issues to address going forward? – Can you share a little bit about the governance arrangements for WFF (there seems to be several layers and many roles) and how these have supported the Fund to develop and progress towards its Vision? – What lessons are emerging from the program? – What would you like to recommend as an option for improving the next phase of the Fund? – where do you see the fund in 10 years?
WFF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Fund Program Officer – Linda 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Tell me a little about yourself and your role in WFF – What are the most significant achievements of the Fund to date/ what are you most proud of? – What evidence is there that the Fund is building capacity within the Fund itself, with grantees and more broadly within the feminist and women’s rights movement in Fiji? – Can you give some examples of what the Fund did – to strengthen gender equality in development and elimination of Violence Against women and Girls (VAWG) – examples of wins, challenges and opportunities for the WFF in relation to women’s rights organisations in Fiji, advocacy and increased voice – Considering the Strategic Plan comes to an end this year, what have you achieved and what gaps remain? What are the strategic issues to address going forward? – Can you share a little bit about the governance arrangements for WFF (there seems to be several layers and many roles) and how these have supported the Fund to develop and progress towards its Vision? – What lessons are emerging from the program? – What would you like to recommend as an option for improving the next phase of the Fund? – where do you see the fund in 10 years?

Category	Respondents	Questions
WFF	– Fund MEL Coordinator – Linda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Tell me a little about yourself and your role in WFF – What are the most significant achievements of the Fund to date/ what are you most proud of? – How has the Fund revised and developed its Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) framework to support ongoing data and information collection and overall decision making? – Specific questions here: – There seems to be lots of tools and points of data collection, how do you manage all of this and how do you bring it together? – how do you ensure the voice of women and girls is reflected in the M&E and reporting? – How do you balance the demands for formal M&E systems with approaches that support pacific learning and engagement? – What would make the M&E more useful? Or more relevant to org development? – Considering the Strategic Plan comes to an end this year, what have you achieved and what gaps remain? What are the strategic issues to address going forward? – What lessons are emerging from the program? – What would you like to recommend as an option for improving the next phase of the Fund? – where do you see the fund in 10 years?
WFF	– Fund Interim ED – Victoria Yee – Linda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Tell me a little about yourself and your role in WFF – What are the most significant achievements of the Fund to date/ what are you most proud of? – Can you share a little bit about the governance arrangements for WFF (there seems to be several layers and many roles) and how these have supported the Fund to develop and progress towards its Vision? – What evidence is there that the Fund is building capacity within the Fund itself, with grantees and more broadly within the feminist and women’s rights movement in Fiji? – What have been the external challenges for the Fund, from Fiji, Australia, others? How has the Fund adapted and addressed these challenges? – What are some of the risks the organisation has experienced? How well did the Fund managed these risks? – What lessons are emerging from the program? – What would you like to recommend as an option for improving the next phase of the Fund? – where do you see the fund in 10 years? – AIR partnership – What works between WFF and its AIR partners? What didn’t work well? – What lessons have partners learnt about how collaboration through this partnership can improve outcomes for gender equality, both as individual organisations and as a partnership? – What have partners learnt about power dynamics in this partnership? – What are the key challenges to implementing the AIR partnership concept? What enabled the partnership to work from the perspective of WFF? How can it be improved?

Category	Respondents	Questions
		<ul style="list-style-type: none">- What are the strengths and weaknesses of the AIR Partnership from the perspective of WFF and how can these be addressed in future programmes?- How are risks managed, as they are relevant to WFF?- What communication strategies work for the AIR Partnership and WFF in particular?- What lessons can be learnt from the current partnership to improve future partnerships with the WFF??

Annex 6 Talanoa Survey

Pacific Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Capacity-strengthening Needs Assessment, Kakala / Rebelib

The Kakala Research Framework for Evaluation?

The Kakala research framework is an original idea from Tonga promoted in various Pacific oriented literature. It consists of six (6) distinct steps to complete the garland of celebration.⁵¹ The Women's Fund Fiji (WFF) Evaluation team are inviting interested stakeholders in the Pacific region to participate in the *Kakala* evaluation tool. The *Kakala Research Framework* is communicated through "talanoa" translated "story telling". The *Kakala* research framework is a Tongan concept outlining the process of making a lei. At each stage of the *Kakala*, progress takes place. There are six (6) distinct stages in the Kakala research framework. They are Teu, Toli, Tui, Lua, Malie and Mafuna. The *Teu* stage is the conceptualisation phase where we ensure a collective voice. We are purposeful in our reach and engagement to include marginalised groups. The *Toli* phase is where objects or flowers are selected purposefully for the garland. Relatively, we are purposeful in our search for evidence and impact. Reflections and storying will enhance our approach to data collection. The *Tui* stage in Kakala research refers to the data analysis stage where data is collated and analysed. Common themes are identified, challenges and new opportunities are recorded. *Luva* is the stage in the process where the gift that has been made is gifted to you. In the *Malie* stage, the work has been done throughout the whole process and is where monitoring and evaluation has taken place and we continue to improve and feedback on the logical framework and theory of change. The last stage is *Mafuna*. Here is where the performance is appreciated by the audience and there is a relationship where stories, songs, dance has been used to communicate the message where the performance is appreciated and it is seen as the final stage of the research where the researcher and knowledge giver are both transformed and empowered. Further, in Mafuna, is the final stage where knowledge is applied and tested for transformation and sustainability. They are said to create and reach their own solutions. The research findings are presented to an audience who can make sense of the findings. From this understanding, the *Talanoa (storying)*, survey is encouraged to be used as a way of reflection on the WFF program. It will give WFF and its partners an opportunity to self-evaluate and determine their own solutions.

The evaluation is set out according to the Kakala Research Framework to examine and explore the areas which WFF can benefit from in their ongoing work.

Who is invited to complete the Talanoa survey?

This evaluation will be shared only with the WFF Board and Staff to facilitate safe and confidential responses for volunteers who are willing to participate in the survey. The talanoa survey is open to all stakeholders with direct or indirect links to WFF Programme activities. We encourage you to complete the survey to the best of your understand of WFF and its activities implemented against its objectives thus far.

The survey will be collected by the Evaluation team on Friday 26 July 2024.

How will the Talanoa survey findings be used?

Survey submissions will be used to:

Learn about current status of the WFF and AIR Partnership, what worked well and what didn't work well. Better understand strengths and weakness of WFF and its effectiveness.

Understand current perceived value of capacity building and technical support provided to WFF grantees and partners.

Get a feel for the barriers and challenges of the program.

Understand where WFF is at and where it is going, and how it is planning to get there.

⁵¹ Seu'ula Johansson Fua, The Kakala Research Framework, No Date

Understand capacity building gaps and document lessons learnt.
Propose recommendations for future programming.

All survey participants will receive a summary of the findings at a future date deemed approved by DFAT; this summary will not identify which individuals or organisations submitted particular information. The intent is to get an overall picture of WFF organisational status, program and operation status and recommendations for the future. The findings will inform WFF and DFAT in its programming efforts.

When and how can the Talanoa survey be completed?

There are 20 survey questions, and we estimate it will take about 10-15 minutes to complete. We advise that you read the survey document first *before* completing it, so you have the necessary information at hand and/or have consulted with colleagues. **There will not be any online surveys.**

Who is providing the information?

The following information is requested to understand from which perspective this survey is completed. This information will not be shared with others; it will be used only for the purpose of analysing and disseminating the survey results.

- Position _____
- Organisational level responsibilities _____

[Note: Think about responsibilities in terms of contributions to the success of WFF, its effectiveness, its efficiency, its relevance and sustainability at organisational, country and/or regional levels. Think about responsibilities in terms of coordinating, commissioning, managing, doing, providing oversight, reporting and/or using information/data for evidence-based reporting and planning]

How to complete the survey?

This survey uses rating scales for different questions under each evaluation heading. Please choose the category which **best describes the current situation in your organisation** – even if not all the statements in that category apply. Please also provide **explanatory comments** which will be very helpful to understand better what is already in place. Please use as much space as you need to write your comments.

If you **do not have sufficient information** to answer a question, please indicate this by selecting the appropriate reply.

Please tick one against your question and under the following key: B=Beginning, P=Progressing, E=Established and U= Unsure.

Question	B	P	E	U
Domain 1: Teu- The Conceptualisation Phase	B	P	E	U
People, Organisational culture, project planning and Target Groups & Learning ⁵²	B	P	E	U
1. The WFF design phase allow the voices of socially disadvantaged groups and purposefully reach to provide the same opportunity and enjoyment for all beneficiaries and needs met.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Human Resources: Job descriptions for all staff clearly defined.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Organisational Culture: Funds and support program resources are effectively distributed to grantees to address gender inequalities, barriers, and are clearly explained and understood by participants.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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Question	B	P	E	U
4. Organisational Performance: WFF and its partner organisations achieve objectives of annual workplans and EOPO's are clearly articulated and risks managed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Domain 2: Teu – The purposeful selection of objects for the garland: Grantee selection, fund governance and established Partnerships for greater voice and advocacy.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Mechanisms are in place to support strong relationships within WFF and between its partners.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Strong leadership within WFF and the implementation of annual work plans in alignment with national and Australian policy priorities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Regular reporting to DFAT and good and safe communication between WFF and its partners.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Evidence of clear proposed change pathways and shows change in Knowledge and behaviour of those participating and benefiting from the fund.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Economic Growth experienced as a result of Australia's value-add and leverage.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.3 Supervision & Auditing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Finance and Operations Manuals closely followed and supervision of routine data collection at WFF and community levels takes place.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. WFF leads in advocacy work with marginalised groups and GEDSI groups benefit financially and through soft skills gained and capacity building and technical support to partner organisations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Domain 3: Tui- Data Analysis Stage Baseline research informed decision making	B	P	E	U
12. Risks mitigated and resolved and lessons inform the ongoing work of WFF	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. Essential and appropriate tools and equipment for data management (e.g., collection, transfer, storage, analysis) are available and inform program decisions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Domain 4: Luva – The gifting back of Knowledge Making sense of findings and improving content and reporting Evaluation results presented to an advisory and evaluation governance committee for rigorous feedback and technical Support and availability of resource-persons to facilitate trainings and workshops planned.	B	P	E	U
14. Data collected, is triangulated and gifted back to knowledge holders.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Domain 5: Malie – Monitoring, Evaluation, Research & Learning	B	P	E	U
15. WFF inventory of completed and ongoing country-specific evaluation and research studies including local evaluation reports input to organisational data base specific to the program outcomes.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. WFF support for existing national level research and learning on an ongoing basis.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.1 Annual costed workplan	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. WFF follow logical framework/results chain which contain inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes, impacts, responsible implementers, timeframe, activity costs, and identified funding.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18. Strategic Plan explicitly links to the overall project design.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Domain 6- Mafuna – Final Products and Documentation To be consistent with DFAT Design, Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning guidelines and principles, Six (6) monthly reports, Timely annual reports and established data bases consistent to EOPO 1-3 published and shared publicly.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19. Interpretation and sharing of Data through contextualisation and adaptation of culturally appropriate and relevant tools 6 monthly, and annually.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Any other comments: