

23/8/2016

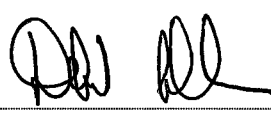
MFAT Management Response to Evaluation of PacificTA

About this document

This document describes the programme's response to the evaluation.

Evaluation report title:	Evaluation of the Local Government Technical Assistance Facility for Pacific Island Countries
File title of final pdf report:	As above
GDM Link to final pdf report:	INTD-119-2424
GDM Link to final Word report:	INTD-119-2441
AMS Activity Number:	A11089-A01
Activity Manager:	Chris Day
Programme:	Partnerships and Funds
MFAT response approved by:	Deb Collins, Director PHM
Approved date:	
Evaluation cost to MFAT:	\$102,285

Approval

Approval of the MFAT Management Response to Evaluation	
Approved by:	
Signature:	
	Deb Collins, Director
Date:	8 / 9 / 2016

MFAT Management Response

Evaluation team members

Members of the evaluation team were:

Name	Role
Dr Susanna Kelly	Evaluation lead, Evaluation Consult
Dr Kara Scally-Irvine	Senior evaluator, Evaluation Consult
Kate Averill	Peer Review, Evaluation Consult
Assistant Professor Graham Hassall	Technical Adviser, School of Government, Victoria University

Key findings/conclusions of the evaluation

The key findings/conclusions of the evaluation are:

- The evaluation found the PacificTA to be a highly relevant programme, which is responding to a clear need. In many PICs, local government institutions continue to face capacity gaps to strengthen delivery of local level services and responsibilities. Uptake of the Facility has been lower than expected, leading to a consistent underspend on technical assistance (TA). Low awareness and understanding of the Facility along with a lower than expected ability of in-country counterparts' to effectively identify TA needs appear to be key reasons for this.
- PacificTA has contributed to strengthening capacity in pockets of local government in the Pacific, but this could be expanded. Results of technical assistance delivered under PacificTA need to be reported and shared with stakeholders. Those who have received assistance are very positive about the technical advice and solutions provided. Technical advisors also reported involvement in PacificTA to be enriching and valuable.
- PacificTA efficiency could be enhanced by more strategic connections with MFAT at post and PIC partners. Continued alignment with New Zealand Aid Programme Investment Priorities will enhance the effectiveness and impact of technical assistance by creating opportunities for leverage across activities.

Lessons for MFAT

Describe the top three lessons for MFAT in the table below. These can and ideally will apply beyond the bounds of the specific Activity evaluated. In cases where the evaluation has not been commissioned solely by MFAT, it may be necessary to infer the lessons (and also

recommendations, in the next section below) rather than take these directly from the evaluation report.

Lessons that MFAT can take from the evaluation are:

No.	Lesson	Programme response
1	The evaluation was timely, as the programme has been running since 2012, involved working with a new partner, and was innovative in its approach in a relatively complex context. The evaluation provides confidence that the investment has been worthwhile, while giving valuable insights that can usefully inform a second stage design..	Agree.
2	The establishment of a valuable programme is not enough in itself to ensure demand/broad ranging uptake particularly when it is Pacific wide – systematic marketing, gaining credibility through early successes, building trust and using a range of networks are all part of the mix.	Agree
3	The evaluation has highlighted the benefits of connecting NZ expertise with Pacific organisations seeking help and provided some valuable ideas as to how to maximise this type of development assistance i.e. using a planned marketing approach.	Agree

Recommendations for MFAT from the Evaluation Report:

No.	Recommendation	Programme response
1	Develop a communication strategy setting out the means of accessing the PacificTA and the scope of TA the Facility supports.	Agree.
2	Continue to align all PacificTA assignments with New Zealand Aid Programme investment priorities and prioritise applications that are clearly aligned with PIC strategic/ sectoral development plans.	Agree.
3	Revise the PacificTA Results Framework to show intended contribution to New Zealand Aid Programme and PIC development plans.	Agree.
4	Identify explicit and feasible capacity (organisational) and capability (individuals) building opportunities in collaboration with PIC stakeholders and TA advisors.	Agree.
5	Invest in a simple mechanism to share results and lessons learned with PIC partners, MFAT country programmes, New Zealand local authorities and TA advisors, in order to build knowledge of how PacificTA support can work most effectively.	Agree.
6	Provide guidance to LGNZ from MFAT on Aid Programme expectations for integrating cross-cutting issues within PacificTA delivery.	Agree.
7	Review results of expanded delivery between now and 31 May 2017 to test PacificTA capacity to respond to increased applications and TA and use this to guide resource decisions for any next phase.	Disagree. Given timeframe, we intend addressing delivery and resourcing as part of redesign.
8	Increase PacificTA Steering Committee strategic oversight of resource allocation and criteria for the optimal mix between delivering short and long-term TA.	Agree.

No.	Recommendation	Programme response
9	Increase promotion of PacificTA with eligible PIC partners to encourage uptake.	Agree.
10	Reduce LGNZ PacificTA manager travel time delivering PacificTA on the ground in PICs by more strategic use of in-country networks and partners to identify and scope TA.	Agree to consider further in redesign.
11	Implement stronger (more transparent and accountable) project management.	Agree.

Further programme response

MFAT follow up actions

These may be the responsibility of staff outside the programme that commissioned the evaluation.

This table lists actions that MFAT will undertake in response to the findings, lessons and recommendations of the evaluation.

Lesson learned / Recommendation	Action	Who will action	When	Resource Implications
Lesson 1: The evaluation was timely as the programme has been running since 2012, involved working with a new partner, and was innovative in its approach in a relatively complex context.. The evaluation provides confidence that the investment has been worthwhile, while giving valuable insights that can usefully inform a second stage design..	Address in second stage design process..	MFAT	By end of 2016	
Lesson 2: The establishment of a valuable programme is not enough in itself to ensure demand/broad ranging uptake particularly when it is Pacific wide – systematic marketing, gaining credibility through early successes, building trust and using a range of networks are all part of the mix.	Address in second stage design process.	MFAT	By end of 2016	

Lesson learned / Recommendation	Action	Who will action	When	Resource Implications
Lesson 3: The evaluation has highlighted the benefits of connecting NZ expertise with Pacific organisations seeking help and provided some valuable ideas as to how to maximise this type of development assistance i.e. using a planned marketing approach	Make findings available as per dissemination plan below.	MFAT	September 2016	
Recommendations 1, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11	Address in second stage design process	MFAT/LGNZ	By end of 2016	
Recommendations 2 and 8	Steering committee to monitor and encourage progress as part of agenda items	Steering committee	Ongoing	
Recommendation 6	MFAT to provide advice. LGNZ to ensure cross-cutting issues are addressed in applications/reporting.	MFAT/LGNZ	Advice in September 2016. Implementation ongoing	

Dissemination plan

The evaluation will be/have been shared with partner organisations, MFAT staff and other stakeholders in the following ways:

No.	Method of dissemination	Responsibility of	When
1	Evaluation report published on the MFAT website	The Development Support Officer of the Evaluation Team (DSE)	By 30 September 2016

No.	Method of dissemination	Responsibility of	When
2	Summary of findings distributed to relevant stakeholders and interested parties letting them know the main report is on the website.	Activity manager	By 30 September 2016
3			
4			

Report Release Checklist

Note: This checklist must be used for all evaluations that will be published in full on MFAT's website. Where the report has been commissioned by a partner organisation and is published on their website, MFAT should simply seek written permission from the partner to provide a link to the published evaluation from our website. Attach a copy of the partner's permission to this MFAT Response to Evaluation template in lieu of this Report Release Checklist.

NAME OF THE REPORT: EVALUATION OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FACILITY FOR PACIFIC ISLAND COUNTRIES

AUTHOR(S): EVALUATION CONSULT

REPORT MONTH AND YEAR: 30 JUNE 2016

All evaluation reports should be able to be publicly released in accordance with the principle of availability (Section 5 of the Official Information Act (OIA)). However, this principle can be overridden if there is 'good reason' (as set out in the OIA) to withhold information. Use this checklist to help you decide if sections in the evaluation report should be withheld.

If any of the answers to these questions is 'yes' then:

- A hard copy of the report should be marked up with brackets around the information to be withheld, and the OIA section under which the information is to be withheld noted (refer to MFAT Style and Practice Guide OIA Requests)*
- The PDF copy of the report that is submitted to the Development Support Officer (DSE) for the library and public release will have the withheld information whited out and the reasons for withholding noted in the margins. The following note should be placed in the report: Certain information in this report has been withheld in accordance with the Official Information Act and the grounds for withholding, as at the time of publication, are noted in the margins.*

If you are unsure whether a good reason to withhold exists seek advice from the IDG staff member responsible for OIAs or the MFAT corporate legal team.

OIA Section 6 Conclusive Reasons: Are there words in the evaluation that are likely to:

- a) Prejudice the security or defence of NZ or NZ's international relations? Yes No
- b) Prejudice the entrusting of information to the Government of NZ on a basis of confidence by (i) the Government of any other country or (ii) any international organisation? Yes No
- c) Prejudice the maintenance of the law? Yes No
- d) Endanger the safety of any person? Yes No
- e) Damage seriously the NZ economy? Yes No

OIA Section 7 Special Reasons: Are there words in the evaluation that are likely to:

- a) Prejudice the security or defence of the Cook Islands, Niue, Tokelau or the Ross Dependency? Yes No
- b) Prejudice relations between the governments of NZ, and governments of the Cook Island and Niue? Yes No

c) Prejudice the international relations of the governments of the Cook Islands or Niue

Yes No

OIA Section 9 Other Reasons: Are there words in the evaluation that need to be withheld to:

(Note: There is need to balance Section 9 grounds for withholding against 'public interest considerations'. Consider the negative consequences from release, and whether or not these consequences are outweighed by the public interest in access to the information.)

- a) Protect the privacy of natural persons? Yes No
- b) Protect trade secrets and commercial positions? Yes No
- c) c)Protect information that is subject to an obligation of confidence where release of the information would be likely to i) prejudice the supply of similar information from the same source and it is in the public interest that such information should continue to be supplied or (ii) otherwise damage the public interest? Yes No
- d) Avoid prejudice to measures protecting the health or safety of members of the public? Yes No
- e) Avoid prejudice to the substantial economic interests of New Zealand? Yes No
- f) Avoid prejudice to measures that prevent or mitigate material loss to members of the public? Yes No

- a) Maintain the constitutional conventions including the confidentiality of advice tendered by ministers and officials? Yes No
- b) Maintain effective conduct of public affairs through free and frank expressions of opinion and protection from improper pressure or harassment? Yes No
- c) Maintain legal professional privilege? Yes No
- d) Enable a minister department or organisation holding information to carry out commercial activities without prejudice or disadvantage? Yes No
- e) Enable a minister, department or organisation holding the information to carry on negotiations without prejudice or disadvantage? Yes No
- f) Prevent the disclosure or use of official information for improper gain or advantage? Yes No

Other Reason: Is there any other reason for withholding information?

- If the answer is yes then seek advice from the IDG staff member responsible for OIA or the MFAT corporate legal team. Yes No

RECOMMENDATION

- Withhold selected parts, noting sections of the OIA applying to these in a copy of the report that is filed, and white-ed out in the copy of the report to be forwarded to the Development Support Officer (DSE) for public release and the library
- Release entire report

Signed by Sue Lancaster

Signed by Chris Day

Date: 5/9/2016

