



Australian Government
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade



PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY INTO SUPPORTING DEMOCRACY IN OUR REGION

November 2022

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INTRODUCTION

The Minister for Foreign Affairs, Senator the Hon Penny Wong, asked the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade - Foreign Affairs and Aid Subcommittee to inquire into matters related to supporting democracy in our region.

Terms of Reference

The Inquiry will look at how Australia can partner with countries in our region to promote democracy and the international rules-based order, with particular reference to:

- Australia's interest in supporting the sovereignty and independence of our immediate neighbours;*
- the importance of stability, democracy and good governance for the wellbeing of all the people of our region;*
- how Australia can partner with our neighbours in promoting our shared democratic values and protecting democratic institutions;*
- the role of civil society organisations in supporting democracy in our region;*
- ways in which Australia can assist our neighbours in these objectives; and*
- any related matters.*

Australia's support for democracy in the region is delivered through political, economic, security and international development program engagement. This submission references work across these areas of DFAT but focusses primarily on the development program in the Asia-Pacific region given the Committee's advice and the depth of practical examples of our support in this area.

1. AUSTRALIA'S APPROACH TO SUPPORTING DEMOCRACY IN OUR REGION

1.1 WHAT GUIDES US

Australia seeks a region that is peaceful, prosperous and resilient, that is governed by accepted rules and norms, and where all our countries and peoples can cooperate, trade and thrive. To realise this vision, and respecting individual country sovereignty, Australia **supports effective, accountable and stable states that can sustain their own prosperity and development.**¹ This enables states to deliver equitably for all their

¹ Development Policy [Terms of reference](#) | Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (dfat.gov.au).

citizens, be resilient in the face of external pressures and shocks, and collaborate freely to address regional and global challenges.

Australia is respectful of different types of political and governance systems. We recognise that many countries have endured conflict, instability and external subjugation, some recently. So we are all at different points on the journey.

Alongside like-minded international partners, we share concerns about global governance trends. Progress against the Sustainable Development Goals has been declining in recent years –worsened by COVID-19.² Inequalities have been deepening, increasing the likelihood of discontent and conflict.³ These challenges are particularly acute and difficult to address for countries that experience fragility⁴ or are conflict-affected.

The stability and prosperity of our region is undermined when diverging views or needs go unheard or are penalised, or when people are excluded from full participation in social, political, economic activity or decision making. Inclusive democratic principles help peacefully navigate this diversity, and create a virtuous loop of accountability.

To achieve and sustain greater resilience, democratic processes must be legitimate in the eyes of the local population⁵ and be relevant to the local political, economic, social and environmental context. Partners, such as Australia, cannot and should not seek to impose change. Instead, we aim to support locally driven initiatives.

We recognise that **democratic participation requires strong election processes, government institutions and policies.** It must also be matched by vibrant civil society and media, in order to hold leaders to account, manage resources equitably and fully understand the needs of citizens.

Extensive research and experience shows that gender equality and social inclusion are requirements for good governance and democracy – and, therefore, shared prosperity.⁶ As progress is made on gender equality – at leadership and community levels – electoral participation and confidence in governments increases.⁷ Supporting people with disabilities and other marginalised groups to fully participate in democratic processes ensures we harness the full potential of society and maximises development outcomes. Our development assistance in these areas also demonstrates our own values of inclusion.⁸

1.2 WHAT WE KNOW/HAVE LEARNED

Institutions are the formal and informal rules that organise social, political and economic relations in a country. **We need to focus on supporting institutions to become stronger and more robust, as distinct from primarily building the capacity of individuals.** We want our region to be characterised by states that have

² UNESCAP (2018) [Inequality in the Asia and the Pacific in the era of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#).

³ See World Bank (2006) [The World Development Report: Equity and Development](#).

⁴ Fragility is the combination of exposure to risk and insufficient coping capacities of the state, system and/or communities to manage, absorb or mitigate those risks. [States of Fragility 2022 | en | OECD](#). Fragility arises where countries or regions experience repeated cycles of political, social and/or economic or environmental instability, conflict, stagnant human development, low overall capacity and vulnerability to natural and/or human induced shocks. This can lead to fragility in service delivery, social cohesion and governance and institutional strength. Additionally, this can give rise to regional spill-over effects, such as cross-border health challenges and increased reach of violent extremist organisations. *DFAT Governance Guidance Note – Internal July 2021*

⁵ Seu'ula Johansson-Fua, Kabini Sanga, David Fa'avae, Martyn Reynolds, Richard Robyns, Danny Jim. (2022). Contextualising leadership: Looking for leadership in the everyday. Developmental Leadership Program. <https://www.dlprog.org/publications/research-briefs/contextualising-leadership-looking-for-leadership-in-the-everyday>

⁶ World Bank (2014) [Voice and Agency: Empowering Women and Girls for Shared Prosperity](#)

⁷ DFAT Gender team submission

⁸ DFAT Social Inclusion team submission

institutional capacity (including the ability to deliver public services, collect revenue and regulate the economy, functional legitimacy (ability to maintain the rule of law) and political authority (where citizens judge the government has the right to govern). And we also want these institutions to be inclusive, so that all citizens, including women, people with a disability, and marginalised groups have a seat at the table. The international evidence is clear: when these “rules of the game” are ineffective and weak, development outcomes are poor.⁹

Supporting robust, inclusive governance and democratic systems requires a broad approach – locally and regionally, across government, civil society and the private sector. This includes support for knowledgeable, peaceful advocacy for constituent views, policy direction and practical, accountable action.

Support to governance and democracy is usually complex, politically sensitive and often slow to realise outcomes. At times Western democracies and partners alike may not support particular governance reforms our outcomes, particularly where short-term progress is hard to see or measure. **At other times, democracy and accountability support can also be outstripped by new priorities and / or rapidly evolving political developments.** Crises can have a particular impact on accountability mechanisms if, for example, governments move to consolidate power to suspend usual oversight processes (see Section 1.3 below – Effects of COVID-19).

This requires striking a balance between responsiveness and a strategic and patient focus on supporting long term approaches and outcomes. This can be a difficult balance. Constant analysis and adaptation are essential to responsiveness, and to ensure our support remains relevant. Flexible approaches can also enable investigation and testing of opportunities for potential governance reform and bring unexpected benefits – but to realise these, long term engagement is needed¹⁰.

Partners, including governments such as Australia, are most likely to be able to support outcomes at the margins,¹¹ since any action must have local legitimacy for impact. Too much involvement or pushing risks accusations of interference, may provoke criticisms and at times, can undermine (rather than advance) our engagement and support. **Trusted relationships over time are key to effective governance partnerships** – both with governments (to encourage buy in), and with implementing partners and stakeholders (to ensure effective collaboration and adaptation or adjustment of approach as needed). Australia can point to highly effective development programs that put this lesson into practice well.

Gender responsive programming specifically, and inclusive approaches generally, are critical to effective support for robust democratic processes, since these issues are at the heart of how power is organised and plays out socially and politically.¹²

Just as in Australia, **new forms of technology and the rise of social media are disrupting the information and political landscapes** in countries across our region. This brings new complexity to the challenge of working in support of democratic and accountable institutions.

⁹ For example World Bank (2017), World Development Report 2017: Governance and Law; Institute of Development Studies (2010) An Upside Down View of Governance; Douglass C North (2005) Understanding the Process of Economic Change; David Booth (2012) Development as a collective action problem: Addressing the real challenges of African Governance Africa Power and Politics Program; Elinor Ostrom (1990) Governing the Commons: The Evolution of Institutions for Collective Action; Dani Rodrik ‘Thinking about Governance’ in Governance Growth and Decision Making World Bank (2008), 17; Daron Acemoglu and James Robinson (2012) Why Nations Fail: The Origins of Power, Prosperity and Poverty; Adrian Leftwich (2005) ‘Politics in Command: Development Studies and the Rediscovery of Social Science 10:4 New Political Economy, 573

¹⁰ Governance Learning Paper – Insights from Completed Investments DFAT (Internal) September 2022.

¹¹ D. Booth (2011) ‘Aid, Institutions and Governance: What have we learned?’; Centre for the Future State (2010) ‘An upside down view of governance.’

¹² Roche et al., 2018 (DLP work)

1.3 EFFECTS OF COVID-19

COVID-19 has had mixed effects on democratic indicators across our region. On the positive side, we have seen examples of increased transparency and focus on delivering services in response to the pandemic. Government efforts to address weaknesses in economies, social protection, health and other systems have been prominent and more visible – this has strengthened the trust of citizens in some countries. We have seen more local leadership in designing and delivering solutions. More concerning has been a tightening of both government and general public information flows, including internet and media, less transparency around decision making, more restrictions on movement and assembly and less emphasis on protecting civil rights.¹³

As a result of these dynamics, we have adapted elements of our practical support. Programs designed to adapt to changing circumstances and contexts have pivoted to support the urgent needs of partners. This responsiveness has reinforced Australia’s standing as a reliable and trusted partner.¹⁴

2. CURRENT SUPPORT TO DEMOCRACY IN OUR REGION

2.1 HOW WE OPERATE AND WHAT WE FOCUS ON

Australia’s support for democracy in our region is decades long and draws on strong (and mutually reinforcing) partnerships across diplomatic, political, economic, security, and development work (drawing on official development assistance funding (ODA) to support agreed programs and provide support.

We engage bilaterally, regionally, multilaterally and through other civil society and accountability relationships. This includes partnerships with, and development cooperation and support to, non-government organisations, civil society organisations, faith-based groups, media and other accountability focused organisations. It also includes support for diplomatic initiatives for collective action, such as the annual Bali Democracy Forum.¹⁵

Australia is an advocate of liberal institutions, universal values and human rights. Australia’s regional and multilateral policy engagements emphasise Australia’s abiding belief in and practical cooperation on promoting inclusive democratic systems and principles. As a trading economy, we continue to engage in the multilateral trading system championing the benefits of open and free trade. Respecting the very wide range of political and governance systems in the region, we also maintain strong engagement with governments across the Pacific and Southeast Asia and partner on agreed priorities, rather than supporting a particular model or ideology.

Our democracy engagement and support are tailored to context (see [Annex A](#) for a detailed list of country and regional/global examples). For example, in some countries our support and partnerships are focused on strengthening democratic institutions alone;¹⁶ in others we expand the focus of engagement and assistance

¹³ Governance Challenges in our Region – DFAT Governance Helpdesk September 2022

¹⁴ Governance Learning Paper – Insights from Completed Investments DFAT (Internal) September 2022.

¹⁵ The Bali Democracy forum was established by Indonesia in 2008 to promote and foster regional and international cooperation in the field of peace and democracy.

¹⁶ Here ‘democratic institutions’ refers to two main groups: 1) Formal institutions for accountability and democracy: e.g. check and balance institutions, Parliaments / National assemblies, Auditors and Accountants General, Election Commissions, the media, Rights of assembly, expression, and rights to information and those that rule of law, give effect to property rights and form part of an effective business regulatory environment. 2) Informal institutions such as norms and values, expectations and responsiveness of citizens, and space and ability for expression of views.

to those institutions (government and non-government) that support the rule of law, support civil society, and enhance community resilience and social inclusion.

- **Where institutions are strong**, our political engagement, policy dialogue and funding assistance features support for upstream reforms, strengthening people-to-people links (e.g., through parliamentary exchanges and scholarships), enhancing public trust and broad participation in democratic processes.
- **In those countries without democratic systems of government**, Australia demonstrates the values and principles of democracy through engagement and leading by example, supporting good governance through initiatives to assist public financial management, human rights and accountable justice systems.
- **In very limited circumstances where Australia does not or cannot engage directly** with a governing regime, our focus is on engaging pro-democracy actors and encouraging dialogue, while supporting international efforts to pursue accountability and respond to the crisis / crises.
- **Where we do not provide development assistance**, our political and policy engagement emphasises the importance of transparency, accountability, and the rule of law.

Australia’s technical support and assistance to democracy in our region largely falls under the ‘governance’ umbrella. ‘Governance’ is broadly defined.¹⁷ It accounts for around a quarter of Australia’s total official development assistance.¹⁸ In 2021-2022, around half of this was spent in the Pacific, around one third in Southeast Asia and the remainder on global and other country programs.¹⁹

DFAT does not have a stand-alone governance strategy, but we are guided by the current overarching development policy. Operational and policy support for this work is primarily led by geographic program teams in Canberra and overseas posts and is complemented by access to world class thematic governance advice on design, implementation and review, including specifically on democracy and elections. This thematic governance advice is available to all DFAT staff through the Department’s Governance Unit helpdesk, along with written guidance materials which are regularly updated.

Our development-focused support to democracy can be categorised in 6 broad areas that strengthen governance and accountability:

1. **Elections support** – e.g. elections monitoring, logistics support to elections, and technical assistance to strengthen election bodies.
2. **Strengthening governance and accountability institutions** – e.g. support to audit offices, ombudsmen, parliaments, service delivery, regulatory and law enforcement agencies; anti-corruption work; public financial management and economic governance reform and support.
3. **Support for civil society organisations and voices** – e.g. support for media skills and responsible media reporting; facilitating civil society dialogue; strengthening civil society organisations and networks; support for transparency and transparency organisations; and NGO program delivery.
4. **Gender equality, diversity and social inclusion** – e.g. assistance to women’s rights organisations; building institutional capacities to better respond to the needs and rights of women, girls, those with disabilities, and marginalised or vulnerable groups.

¹⁷ Reporting of governance related spending has changed from 2019-20 to 2021-22. The definition of governance in the current Green Book is: Investments supporting the stronger operation of the public sector and civil society. Includes public sector policy and management; public financial management; domestic revenue mobilisation; legal and judicial development; elections; media and free flow of information; human rights; ending violence against women and girls; social protection; employment creation; and housing policy, culture and recreation. (p. 65, Australia’s Official Development Assistance Statistical Summary 2020-2021.)

¹⁸ Australia’s Official Development Assistance – Development Budget Summary 2022-2023

¹⁹ Australia’s Official Development Assistance Statistical Summary (The Green Book) – yearly editions

5. **Human rights** – e.g. protecting and advocating in multilateral, regional and bilateral engagements; and supporting programming as above.
6. **People-to-people links** – e.g. parliamentary and media exchanges and scholarships, fellowships and short courses, alumni engagement, building coalitions for change.

We don't just work within the political system in these areas; it is important to also work across a country's social and economic spheres too.

2.2 EXAMPLES OF COUNTRY LEVEL SUPPORT

In the Pacific, all countries have established parliamentary democracies, although there is significant diversity in democratic models and norms. Political power and decision making is often characterised by a complex informal web of personal relationships, familial obligations and traditional leadership and influence systems. Australia's engagement and development cooperation programs in the Pacific often draw on the full range of partnership and programming options.

In the Asian region, governing systems range from established (but varied types of) democracies to authoritarian regimes. Australia's approach to supporting democracy and governance in the Asian region is therefore highly differentiated – politically and practically (see Section 2.1).

The following are selected country examples from across the region that demonstrate the range of development-related support we provide. [Annex A](#) includes a more extensive list of key country program examples and case studies.

PACIFIC

- **Papua New Guinea:** The *Papua New Guinea-Australia Comprehensive Strategic and Economic Partnership (CSEP)* sets out our joint commitment to participatory democracy and accountable institutions, delivered by DFAT alongside other Australian agencies (i.e. Australian Electoral Commission, AUSTRAC, Home Affairs, Australian Defence Force, Australian Federal Police).
 - DFAT's partnership on governance with PNG spans election support; building community engagement and demand for services and reform, including by engaging the media; and law and justice reform, and support for the Judiciary and Ombudsman, alongside policy capacity building work.
- **Fiji:** DFAT supports the strengthening of democratic institutions and media capacity building in Fiji. Key programs include a longstanding twinning arrangement between the Australian Electoral Commission and the Fijian Elections Office, support to the establishment of the Fijian Press Club, and the Fiji Parliamentary Support Project that supports the development of systems and processes for Fiji's parliament to effectively and efficiently undertake its legislative, oversight and representative roles. Australia will also co-lead the Multinational Observer Group, alongside India and Indonesia, for Fiji's upcoming general election in mid-December 2022.
- **Kiribati:** During the past two years, under the *Pacific Law and Justice Development Program*, Australia's Attorney-General's Department (AGD) has provided law and justice support to Kiribati in relation to cybercrime and anti-corruption. In June 2022, AGD provided Kiribati officials from the Public Service Office (PSO), the Leadership Commission, Attorney General's Office and the Kiribati Police Service with anti-corruption policy development training. AGD has also provided preliminary assistance to support Kiribati's ambitions to meet its obligations under the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC).

SOUTHEAST ASIA

- Indonesia:** *The Democratic Resilience Pilot Program*: (\$4.7 million, 2021–2023, delivered by the International Federation for Election Support (IFES) and The Asia Foundation (TAF)) is looking at innovative approaches that help strengthen democratic institutions and the quality of democratic processes in Indonesia, particularly for youth, women, and people with disabilities. The program works with Indonesian electoral management bodies (Indonesian General Election Commission and the National Elections Supervisory Body) and civil society organisations, to improve electoral policies and procedures and to expand civil liberties and space at national and subnational levels.
- **Timor-Leste:** Through the *Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP)*, DFAT has supported NGO Oxfam Australia to partner with seven civil society organisations and networks in Timor-Leste, to strengthen their capacity to monitor and influence Government policies and programs at national and municipal levels in Covalima and Oecusse. Partner Capacity Assessments showed that all project partners demonstrated increased skills and knowledge in influencing and monitoring the State budget to better address the needs of people with disabilities.
 - **Vietnam:** Australian Government-funded programs are supporting human rights protection and promotion in Vietnam (\$2.6 million, 2017–22) including through:
 - developing the Master of Human Rights Law course at the Vietnam National University School of Law and providing scholarships to Vietnamese students undertaking this course;
 - Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) support for the development of human rights education for schools;
 - a partnership with the Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry to increase human rights awareness among business; and
 - support for capacity-building for civil society organisations.
 - **Philippines:** recognising the impact that armed conflict can have on democracies, DFAT is supporting the following peacebuilding initiatives in Mindanao:
 - *The Peacebuilding in Conflict-Affected Mindanao Program* (\$94.6 million, over 2014–23) provides support to the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) - Government of Philippines (GPH) peace process, through the United Nations Development Program, World Bank, and other NGOs. Efforts are aimed at enabling and equipping democratic institutions with the knowledge, frameworks and tools for dialogue, engagement and peacebuilding, nurture and protect peaceful, inclusive societies.
 - *The Education Pathways to Peace* in Mindanao program works with NGOs to improve the capacity of the autonomous government and other institutions, to sustainably deliver conflict-sensitive education services resulting in a better educated population positioned to contribute to economic growth and development in a post-conflict environment.

2.3 EXAMPLES OF REGIONAL LEVEL SUPPORT

- Through our engagement with the **Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)**, we are engaging with and supporting the regional architecture. ASEAN provides a forum for Australia to work with regional partners to tackle shared challenges. It provides equitable dispute resolution mechanisms and respects sovereign choices (e.g. engaging with Myanmar as a bloc).
- The *Pacific Media Assistance Scheme (PACMAS)*: Australia has continued to support journalists and communication practitioners in the Pacific to report responsibly on critical issues in the region (including on COVID-19) through the Pacific Media Assistance Scheme (PACMAS). During 2021–22, more than 220 participants from Pacific media organisations and 153 participants from non-media

organisations received PACMAS training. 16 out of the 18 training activities were led by Pacific facilitators previously trained by PACMAS, demonstrating the capacity strengthening impact the program is having on the ground.

- *Pacific Women Lead*: Australia is a lead advocate in the Pacific region in advancing gender equality and disability inclusion. Pacific Women Lead (\$170 million 2021–2026) is working in partnership with Pacific organisations to ensure that Pacific women and girls, in all their diversity, are safe and equitably share in resources, opportunities and decision-making. The program is enabling dialogue between government, civil society and the private sector including through support for the Triennial Conference of Pacific Women. The program focuses on women’s leadership at all levels, in a range of sectors beyond parliamentary politics including climate change and women’s leadership in sport.
- *Pacific Australian Emerging Leaders’ Summit (PAELS)*: The inaugural Pacific Australian Emerging Leaders’ Summit will take place in Canberra in November 2022, with around 50 young church leaders from Australia (including First Nations delegates) and 19 Pacific countries in attendance. Young and emerging Christian leaders (22–35 years old) from Australia and the Pacific and Timor-Leste will engage with Australia’s parliamentarians and top regional decision makers. The Summit aims to cultivate stronger ties between the next generation of church leaders and develop their skills in civic participation, policy engagement, governance, and leadership.
- *Australia Award Scholarships: The Women Leading and Influencing* initiative (2022–2026) focusses scholarships on supporting women’s leadership for positive development outcomes in the Pacific. It provides opportunities for emerging women leaders to explore strategies to challenge gendered perspectives on leadership, build skills and craft networks and coalitions to lead in their communities. The program also engages with men as allies for women’s leadership and builds on the 2017–22 pilot.
- The *Indo-Pacific Partnerships Program (TII-PPP)* is a \$9.5 million partnership (2020–23) delivered by Transparency International and co-funded by DFAT and the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. Transparency International also provides a range of support directly through our country programs.
- The *Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP)* supports around 61 Australian NGOs and over 2,000 local partners to deliver around 400 projects in around 50 countries, each year, ensuring we are facilitating and supporting civil society engagement on the ground in delivering the development program.
- The *Asia Foundation (TAF) Strategic Partnership – Democratic Resilience Workstream* is one of five focussed research and piloting areas of DFAT’s ongoing strategic partnership with TAF. The work brings to bear TAF’s deep and longstanding experience across the region, with DFAT’s networks and resources. The work is building evidence and insights that underwrite our regional support to democracy.

2.4 EXAMPLES OF MULTILATERAL AND GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT

We engage in multilateral and global forums to support and strengthen agreed rules and norms, including human rights and gender equality, and protecting civic space; fighting corruption and advocating for global support to the institutions that foster these principles.

- **Summit for Democracy**: Australia participated in the inaugural Summit, launched by President Biden in 2021 to ‘set forth an affirmative agenda for democratic renewal and to tackle the greatest threats faced by democracies today through collective action’. We are progressing initiatives announced at

the December 2021 Summit. Australia is also a member of the Focal Group, involved in shaping outcomes for the next Summit in 2023 and the Global Network for Security Electoral Integrity, focused on advancing and promoting adherence to norms and principles that address emerging and long-term threats to electoral integrity. Australia has committed to engaging in the *Elections Integrity* democracy cohort (led by India), the *Gender Equality as a prerequisite for democracy* cohort, and USAID’s *Network for Inclusive Democracy*.

- **International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA)** – Founding member in 1995; Australia was the Chair of the Council of Member States in 2021; Australia is currently part of the Core Review Committee to develop International IDEA’s institutional strategy.
- **Myanmar:** Following the 2021 coup’s impact on the political and security situation, and Australia’s requirement to work outside regime systems, all our development and humanitarian support is now delivered through multilateral and non-government organisations. This provides an example of how Australia, through its multilateral relationships, can continue to support the citizens of Myanmar and demonstrate our commitment to inclusive democracy, without providing direct financial benefit to the military regime. This positions Australia well to take opportunities to support Myanmar’s return to democracy.

2.5 HOW WE TRACK PROGRESS

DFAT recognises that measuring results for governance is challenging. There is not an internationally recognised standard approach. Two key principles guide DFAT’s assessment of the effectiveness of governance programs: (1) the need to adapt and vary the approach considering the differing country contexts we operate in; and (2) that governance improvements often take a long time to emerge – positive changes can be difficult to identify over the short-term.

Performance of Australia’s development program support to democracy is assessed as a component of our broader Governance assistance, via the government’s overall three-tiered performance framework for Australia’s development program.

The first tier of this framework tracks the development context across the Indo-Pacific region against the pillars of stability, prosperity and resilience. The framework uses the global *Freedom House Index to track political rights and civil liberties* (key indicators of democracy and effective governance) for each country in the Pacific and Southeast Asia. This is one of three indicators for stability.

The second tier of the framework captures Australia’s contributions to the development priorities of our partner countries. Governance is positioned as contributing most directly to stability. **In 2021–22, Australia provided development assistance in 41 countries to strengthen governance systems and policies.**

Monitoring and performance assessment of individual development investments (the third tier of the framework) typically focuses on **four governance sub-sectors: political representation and accountability; public sector reform; law, justice and anti-corruption; and economic management.** Investment-level performance assessments inform annual country and regional performance reports, delivery partner and multilateral performance assessments and program evaluations.

The government has recently announced its plan to reinstate the target that 80 per cent of development investments effectively address gender equality in their implementation. Further, the government has introduced a gender equality objective mandate which requires all new ODA investments (valued at or over \$3 million) to include gender equality outcomes in their design. Accordingly, gender equality will be systematically integrated into DFAT investments. Over time, this will improve the effectiveness of Australia’s good governance and democracy programming.

3. FUTURE APPROACH TO SUPPORTING DEMOCRACY IN OUR REGION

Australia's support for democracy and accountable governance in our region is comprehensive and long-standing. There are now opportunities to consider building on our current approach.

The Foreign Minister has commissioned DFAT to produce a new whole-of-government policy for international development for finalisation in the first half of 2023. The government has released Terms of Reference guiding DFAT's preparation of the new policy and emphasised that the policy should reinforce the foundations of a peaceful, stable and prosperous Indo-Pacific, with a sharp focus on:

- i. building more effective, accountable states that can sustain their development
- ii. enhancing state and community resilience to external pressures and shocks
- iii. connecting partners with Australia and regional architecture, and
- iv. generating collective action on global challenges impacting our region.

Pursuing these four priority focus themes requires ongoing support for democracy and effective, accountable government institutions. The new policy, then, is a significant new process that will shape Australia's future development effort to support democracy.

In producing the new international development policy, DFAT will explore options to expand and enhance our work on democracy and effective, accountable governance. These options may include new or increased work in the following areas:

- **Effective implementation of the government's approach to gender equality programming**, particularly via the mandating of a gender equality objective for all new investment designs at or over \$3 million. *This more ambitious focus on gender equality will lead to improvements in Australian support for democracy and accountable governance.*
- **Stepping up efforts to carefully calibrate our approach to 'localising' our delivery of development assistance** so that Australian-funded development action is locally informed, locally led and meets the needs of local people. Strengthening our commitment to localisation in the design and delivery of Australian development cooperation will improve local agency and strengthen local accountabilities, including between partner governments and their citizens. This would drive an expansion of our efforts to support local champions of reform. It would also lead to more partnerships with local civil society and media organisations. *A stronger commitment to localisation can enhance Australian support for democracy and accountable governance.*
- **Deepening our engagement in education, particularly in the Pacific**, with a view to reinforcing Australia's support for democracy and good governance in the region. *Investment in education across the Pacific, particularly at secondary school level and through international scholarships, can foster stronger democratic and accountability awareness, instincts and commitments in the next generation of Pacific leaders.*
- **Increasing our investments in building public demand for accountability and transparency** through better civil society, private sector and citizen engagement, including active inclusion of First Nations perspectives. In many countries across the region, there are growing calls from emerging leaders in the private sector, civil society and the middle class for increased accountability and

transparency from government. *By more deliberately channelling support to these kinds of emerging leaders outside government we can broaden and deepen Australia's support for democratic accountability.*

- **Considering how Australia can address the emergence of new forms of technology and the rise of social media** which are having a disruptive influence in different countries across the region. *A strategic whole-of-government approach to addressing new forms of technology is important to supporting democracy and accountability in the region.*

These and other options will be tested through a comprehensive public consultation process to inform the international development policy. Public consultations, including a call for public submissions, are now underway. There will be further consultation with partner governments and organisations as we consider how to take forward implementation, taking into account specific country contexts and circumstances.

ANNEX A – FURTHER EXAMPLES OF KEY DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE PROGRAMS AND ENGAGEMENT

Southeast Asia, The Pacific, and Regional/Global Engagements

Note: These tables represent key programs and engagements supported by DFAT. As such, it represents the majority of DFAT’s work in democracy and governance. It does not, however, represent every program or engagement.

SOUTHEAST ASIA

Program / Title	Value ²⁰	Description	Theme/s
Brunei			
N/A	N/A	Brunei is not eligible to receive bilateral ODA funds and is an absolute monarchy. As such, DFAT are not undertaking democracy support activities. Post raises the importance of transparency, accountability, and the rule of law with interlocuters during engagements in country.	N/a
Cambodia			
Ponlok Chomnes	N/A	Our support to Cambodian think tanks and research institutes through Ponlok Chomnes is strengthening their capacity to undertake quality research to inform public policy development and facilitate greater interaction and engagement with Cambodian Government ministries.	Strengthening governance institutions
Assistance to the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia (ECCC)	\$44 million 2003-22	Australian support (third largest financier behind Cambodia and Japan) has contributed to the development of a public, detailed and independent record of the extensive, serious crimes of the Khmer Rouge regime; promoted the rule of law, fair trial rights and judicial capacity-building; and is helping victims and their families come to terms with their suffering.	Strengthening governance and judicial institutions
Asia Pacific Forum of National Human Rights Institutions / ACCESS Program / UN Women	N/A	Australia supports the development of laws and institutions that support accountability. We recently facilitated discussions between the Asia Pacific Forum of National Human Rights Institutions and the Cambodian Government’s Human Rights Committee, at the request of the Committee, on the drafting of a law to establish an independent national human rights institution. Under the ACCESS program and in partnership with UN Women , Australia is providing assistance to the Cambodian Ministry of Women’s Affairs on a draft bill on preventing violence against women and girls. This bill will help Cambodia better meet its obligations under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.	Human rights

²⁰ All figures in AUD unless otherwise specified.

Cambodia-Australia Partnership for Resilient Economic Development (CAP-RED)	\$87 million over 5 years	CAP-RED is designed to stimulate investment across Cambodia’s policy reform agenda, with a focus in three domains where Australia has a comparative advantage: agriculture and agro-processing; trade, investment and enterprise development; and infrastructure services. In addition, it is targeted towards reducing the constraints to women and marginalised people participating in and benefiting equally from the economy.	Strengthening financial institutions Gender equality, diversity and social inclusion (GEDSI)
Indonesia			
Democratic Resilience Pilot Program (Dem-Res)	\$6.7million 2021-2024	<p>This program is piloting innovative approaches to strengthen democratic institutions and the quality of democratic processes in Indonesia, delivered by IFES (International Foundation for Electoral Systems) and The Asia Foundation (TAF). The program works with Indonesia’s electoral management bodies (i.e. Indonesian General Election Commission (KPU) and the National Elections Supervisory Body (Bawaslu)) and civil society organisations, to improve electoral policies and procedures at national and subnational levels.</p> <p>Across 2021, Dem-Res</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> supported KPU and Bawaslu to form a Multi-stakeholder Forum on Disinformation with civil society to prepare for potential disinformation attacks emerging at the local level ahead of the 2024 elections; trained 167 local civil society representatives to engage and influence local authorities and to advocate for more inclusive local decision-making processes; facilitated Government of Indonesia MOUs with civil society organisations (CSOs) to increase public access to election data, and trained 44 CSOs in digital literacy to participate in local political discourse. 	Elections support Gender equality & social inclusion Support for civil society organisations and voices
KOMPAK (Governance for Growth)	\$178 million 2015–2018 and 2019-June 2022	<p>KOMPAK was a DFAT-funded facility of \$178 million that supported Indonesian Government efforts to reduce poverty and strengthen equality. Through KOMPAK, Australia:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> contributed to Indonesia’s progress in strengthening democratic systems and improving basic service delivery. strengthening of national policies aimed at ensuring access to identity documents, particularly for groups. Without any legal identity documents, it’s not possible to access public services, receive government support or to vote in elections. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> KOMPAK supported village level governments to improve the quality and coverage of legal identity services. The village-based civil registration improved population data and its system will support the broadening of democratic processes. worked with the Government of Indonesia to assist 15 provinces developing their local action plans for people with disabilities, resulting in over 50 Disabled Peoples Organisations being involved in consultation. 	Elections support Gender equality & social inclusion
Laos			

ASEAN Australia Counter Trafficking (AACT)	N/A	In 2020, in consultation with the AACT, Lao judges identified challenges in understanding and implementing victim sensitivity in courts. In response, AACT supported the People’s Supreme Court to conduct a victim-sensitive court (VSC) workshop with 29 judges, enabling Lao judges to learn best practice from other ASEAN member states. A Technical Working Group of Lao judges was established, with support from ASEAN-AACT, to draft Lao specific guidelines, and engaging four ministries (foreign affairs, justice, procuracy and police)and gaining in principle approval. Once final, Laos will be the first ASEAN member state to develop VSC guidelines.	Strengthening governance and accountability institutions
Mekong-Australia Partnership (MAP)	N/A	Under the Mekong-Australia Partnership , Australia (through the World Bank) is supporting Laos to improve public financial management and domestic resource mobilisation, including work on the state-owned enterprise reform agenda, tax administration and debt management, as well as the education sector. Building capacity in this area will equip decision-makers with tools to make timely policy decisions that will impact Laos’ long-term prosperity.	Strengthening governance and accountability institutions
Human Rights protection and promotion	\$815,000 2017-2022	Australian Government-funded programs supporting human rights protection and promotion in Laos (\$815,000, 2017-22) included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o supporting consultations with civil society organisations on Laos’ Universal Periodic Review and report the UN Committee on the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights o strengthening capacity of human rights lecturers at the National University of Laos o delivering workshops on human rights for Lao government officials including on disability rights. 	Human rights
Human Rights Dialogue	N/A	We hold a biennial Human Rights Dialogue with Laos where we have a constructive discussion on a broad range of human rights issues. The Dialogue was last held in December 2021.	Human rights
Malaysia			
Malaysian Parliamentary Reform Project	\$100,000 2019-20	DFAT provided support for the Malaysian Parliamentary Reform Project in 2019-20 (\$100,000) which worked with the UNDP to build the capacity of Malaysia’s Parliament. The Parliamentary reform work helped strengthen the Parliamentary Special Select Committee system in Malaysia.	Elections support Strengthening governance and accountability institutions
Malaysiakini’s Youth Debathon	Approx. \$10,135 2023	We supported Malaysiakini’s Youth Debathon 2023 to provide young Malaysians with training in thinking critically and exposure to important policy debates.	Strengthening governance and accountability institutions Gender equality, diversity and social inclusion

Myanmar			
Not currently publicised due to safety & security concerns	N/A	Our development and humanitarian support is delivered through multilateral and non-government organisations and do not provide direct financial benefit to the military regime. We do not currently publicise our partners or their activities due to safety and security concerns.	
Philippines – case studies			
Philippines Commission on Elections	N/A	In 2022, we supported the Philippine Commission on Elections to implement COVID safe and accessible elections.	Elections support
Election monitoring	N/A	Australia’s Embassy in Manila monitors elections , demonstrating support for the Philippine democratic process.	Elections support
Mediation of violence	N/A	Through our Peacebuilding in Conflict-Affected Mindanao Program we supported the mediation of 74 cases of violent clan conflicts, with 20 formally resolved , ultimately contributing to the stability, security and prosperity in the country.	Strengthening governance & accountability institutions
Training senior Philippine Government officials	N/A	Provided training to 327 senior Philippine government officials through 12 short courses on topics including: policy research and development; GEDSI mainstreaming; and data analytics.	Strengthening governance & accountability institutions. Gender equality, diversity and social inclusion
Philippines - investments			
The Philippines Australia Citizens Empowerment Program	\$8.6million 2018-2023	The Philippines Australia Citizens Empowerment Program (\$8.6 million, over 2018-23) which aims to support Philippine government bodies, facilitating their collaboration with civil society organisations, to improve outcomes in the human rights space (including support for freedom of information and expression).	Human rights Support for civil society organisations & voices
Strengthening Philippine Justices Responses to Violent Extremism Program	\$8.1 million 2019-2024	The Strengthening Philippine Justice Responses to Violent Extremism Program (\$8.1 million, over 2019-24) which provides targeted assistance to Philippine law and justice agencies to strengthen their rule of law, uphold peace and order, and good government.	Strengthening governance and accountability institutions
The Social Protection, Innovation and Policy Engagement Program	\$11 million 2015-23	The Social Protection, Innovation and Policy Engagement Program (\$11 million, over 2015-23) which addresses social protection reform by supporting the Department of Social Welfare and Development make evidence-based decisions and policies which will increase access and utilisation of social services by key vulnerable groups especially indigenous people, homeless street families and the disabled. When society includes and supports its vulnerable groups, people are safer, and democratic institutions become better trusted and more resilient.	Strengthening governance & accountability institutions/ Gender equality & social inclusion

The Research for Inclusive Development Initiative	\$5.5million 2019-23	The Research for Inclusive Development Initiative (\$5.5 million, over 2019-23) aims to contribute to inclusive economic growth in the Philippines and achievement of the Philippines’ development objectives by supporting evidence-based policy and program implementation and by strengthening policy eco-systems. Evidence-based interventions are more likely to be effective in changing targeted behaviour if implemented with integrity.	Strengthening governance & accountability organisations
The Peacebuilding in Conflict-Affected Mindanao Program	\$94.6 million 2014-23	The Peacebuilding in Conflict-Affected Mindanao Program (\$94.6 million, over 2014-23) provides support to the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) - Government of Philippines (GPH) peace process, through the United Nations Development Program, World Bank, and other NGOs. Armed conflict can cause democracies to fail. Efforts aimed at enabling and equipping democratic institutions with the knowledge, frameworks and tools for dialogue, engagement and peacebuilding, nurture and protect peaceful, inclusive societies.	Strengthening governance & accountability institutions
The Australia Awards Philippines	N/A	The Australia Awards Philippines (short and long courses) help strengthen public policy expertise, governance skills and gender and disability equality in government amongst other areas.	Strengthening governance & accountability institutions. Gender equality, diversity and social inclusion
The Education Pathways to Peace in Mindanao (Pathways)		The Education Pathways to Peace in Mindanao (Pathways) is helping to improve the Islamic (madrasah) education system to deliver quality basic education in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM). Activities that showcase inclusion foster more cohesive and stable communities.	Strengthening governance & accountability institutions
Thailand			
Asia Network for Free and Fair Elections’ (ANFREL) International Election Observation Mission (IEOM)		In 2007, 2011 and 2019, Australia supported the Asia Network for Free and Fair Elections (ANFREL) International Election Observation Mission (IEOM) to observe Thailand’s elections. In 2019, ANFREL deployed 34 international observers to Thailand and was the only international observation group present. ANFREL’s objectives were to: promote and assess free and fair electoral processes; and provide means for stronger advocacy in political and human rights. This was achieved by conducting campaign monitoring, interviews with key electoral stakeholders, desk review and visits to polling stations. ANFREL raised awareness of the electoral process, enabled broader discussions, produced three overarching reports, and identified shortcomings.	Elections support
	N/A	In 2018, a delegation of Australian parliamentarians visited Thailand. The delegation met the President of the Legislative Assembly and the Foreign Affairs Sub-Committee at Parliament House. This visit created an opportunity to continue mutual dialogue on parliamentary engagement, to explain our system of parliamentary democracy and to build and maintain people-to-people connections.	People-to-people links

Timor-Leste			
NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP)	N/A	ANCP supported Oxfam Australia to strengthen the capacity of seven civil society organisations and networks in Timor-Leste to monitor and influence Government policies and programs at national and municipal levels in Covalima and Oecusse. Through Partner Capacity Assessments (PCAs), 100% of project partners showed increased skills and knowledge in influencing and monitoring of the State budget to better address people with disabilities' needs.	Support for Civil society organisations and voices
Timor-Leste Police Development Program (TLPDP)	N/A	TLPDP works with Timor-Leste's National Police service (Policia Nacional de Timor-Leste or PNTL) to reform its use-of-force policy and training towards a contemporary human rights compliant policing model. TLPDP also provides significant advice on the conduct of the PNTL operations to provide public safety and security for the elections.	Strengthening governance and accountability institutions
Partnership for Inclusive Prosperity (PROSIVU)	N/A	PROSIVU is working with the Timor-Leste Government to support sustainable public financial management, inclusive economic growth and better public administration.	Strengthening governance & accountability institutions
Vietnam			
Human rights protection and promotion	\$2.6 million 2017-22	Australian Government-funded programs supporting human rights protection and promotion in Vietnam (\$2.6 million, 2017-22) include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o developing the Master of Human Rights Law course at the Vietnam National University School of Law and providing scholarships to Vietnamese students undertaking this course o Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) support for the development of human rights education for schools o a partnership with the Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry to increase human rights awareness among business o support for capacity-building for civil society organisations. 	Human rights Support for civil society organisations and voices
Human Rights Dialogue	N/A	Australia cooperates with like-minded countries and raises concerns regarding freedom of religion and belief with Vietnamese authorities, including during the Human Rights Dialogue which was last held in December 2021.	Human rights
The Australia-World Bank Partnership	\$30 million 2017-23	The Australia-World Bank Partnership (\$30 million, 2017-23) is supporting key Government of Vietnam reform challenges in green infrastructure, digital transformation, gender and ethnic minority inclusion, the Mekong Delta and economic transformation.	Strengthening governance & accountability organisations
Friends of Freedom of Religion or Belief Group	N/A	In 2018, Australia established the Hanoi 'Friends of Freedom of Religion or Belief Group' – this group allows diplomats from Australia and other like-minded countries to meet religious leaders from registered and unregistered religious groups.	People to people links
Southeast Asia regional			
ASEAN		We support active collaboration and mutual assistance on matters of common interest through our cooperation with AESAN, for example:	Strengthen governance &

		<p>-under the ASEAN-Australia Development Cooperation Program Phase II we supported ASEAN-led efforts to narrow the development divide within ASEAN, deepen regional integration and enhance competitiveness</p> <p>- supported the development of the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity 2025, the ASEAN Sustainable Urbanisation Strategy, and the Initiative for ASEAN Integration Workplan.</p>	accountability institutions
Mekong-Australia Partnership (MAP)		<p>The Mekong-Australia Partnership (MAP) has supported the International Foundation for Electoral Systems’ (IFES) work with civil society organisations in Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam to counter hate speech and COVID-19 disinformation and built digital media literacy of vulnerable populations.</p> <p>Under MAP, the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission is also partnering with government counterparts in Cambodia, Vietnam and Thailand on competition and consumer protection themes including to support implementation of consumer legislation.</p>	Support for civil society organisations & voices

THE PACIFIC

Program / Title	Value	Description	Theme/s
Cook Islands			
Oa Tumanava Partnership	N/A	Australia and Cook Islands signed a bilateral partnership arrangement (‘Oa Tumanava Partnership) on 18 October 2022 in Cook Islands. Under the arrangement, we agree to “work together to promote a peaceful, prosperous and resilient region, underpinned by rules, norms and respect for sovereignty”.	Strengthening governance & accountability institutions
Pacific Islands, Australia and New Zealand Electoral Administrators (PIANZEA)	N/A	Cook Islands is a member of the Pacific Islands, Australia and New Zealand Electoral Administrators (PIANZEA) Network, of which the Australian Electoral Commission is the Secretariat. Through PIANZEA, Pacific Electoral Administrators share electoral information among member countries and provide assistance where possible.	Elections support
Federated States of Micronesia			
Improving the Quality of Basic Education project	\$2.4million 2017-23	Australia co-finances the Improving the Quality of Basic Education project (\$2.4million, 2017-23), with the key goal to improve numeracy and literacy standards across FSM’s four states. Higher literacy and numeracy enable citizens to more fully engage in community and public life and participate in democratic processes, contributing to a country's stability.	Strengthening governance & accountability
Fiji			
Fiji Elections Office	N/A	DFAT supports the strengthening of democratic institutions in Fiji to advance inclusive political representation, civic participation and to build the capacity of Fiji’s news media. Key programs include a longstanding twinning arrangement between the Australian Electoral Commission and the Fijian Elections Office, the establishment of the Fijian Press Club, and the Fiji Parliamentary Support Project that supports the development of systems and processes for Fiji’s parliament to effectively and efficiently undertake its legislative, oversight and representative roles.	Elections support

The Australian Electoral Commission (AEC)	N/A	The Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) has a longstanding twinning program with the Fijian Elections Office (FEO) to enhance the knowledge and skills of FEO staff through training and capacity building. Through this program AEC staff have been deployed to Fiji to support the FEO's strategic and operational planning, and to provide operational and technical support during elections. Fiji Electoral Commission (FEC) and FEO staff have participated in visits to the AEC including through an FEC study tour in 2014, and the Election Visitor Program for the Australian federal election in 2019.	Elections support
Fijian Press Club	N/A	Since 2021, the Australian Government has partnered with the Fiji Media Association to establish the Fijian Press Club (2022 - 2023) . This initiative seeks to strengthen the capacity of Fiji news media journalists and promote democratic norms in Fiji, particularly by increasing public accountability and transparency. The Fiji Press Club was formally launched in May 2022 and includes a series of public lectures, networking opportunities, and capacity building through the Pacific Media Assistance Scheme (PACMAS). The Fiji Media Association is comprised of local media organisations including the Fiji Broadcasting Corporation, Mai TV, Fiji TV, Communications Fiji Limited, Fiji Sun, Fiji Times, and Fiji Live.	Strengthening governance & accountability institutions
Kiribati			
Growth and Economic Management Program	\$1 million since 2017 \$7.6 million 2010-2022 FY2022 \$3 million	Through the Growth and Economic Management Program (\$7.6 million from 2010-2022), Australia is investing in Kiribati's stability and prosperity. Australia has supported Kiribati for over a decade to strengthen economic governance reforms to expand the country's revenue base, promote financial inclusion in order to build savings and financial literacy; and embedding a formal social protection system. Australia has provided budget support since 2017 of around \$1 million annually to an Economic Reform Program that is jointly led and funded by World Bank, Asian Development, New Zealand, the European Union and Australia. In FY2022, Australia provided an additional \$3 million in budget support, earmarked to social protection reform.	Strengthen governance & accountability institutions
Pacific Law and Justice Development Program	N/A	During the past two years, under the Pacific Law and Justice Development Program, AGD has provided bilateral law and justice support to Kiribati in relation to cybercrime and anti-corruption. In June 2022, AGD provided Kiribati officials from the Public Service Office (PSO), the Leadership Commission, Attorney General's Office and the Kiribati Police Service with anti-corruption policy development training. AGD has also provided preliminary assistance to support Kiribati's ambition meet its obligations under the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC) by more effectively criminalising corrupt activities.	Strengthening governance & accountability institutions
Nauru			
Nauru's Electoral Commission	N/A	The Australian High Commission in Nauru, at the request of the Nauru's Electoral Commission, provided election observation support during Nauru's general elections in September 2022. As one of approximately five international observer groups, Australia's efforts contributed to raising voter confidence and improving the quality of democratic elections. Nauru is a member of the Pacific Islands, Australia and New Zealand Electoral Administrators (PIANZEA) Network, of which the Australian Electoral	Elections support

		Commission is the Secretariat. Through PIANZEA, Pacific Electoral Administrators share electoral information among member countries and provide assistance where possible.	
Nauru Public Sector Reform Program	\$56.9 million from FY2009-2022	Under the Nauru Public Sector Reform Program (valued at \$56.9 million from FY2009-2022), DFAT has been providing support to the Government of Nauru to improve public financial management, strengthen economic governance and incentivise savings, with a view to improving Nauru's economic viability and reducing its reliance on external support.	Strengthening governance & accountability institutions
Niue			
Fale Fono II	\$357,490 + \$160,870	Niue's new parliamentary complex, Fale Fono II, was opened on 27 May 2022. The building complex replaced the first Parliament building, Fale Fono, which was built and gifted by the Government of New Zealand in 1978. The current complex was funded primarily by New Zealand (NZD 5 million/AUD 4.47 million) with complementary support from Australia and Japan (audio system). Australia provided AUD 357,490 for equipment and furniture for the building and AUD 160,870 for exterior works including ramps to improve accessibility (not part of the original design).	Strengthening governance & accountability organisations
Pacific Islands, Australia and New Zealand Electoral Administrators (PIANZEA) Network	N/A	Niue is a member of the Pacific Islands, Australia and New Zealand Electoral Administrators (PIANZEA) Network, of which the Australian Electoral Commission is the Secretariat. Through PIANZEA, Pacific Electoral Administrators share electoral information among member countries and provide assistance where possible.	Elections support
Palau			
Pacific Media Assistance Scheme (PACMAS)		Australia supports training of local journalists in Palau, including budget and election reporting workshops in 2020 (last election was in November 2020) through PACMAS (the regional <i>Pacific Media Assistance Scheme</i>).	Support for civil society organisations & voices
Australian Taxation Office	N/A	Australia is supporting economic reform efforts, including assistance through the Australian Taxation Office in the implementation of the Palau Goods and Services Tax.	Strengthening governance & accountability institutions
Pacific Islands, Australia and New Zealand Electoral Administrators (PIANZEA) Network.	N/A	Palau Election Commission officials have participated in regional training provided through the Australian Electoral Commission as part of Pacific Islands, Australia and New Zealand Electoral Administrators (PIANZEA) Network.	Elections support
Papua New Guinea			
Papua New Guinea-Australia Comprehensive Strategic and Economic		The Papua New Guinea-Australia Comprehensive Strategic and Economic Partnership (CSEP) sets out our joint commitment to participatory democracy and accountable institutions. DFAT partners with other Australian agencies (i.e. AEC, AUSTRAC, Home Affairs, ADF, AFP) to help PNG strengthen democratic institutions and systems, including by increasing public demand for transparency and accountability; enhance judicial	Strengthening governance & accountability institutions

Partnership (CSEP)		systems and the rule of law; support electoral systems and strengthen civil society. The assistance is delivered through technical assistance, capacity-building, infrastructure development and core funding (for example for Transparency International).	
PNG's electoral system	2022 approx. \$20 million as part of broader \$30 million over four years	Democratic elections are fundamental to democratic governance. Australia's support for PNG's electoral system and conduct of elections is a key part of our approach. For the 2022 election we provided around \$20 million in assistance, as part of a broader \$30 million four-year support program. Australia provided technical advisory and capacity-building assistance, material support and voter awareness initiatives. Australia also provided technical, planning, logistical and transport assistance through the Australian Defence Force and the Australian Federal Police.	Elections support
Building Community Engagement Program (BCEP)	N/A	Australia's new Building Community Engagement Program (BCEP) works with civil society and leaders to strengthen public demand for transparency and accountability. At the grass-roots level we support civil society and other organisations demand government services, such as water and sanitation. At a broader level, through our media partnership with ABC International and the PNG National Broadcasting Corporation, we support the PNG media to act in the public interest and help other BCEP program partners understand how to engage the media in advocacy and in civic education programs. We also support PNG civil society organisations build coalitions around policy reform objectives.	Support for civil society organisations & voices
Ombudsman	N/A	A final example of Australian support is the work we do in the law and justice sector, including through provision of judges, capacity building and advice for law reform in selected areas, and assistance with strengthening PNG's accountability processes, including the Ombudsman. This is supported by police capacity building to improve law enforcement and police effectiveness.	Strengthening governance & accountability institutions
Republic of the Marshall Islands			
Australian Electoral Commission	N/A	Through the Australian Electoral Commission, Australia is providing modest technical assistance to support RMI to deliver its next national elections in 2023, this includes support with the Global Voter Registration System (GVRS).	Elections support
RMI's Census	\$26,460	Australia also provides a range of other support that helps improve the foundations for democracy, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a contribution of \$26,460 to support RMI's census in 2021 • small scale support to RMI's National Women's Forum in March 2022, which helps empower women to run in elections, and • support to the new Pacific Media Institute in Majuro with training and mentoring for journalists (through PACMAS). 	Strengthening governance & accountability institutions Gender equality & social inclusion
Samoa			

Legislative Assembly Office (LAO)	N/A	Parliamentary assistance - Australia is funding the construction of a new \$ 13 million Legislative Assembly Office (LAO). This the second and final phase of the Samoa Parliament Complex Redevelopment program. The first phase was the construction of the Samoa Parliament House, which opened in 2018. The LAO is expected to be complete in mid-2023.	Strengthening democracy
Governance for Economic Growth Program – ‘Tautai’	\$45 million – 8yrs	The new Governance for Economic Growth Program – ‘Tautai’ is an \$45 million, eight-year (four plus four year) investment that consolidates and takes forward Australia’s development programming in the sectors of governance, economic growth, private sector and infrastructure. It is anticipated the program will be fully mobilised in November 2022.	Strengthening governance & accountability institutions
Solomon Islands			
Pacific Media Assistance Scheme (PACMAS)		Australia is committed to supporting Solomon Islands’ democratic processes. Current assistance focuses on media and elections. We are supporting development of a well-functioning, skilled and independent media sector capable of reporting on issues in the public interest (through the <i>Pacific Media Assistance Scheme</i> –PACMAS); and we are strengthening the electoral system with a focus on election administration and logistics, electoral reform, women’s leadership and representation, and voter awareness (through AEC and UN).	Elections support Gender equality
Strengthening the Electoral Cycle in the Solomon Islands Project (SECSIP)	N/A	From 14-19 June 2022, the DFAT-funded <i>Strengthening the Electoral Cycle in the Solomon Islands Project</i> (SECSIP)—implemented by the UN—held an Outstanding Women Training and Planning Workshop in West Guadalcanal. Over 40 representatives from nine provinces including the electoral, development, and human rights sectors gathered to identify practical activities which can be undertaken to contribute to enhancing women’s leadership and political representation in the country. The workshop provided practical tools and equipped the female participants with enhanced leadership skills and experience, helping them contribute effectively to decision-making in public, private and multilateral institutions.	Elections support Gender equality Human rights
Pacific Media Assistance Scheme (PACMAS)	N/A	In 2021, under PACMAS, ABC International Development supported the Media Association of Solomon Islands (MASI) to develop a code of ethics that set the benchmark for the professional standards Solomon Islands journalists should maintain. As reported in Solomon Islands media, when the new code of ethics and supporting materials were distributed in November 2021, MASI President Georgina Kekea encouraged journalists to use the code of ethics and accompanying poster guides as tools to assist them in their day-to-day work. ‘We have a code of ethics to abide by and that we must strive to ensure we uphold the principles of journalism in all that we do’, the MASI President said. ‘The credibility of the media industry lies in your hands.’	Strengthening governance & accountability institutions
UNDP	N/A	Australia’s long-term contribution to electoral strengthening through UNDP and community organisations promoted and strengthened women’s political participation and led to an increased number of women contesting national and provincial elections. In this period Solomon Islands elected its first female provincial Premier (in Isabel Province).	Elections support Gender equality, diversity and

			social inclusion
Tonga			
parliamentary assistance	N/A	Australia is supporting the reconstruction of Tonga’s Parliament House and Legislative Officers, which were destroyed by Cyclone Gita in 2018. The project is being led by New Zealand under a Delegated Cooperation Arrangement, with Australian’s contribution financed by the Australia Infrastructure Financing Facility for the Pacific (AIFFP) and the bilateral development program.	Strengthening governance & accountability institutions
Tonga Electoral Support Program	N/A	Under the Tonga Electoral Support Program, the Australian Electoral Commission provides technical assistance and mentoring to the Tonga Electoral Commission. Australian Electoral Commission personnel visited Tonga in October 2022 to meet with their counterparts in the Tonga Electoral Commission and discuss the Tonga Electoral Support Program.	Elections support
Tuvalu			
Good Governance and Economic Growth	\$40 million 2011-22	<p>Australia implements a range of initiatives through our Good Governance and Economic Growth investment (2011 – 2022, \$40 million), including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • continued support for the Tuvalu Trust Fund (TTF) through annual investments [\$1 million in 2021-22], a representative on the TTF Board of Directors, a technical adviser to the TTF Director and a technical adviser to the TTF Investment Committee • budget support [\$2.566 million in 2021-22] and policy reform initiatives which enhance and enable the Government of Tuvalu’s economic reform agenda and fiscal resilience and sustainability • support for the Government of Tuvalu’s Tau-Maketi (marketplace) project, which provides a platform for small and medium-sized businesses, particularly female-owned businesses, to regularly sell their products and endeavours to encourage aspiring entrepreneurs to develop commercial ventures - this initiative supports Tuvalu’s economic recovery in the face of hardship from external impacts such as COVID-19 pandemic, and • support for the rollout of COVID-19 vaccines and procurement of essential medical supplies. 	Strengthening governance & accountability institutions
Vanuatu			
Government of Vanuatu	N/A	Australia is Vanuatu’s largest bilateral development partner, and we are committed to supporting its democratic processes, and strengthening its institutions and governance systems. Key initiatives include supporting institutions across Vanuatu’s ‘chain of justice’ to strengthen the rule of law and facilitating economic reforms and stronger public financial management to support more transparent and effective government spending and service delivery. Australia recently provided substantial logistical support to the Government of Vanuatu, to deliver its snap national election on 13 October 2022.	<p>Elections support</p> <p>Strengthening governance & accountability institutions</p>

Government of Vanuatu (GoV)	N/A	At the request of Government of Vanuatu (GoV), Australia provided substantial assistance to support the delivery of Vanuatu’s snap national election held on 13 October 2022 . This included supporting ballot delivery and collection logistics across all six of Vanuatu’s provinces through the deployment of two RAAF aircraft, two civilian chartered helicopters and one civilian chartered sea vessel. Australia also provided a technical adviser to support the Vanuatu Electoral Office through the Australia Assists program, while two Australian federal Members of Parliament (the Hon Michael McCormack MP and Mr Sam Lim MP), and 15 local and diplomatic staff from the Australian High Commission participated as accredited election observers in a multi-country election observation mission.	Elections support
Vanuatu Australia Policing and Justice Program (VAPJP)	N/A	Australia provides support for governance and institutional strengthening in Vanuatu through a range of bilateral programs across the justice, policing, education, health and economic sectors. The Vanuatu Australia Policing and Justice Program (VAPJP) , is providing institutional strengthening across Vanuatu’s whole ‘chain of justice’ through direct support to Vanuatu’s Ministry of Justice, Police Force, Office of Public Prosecutions, State Law Office, Vanuatu Law Reform Commission, and its court system. This is improving access to quality and transparent justice, policing, and community services in Vanuatu, particularly for vulnerable groups, and is helping to strengthen the rule of law.	Strengthening governance & accountability institutions
Government of Vanuatu – Governance for Growth	N/A	Australia’s Governance for Growth Program (GFG) is focused on working with GoV to facilitate economic reform and improved public financial management measures to support transparent and effective government spending and service delivery. GFG has long-standing partnerships with key central GoV agencies, including the Ministry of Finance and Economic Management, the Ministry of Tourism and Trade, and the National Audit Office. GFG is also providing ongoing support to the Vanuatu Broadcast and Television.	
Pacific Regional programs			
The Pacific Islands Australia New Zealand Electoral Administrators (PIANZEA) Network	\$2 million 2021-2025	<p>Australia, through the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) is a long-standing provider of electoral support and advice to Pacific Island countries. In addition to bilateral electoral assistance programs, Australia also provides \$2m (2021 to 2025) to the AEC to administer and implement the PIANZEA program.</p> <p>PIANZEA aims to strengthen the capacity of electoral administrators and improve the governance and sustainability of Electoral Management Bodies (EMBs) across the Pacific. It focuses on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Networking, Sharing and Support: for example, by facilitating Senior Officials Meetings that provide an opportunity for frank discussions on challenges and experiences • Professional and Organisational Development: for example, a Women in Election Management Virtual Mentoring Program that focuses on developing the technical and leadership skills of female staff working in the elections sector • Operational Support: for example, technical assistance in relation to strategic, operational or policy issues 	<p>Elections support</p> <p>People-to-people links</p> <p>Gender equality</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Election Visitor Programs: for example, providing participants with practical experience of another state's election processes, with the goal of participants then improving their own country's procedures, and Generic Voter Registration System (GVRS) support: the GVRS is an AEC-developed and maintained voter registration system used in 5 Pacific countries that facilitates the development of more robust and accurate voter rolls. 	
Pacific Media Assistance Scheme (PACMAS)	N/A	Australia continued to support journalists and communication practitioners in the Pacific to report responsibly on critical issues in the region (including on COVID-19) through the Pacific Media Assistance Scheme (PACMAS). During 2021-22, more than 220 participants from Pacific media organisations and 153 participants from non-media organisations received PACMAS training. Sixteen out of the 18 training activities were led by Pacific facilitators previously trained by PACMAS, demonstrating the capacity strengthening impact the program is having on the ground	Support for civil society organisations and voices
United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)	\$3 million 2021-2024	<p>Since 2012, Australia has partnered with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) to strengthen anti-corruption institutions, systems and processes in the Pacific. Australia's early efforts focused on helping Pacific Island countries to better understand international anti-corruption standards and practices, by supporting countries to ratify the UN Convention against Corruption (UNCAC), and then participate in self-assessments and external reviews of their countries' anti-corruption frameworks (consistent with UNCAC requirements).</p> <p>Building on this earlier work, Australia is providing \$3m (from 2021 to 2024) to the UNODC to provide technical assistance and support to Pacific Island countries to address any gaps that have been identified from previous reviews, and to support countries to establish and effectively implement the laws, systems and processes necessary to prevent and combat corruption in their context. For example, in 2021-22, consistent with partner priorities the UNODC delivered training courses to Vanuatu's Office of the Public Prosecutor to help strengthen its investigative capacity.</p>	Strengthening governance & accountability institutions
Pacific Women Lead	\$170 million 2021-2026	Australia is a lead advocate in the Pacific region in advancing gender equality and disability inclusion. Advancing the rights of women and girls is a priority for Australia because we recognise that gender equality is a fundamental human right and is essential for social and economic development. <i>Pacific Women Lead</i> (\$170m 2021-2026) is working in partnership with Pacific organisations to ensure that Pacific women and girls, in all their diversity, are safe and equitably share in resources, opportunities and decision-making, with men and boys. The program is enabling dialogue between government, civil society and the private sector including through support for the Triennial Conference of Pacific Women. The program focuses on women's leadership at all levels, from local to global and in a range of sectors beyond parliamentary politics including climate change and women's leadership in sport.	<p>Gender equality & social inclusion</p> <p>Human rights</p> <p>Support for civil society organisations and voices</p>
Pacific Australian Emerging Leaders Summit (PAELS)	N/A	The inaugural Pacific Australian Emerging Leaders Summit (PAELS) will take place in Canberra in November 2022, with around 50 young church leaders from Australia (including First Nations delegates) and 19 Pacific countries in attendance. PAELS brings together young and emerging Christian leaders (22-35 years old) from Australia and the Pacific and Timor-Leste. It supports	Elections support

	<p>democracy by aiming to cultivate stronger ties between the next generation of church leaders through the exploration and discussion of key regional development and justice issues. By engaging with Australia’s parliamentarians and top regional decision makers, the delegates are encouraged to pursue democracy by prioritising issues such as climate change, gender equality, self-determination, youth empowerment and economic recovery. Over the duration of the event, the summit will build the capacity of young leaders in our region to further develop their skills in civic participation, policy engagement, governance, and leadership, and provide them the chance to learn more about technical areas of development assistance and foreign policy.</p>	<p>Strengthening governance & accountability institutions</p>
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REGIONAL AND GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT

Program/Title	Description	Themes
<p>Australia Awards</p>	<p>Australia Awards are prestigious scholarships offered to citizens in partner countries to undertake study, research and professional development in Australia. Australia Awards build human capital and contribute to shared development priorities in partner countries, including on governance and leadership. The Australia Awards program is currently made up of a range of modalities including long-term scholarships (Bachelors, Masters and PhD level), short course (non-degree) Awards and ‘on Award’ enrichment activities. This includes Awards for PNG citizens to study in PNG, and Pacific citizens to study at accredited universities in the Pacific.</p>	<p>People to people links</p>
<p>Women Leading and Influencing (WLI) [An Australia Awards initiative]</p>	<p>The Women Leading and Influencing (WLI, 2022-2026) initiative strengthens the intent of Australia Awards scholarships program by supporting women’s leadership for positive development outcomes in the Pacific. It creates space for emerging Pacific women leaders to explore strategies to challenge gendered perspectives, craft networks and coalitions to lead in their communities. This approach also engages with men as allies for women’s leadership and builds on the successful <i>Women’s Leadership Initiative</i> pilot (2017-2022), the program.</p> <p>WLI alumni include Adi Vasiti Soko (Fiji), expert in geospatial science and surveying and first female director of Fiji’s National Disaster Management Office (NDMO). As NDMO head, her leadership has strengthened Fiji’s disaster risk governance through improved disaster risk reduction policies and laws, making inclusion critical to success in disaster risk reduction and finding new ways to engage women and people with disabilities. In 2021 Vasiti won the inaugural UN Women’s International Network on Disaster Risk Reduction Excellence Award.</p>	<p>Gender equality, diversity and social inclusion</p> <p>People to people links</p>
<p>Civil Society – DFAT’s approach</p>	<p>DFAT takes action to protect the role of civil society as fundamental to democratic participation, by advocating against “anti-CSO” laws and policies, and by contributing to a strong enabling environment for CSOs, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • using convening power to bring together Civil Society Organisations • funding programs, such as Transparency International (TI – see below) • promoting programs that make public information available to the public, to help communities in the Indo-Pacific to enhance transparency and accountability. This has included supporting the enactment of a right to 	<p>Support for civil society organisations and voices</p> <p>Gender equality,</p>

	<p>information law and a right to information portal in Sri Lanka, which enables citizens to request access to government held information.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • supporting public-private partnerships for service delivery, including with CSOs. It provides funding directly to civil society organisations, and has several funding windows for civil society organisations. <p>The Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP) is the Australian Government’s longest running and largest NGO program. Australian NGOs work with civil society organisations in our partner countries to foster civic space – almost one quarter of the 2,000 local partners in the ANCP were civil society organisations in 2021-22.</p> <p>DFAT is aware that space and support for civil society organisations and actions can become increasingly unstable as countries transition away from eligibility for development assistance. DFAT carefully considers ways to maintain its political and practical engagement in these contexts.</p>	<p>diversity and social inclusion</p>
<p>Transparency International (TI) Secretariat</p>	<p>The Transparency International Indo-Pacific Partnerships Program (TII-PPP) is a \$9.5 million partnership (Jan 2020 – Dec 2023) which is co-funded by DFAT and the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT). The objective is to contribute to reduced corruption in the Indo-Pacific region by empowering a strong and independent civil society. The TI Secretariat, chapters and partner organisations across the region engage people in anti-corruption initiatives and advocate for good governance at national, regional, and global levels.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The STRONNGG Programme in Asia supported corruption fighters, including the Anti-Corruption Agency (ACA) Strengthening initiative. • In 2022 Transparency International (TIA) launched the Infrastructure Corruption Risk Assessment Tool (ICRAT) for the Asia Pacific Region. 	<p>Support for civil society organisations and voices</p> <p>Strengthening governance & accountability institutions</p>
<p>Transparency International Country chapters</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the Maldives, the chapter finalized drafting an Asset Declaration bill which has subsequently been shared with the Parliament of Maldives (Majlis) -the bill is officially placed on the Majlis’ 2022 agenda. The chapter is also working with the Whistleblower Protection Unit to jointly draft and propose an amendment to the Whistleblower Protection Act and relating regulations. • TI Mongolia has continued to play a key role in providing inputs into and advocating for draft anti-corruption legislation, including around whistleblower protection, beneficial ownership, and political party financing. The chapter met with the Prime Minister as the government committed to take onboard TI Mongolia’s recommendations to improve governance and national legal frameworks. • TI Pakistan’s continuous and effective work around Right to Information has continued to be successful in 2021: the Balochistan RTI Act includes several recommendations that had been provided by the chapter. • In Pakistan, TI successfully advocated for the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Government to enact whistleblower protection laws, and in Cambodia, TI is a member of the drafting committee responsible for developing whistleblower protection and witness protection laws. • In 2021, chapters including TI Indonesia, Integrity Fiji, TI Maldives, TI Mongolia, TI Nepal, and TI Pakistan have been active in advocating for transparency in public procurement and provided technical feedback to institutions on how to improve procurement regulations and mechanisms. In several cases, institutions have committed or even already started to 	<p>Strengthening governance & accountability institutions</p>

	implement recommendations. Following successful advocacy to enable citizens to access information on COVID related procurement, TI Pakistan continued to monitor procurement processes and report violations	
The Asia Foundation	<p><i>DFAT-The Asia Foundation Strategic Partnership</i> (\$1.8 million from 2019-2022) produced policy analysis and research in a range of areas related to improving governance in countries in the Indo-Pacific. The Asia Foundation works closely with NGOs and civil society in partner countries to strengthen the role of local systems and communities in democratic institutions and processes and the protection of civic space. The next phase of the Strategic Partnership (\$1.8 million from 2022-2025) considers ways of supporting democratic resilience in South and Southeast Asia. It will seek to deepen understanding of democratic and autocratic trends in the region, and support DFAT’s understanding of effective programming for democratic resilience. It also builds on existing work on conflict prevention in the region, targeting peacebuilding institutes, civil networks and other actors to bolster regional, national, and local capacity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2020-21, The Asia Foundation produced five reports on inequalities in cities in five Asian developing countries (Bangladesh, Laos, Mongolia, Pakistan and Vietnam), and explored possible policy/programmatic responses. TAF has launched a project on inclusive urban governance with the ADB and Ramboll under the ASEAN Australia Smart Cities Fund. • In 2020-21, The Asia Foundation provided technical assistance and targeted financial support to the Myanmar Institute of Peace and Security, the Nepal Monitor, and the Bangladesh Observatory, for the development of locally led violence monitoring systems to help improve the accessibility and quality of quantitative data on conflict and violence patterns. • In 2019-2020, The Asia Foundation produced a report “Prevention from Below” identifying ways of supporting civil society efforts to prevent violent extremism in Southeast Asia, encompassing a range of counterterrorism, peacebuilding and development interventions. 	Strengthening governance & accountability institutions
Development Leadership Program (DLP)	The Developmental Leadership Program (DLP) is an international research led policy initiative that explores the critical role that leaders and leadership coalitions play in promoting or hindering development outcomes. DLP focuses on the role of homegrown leadership and coalitions in forging legitimate institutions that promote sustainable growth, political stability, and inclusive social development, and the role that internal and external actors can play in supporting these change processes.	