

Gender in Australia's aid and diplomacy

- 9.1 This chapter sets out the evidence received in the course of the inquiry which addressed the gender focus of Australia's aid program and diplomatic efforts in the region. It also addresses the fourth term of reference – 'the effectiveness of Australian programs to support efforts to improve the human rights of women and girls in the Indian Ocean-Asia Pacific region'. The chapter examines:
- Australia's diplomatic efforts, including Australia's Ambassador for Women and Girls;
 - the size and structure of the aid program in relation to gender and women's empowerment;
 - DFAT's processes for assessing the impact of aid programs on gender equality;
 - assessments of DFAT's flagship gender programs; and
 - evidence about other Australian programs in the region that have an impact on the human rights of girls and women.
- 9.2 Suggestions for improving the Australian aid program are provided in chapter ten, along with the Committee's recommendations.

Diplomatic efforts

- 9.3 DFAT's work on gender equality and the human rights of women and girls in the Indo-Pacific region is two-fold: through the aid program, and through diplomatic efforts. In DFAT's submission to the inquiry, the Department listed a number of diplomatic activities it has undertaken in relation to gender equality, including:

- Advocating for gender equality in discussions around the post-2015 development agenda and at the 58th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women in March 2014.
- Engaging with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to promote gender equality since May 2012, when the Global Ambassador for Women and Girls met with ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC) representatives to discuss opportunities for regional cooperation.
- Working within ASEAN to develop a five-year ACWC work plan (2012–2016), adopted in 2012.¹

9.4 The ACWC *Work Plan* formally recognises that ‘the primary responsibility to promote and protect the fundamental freedoms and rights of women and children rests with each Member State’. Its aims include:

- To promote the implementation of international instruments, ASEAN instruments and other instruments related to the rights of women and children.
- To develop policies, programs and innovative strategies to promote and protect the rights of women and children to complement the building of the ASEAN Community.
- To promote public awareness and education of the rights of women and children in ASEAN.
- To encourage ASEAN Member States on the collection and analysis of disaggregated data by sex, age, etc., related to the promotion and protection of the rights of women and children.
- To support the participation of ASEAN women and children in dialogue and consultation processes in ASEAN related to the promotion and protection of their rights.²

9.5 DFAT also ‘advocate[s] internationally against violence against women’ through their bilateral relationships, and through multilateral forums, such as the United Nations Security Council.³

9.6 DFAT states that it engages with countries in the Pacific through the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF), and ‘on a bilateral basis ... promoting outcomes for gender equality, particularly through the Australian aid program’.⁴

1 DFAT, *Submission 27*, pp. 9–10.

2 ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC), *Work Plan 2012–2016* <humanrightsinasean.info/documents/3> viewed 6 July 2015.

3 DFAT, *Submission 27*, p. 5.

4 The PIF is ‘a political grouping of 16 independent and self-governing states’ in the Pacific region, including Australia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Fiji, Samoa and others. DFAT, *Submission 27*, p. 10.

- 9.7 In 2012, the PIF leaders endorsed the *Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration* as part of the Regional Gender Initiative. According to DFAT:
- The Declaration called for enhanced women's political representation by: strengthening consultative mechanisms with civil society groups on key budget and policy issues; advocating for increased representation of women in the private sector and local level governance boards and committees; and considering specific legislative changes to allow temporary special measures such as reserved seats.⁵
- 9.8 DFAT reported that Pacific leaders agreed to 'ensure that gender analysis is factored into sustainable development discussions, country programming, and policy decisions'.⁶
- 9.9 DFAT submitted that it engages in diplomatic dialogue in the Indian Ocean region, through the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), which includes India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and other countries that border the Indian Ocean. Recent work with IORA has focussed on women's economic empowerment, particularly:
- ... dialogue ... in collaboration with United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in August 2014 on barriers to trade for women-led and women-owned small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in the Indian Ocean region ... [to] produce recommendations to IORA Ministers on actions to remove barriers to women's economic participation in the region.⁷
- 9.10 At hearings, Dr Susan Harris Rimmer from the Australian National University Gender Institute praised Australia's recent diplomatic work, saying:
- The government has also taken what I think is an exciting step to try to promote women's economic empowerment within the Indian Ocean Rim Association.⁸
- 9.11 As a member of the Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation (APEC) forum, Australia has also promoted APEC projects designed to assist

5 DFAT, *Submission 27*, p. 10.

6 DFAT, *Submission 27*, p. 10.

7 DFAT, *Submission 27*, p. 10.

8 Dr Harris Rimmer, Director of Studies, Asia-Pacific College of Diplomacy, Australian National University (ANU), on behalf of the ANU Gender Institute, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 23 September 2014, p. 2. The meeting of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) Council of Ministers held 9 October 2014, Perth, Western Australia, endorsed the proposal, see DFAT, 'IORA Economic Declaration' <dfat.gov.au/international-relations/regional-architecture/indian-ocean/iora/Pages/iora-economic-declaration.aspx> viewed 6 November 2015.

women-owned small and medium-sized enterprises to access the global market.⁹

- 9.12 Australia's diplomatic work on women's rights also includes advocacy in Afghanistan. For instance, Australia advocates for 'the inclusion of women in peace efforts in Afghanistan by ensuring provisions in United Nations Security Council resolutions'. DFAT explained that:

... in the recent United Nations Assistance mission to Afghanistan (UNAMA) mandate renewal (Resolution 2145), Australia advocated new and strengthened provisions to support political participation by Afghan women, enhance protection from sexual violence, hold perpetrators of gender-based violence to account, and maintain legislative protections for Afghan women.¹⁰

Australia's Ambassador for Women and Girls

- 9.13 The position of Australia's Ambassador for Women and Girls was created in 2011 and:

... reflects the Australian Government's active commitment in the international arena – and with a special focus on the Asia-Pacific region – to promote gender equality and to give women a stronger voice in the world.¹¹

- 9.14 The position has been held on a part-time basis by former Senator Natasha Stott Despoja since March 2014. Since her appointment, the Ambassador has travelled extensively in the Asia-Pacific region. DFAT highlighted the Ambassador's role as a representative at multilateral, bilateral and regional meetings, saying that the Ambassador 'strengthened Australia's international credentials as an active advocate for the rights of women and girls'.¹²

- 9.15 DFAT also advised that the Ambassador has promoted key campaigns, such as International Women's Day, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women (White Ribbon Day) and the International Day of the Girl Child.¹³

- 9.16 At the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children in Indonesia, held in February 2014, the Ambassador 'promoted Australia's work internationally and domestically

9 DFAT, *Submission 27*, p. 11.

10 DFAT, *Submission 27*, p. 39.

11 DFAT, 'Gender Equality' <dfat.gov.au/international-relations/themes/gender-equality/Pages/gender-equality.aspx> viewed 6 July 2015.

12 DFAT, *Annual Report 2013–14*, p. 94.

13 DFAT, *Submission 27*, p. 41.

- to address violence against women and end trafficking of women and girls'.¹⁴
- 9.17 As previously mentioned in Chapter 4, the Ambassador also led Australia's delegation to the UK-hosted Global Summit to End Sexual Violence in Conflict, held in London in June 2014. At that summit Australia supported the launch of the *International Protocol on the Documentation and Investigation of Sexual Violence in Conflict*.¹⁵
- 9.18 DFAT advised that the Foreign Minister, the Hon Julie Bishop MP is a champion of the UK's Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict Initiative, and co-hosted with the British High Commissioner an Australian Dialogue on Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict. The dialogue:
- ... brought together diplomatic, aid, military, policing, academic and civil society experts to shape Australia's work on eliminating sexual violence and delivered new commitments by Australia to end the use of sexual violence as a weapon of war, to end impunity for perpetrators and to support survivors.¹⁶
- 9.19 As the economic empowerment of women is considered 'a key pillar of the Ambassador for Women and Girls' international advocacy', the Ambassador represented Australia at the APEC Women and the Economy Forum, in Beijing in May 2014. At this forum, the Ambassador 'announced new funding to build the capacity of trade promotion agencies in APEC economies to connect women's businesses to export markets'.¹⁷
- 9.20 DFAT stated that the Ambassador also led Australia's negotiations to secure 'strong APEC commitments to integrate gender considerations across all APEC activities'.¹⁸
- 9.21 In 2014, the Ambassador met with women entrepreneurs participating in Australian-funded microfinance programs in Indonesia, and women recipients of Australian support in PNG's coffee industry. She also visited Nauru and the Solomon Islands.¹⁹
- 9.22 The Ambassador herself spoke to the Committee in December 2014. She praised the work of the Australian Government in promoting women's

14 DFAT, *Annual Report 2013–14*, p. 95.

15 Available at <www.gov.uk/government/publications/international-protocol-on-the-documentation-and-investigation-of-sexual-violence-in-conflict> viewed 2 July 2015.

16 DFAT, *Annual Report 2013–14*, p. 95.

17 DFAT, *Annual Report 2013–14*, p. 96.

18 DFAT, *Annual Report 2013–14*, p. 96.

19 DFAT, *Annual Report 2013–14*, p. 96.

empowerment in the Indo-Pacific region, and pointed out that Australia's efforts are well-received abroad.²⁰

- 9.23 The Ambassador suggested the Australian Government should prioritise:
- encouraging other countries to create a position of Ambassador for Women and Girls;
 - continuing to support, and give high priority to, programs to increase the representation of women in leadership positions, including but not limited to political leadership;
 - greater engagement of the Australian Parliament with activities associated with the promotion of women's rights, such as International Women's Day, International Day of the Girl Child, etc;²¹ and
 - engaging in more trilateral work, so as to avoid doubling up on effort and to maximise opportunities for success.²²

Assessments of the Ambassador's work

- 9.24 Assessments by witnesses to the inquiry of the Ambassador's role and work were mostly positive. According to DFAT, the Ambassador's work has 'generated a high level of interest in Australia's efforts to promote the empowerment of women'.²³
- 9.25 DFAT asserted that the Ambassador has engaged effectively in bilateral discussions and international fora to promote women's human rights, as well as engaging 'actively on international gender equality issues in the domestic context, advancing the partnership between government and civil society'.²⁴
- 9.26 Other witnesses to the inquiry made positive remarks about the work of the Ambassador. Dr Harris Rimmer suggested that the Government's support for the Ambassador's role demonstrated strong leadership around women's empowerment in the region, concluding that: 'the Ambassador for Women and Girls ... is a very important investment'.²⁵
- 9.27 Ms Dimity Fifer, Chief Executive Officer of Australian Volunteers International, also praised the work of the Ambassador, saying:

20 Ambassador Natasha Stott Despoja, Australia's Ambassador for Women and Girls, DFAT, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 3 December 2014, p. 2.

21 Ambassador Stott Despoja, DFAT, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 3 December 2014, p. 3.

22 Ambassador Stott Despoja, DFAT, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 3 December 2014, p. 8.

23 DFAT, *Submission 27*, p. 41.

24 DFAT, *Submission 27*, p. 41.

25 Dr Harris Rimmer, ANU Gender Institute, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 23 September 2014, p. 2.

Australia has a stunning Ambassador for Women and Girls and she is doing a great job of meeting people and putting forward the sorts of messages you would expect her to be doing and linking people.²⁶

- 9.28 Witnesses agreed that the role of Ambassador for Women and Girls increases Australia's standing as an advocate for gender equality. Dr Harris Rimmer said:

Australia has this legacy of caring and also modelling particular behaviour – strong ministers and strong representation for a considerable period of time. Australia has this reputation already.²⁷

- 9.29 Ms Fifer suggested the Australian Government should consider making the role of the Ambassador for Women and Girls a full-time position.²⁸ The Ambassador herself also commented on the limitations of the role being part time.²⁹ This view was echoed by Mr Stuart Schaffer, Director of International Programs at Save the Children Australia, who proposed that the role of the Ambassador for Women and Girls should also be supplemented and supported with an additional role; that of a male gender advocate.³⁰
- 9.30 Dr Harris Rimmer expressed a similar view regarding the need to supplement the Ambassador's role, noting that Ms Stott Despoja was accompanied by the (now former) Chief of Army, Lieutenant General David Morrison at the Global Summit to End Sexual Violence in Conflict in 2014.³¹
- 9.31 Dr Harris Rimmer proposed the appointment of special envoys to augment the work of the Ambassador. She explained that an envoy could be, for instance, a prominent business person promoting women's economic empowerment through small enterprise.³²

26 Ms Dimity Fifer, Chief Executive Officer, Australian Volunteers International (AVI), *Committee Hansard*, Melbourne, 3 November 2014, p. 6.

27 Dr Harris Rimmer, ANU Gender Institute, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 23 September 2014, p. 2.

28 Ms Fifer, AVI, *Committee Hansard*, Melbourne, 3 November 2015, p. 6.

29 Ambassador Stott Despoja, DFAT, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 3 December 2014, p. 1.

30 Mr Stuart Schaefer, Director, International Programs, Save the Children Australia, *Committee Hansard*, 3 November 2015, p. 12. Also recommended by YWCA Australia, *Submission 65*, p. 14.

31 Dr Harris Rimmer, ANU Gender Institute, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 23 September 2014, p. 2.

32 Dr Harris Rimmer, ANU Gender Institute, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 23 September 2014, p. 4.

- 9.32 The Committee raised some questions about the value of such special envoys, seeking to understand the possible cost and benefits of the proposal. Dr Harris Rimmer pointed to examples from Sweden, Canada and Norway, which ‘appoint special envoys for particular purposes. For example, female entrepreneurship ...’³³
- 9.33 While witnesses were generally positive about the Ambassador’s role, some expressed concerns about a lack of co-ordination across the diplomatic program. For instance, Dr Harris Rimmer stated:
- What [Australia] probably does not have is a joined-up, strategic approach to these issues across portfolios, and I think that could be done. We can see how that works under David Cameron in the UK, where there was a very significant strategic investment in gender equality issues and foreign policy. Under Hillary Clinton there was a very large investment in gender equality outcomes across the state department, and it made an impact on the soft power of those countries. That is what I am hoping we are moving towards.³⁴
- 9.34 The International Women’s Development Agency (IWDA) also pressed the need for a comprehensive focus on women’s human rights across the diplomatic program, asserting that:
- As a goal, Australia must commit to promoting human rights and the rule of law as key foreign policy priorities and a projection of core Australian and universal values. Instrumentally, protecting human rights is essential to securing peace, justice, security and sustainable development.³⁵

Australia’s aid program

- 9.35 DFAT’s submission and supplementary submissions to the inquiry highlighted the Department’s recent moves to increase its focus on gender throughout the aid program, as well as recent investments in flagship women’s programs, such as Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development (Pacific Women) initiative.
- 9.36 For the 2013–14 financial year, the Australian Government budgeted to provide an estimated \$5.6 billion in total Official Development Assistance

33 Dr Harris Rimmer, ANU Gender Institute, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 23 September 2014, p. 4.

34 Dr Harris Rimmer, ANU Gender Institute, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 23 September 2014, p. 2.

35 IWDA, *Submission 32*, p. 2.

- (ODA). \$4.9 billion of this amount was to be managed by AusAID, and \$801 million was to be administered by other Australian government departments.³⁶
- 9.37 In 2014-15 total Australian ODA came to \$5.03 billion. Total Australian ODA for the current financial year is projected to be \$4.05 billion.³⁷
- 9.38 On 1 November 2013, the newly elected Australian Government merged the Department that was AusAID with DFAT in a machinery of government change. All responsibilities for ODA transferred to DFAT.³⁸
- 9.39 DFAT provided evidence to the inquiry regarding the 'gender spend' of the Australian aid program. The Department explained that the Australian Government tracks the amount of aid dedicated to 'the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment' through the use of the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) gender equality marker. Applying the marker means that every aid activity is screened and identified in the Australian aid database, as one of the following:
- not targeted to promoting gender equality and women's empowerment
 - having gender equality as a 'significant (secondary) objective'
 - having gender equality as a 'principal (primary) objective'.³⁹
- 9.40 According to DFAT, in 2012-13, \$2.11 billion, or 52 per cent, of ODA expenditure was gender-related and marked as gender equality focused (principal or significant).⁴⁰
- 9.41 The following year, at the conclusion of 2013-14, 55 per cent of DFAT's aid expenditure, or \$2.19 billion, had been spent on 'investments that targeted promoting gender equality as either a principal or significant objective'.⁴¹ This figure represents an increase of three percentage points on the previous year.
- 9.42 In the most recent financial year, 2014-15, Australia provided an estimated total of \$5.03 billion in ODA.⁴² DFAT's *2014-15 Annual Report*, released in September 2015, stated:

36 The Hon Bob Carr, Minister for Foreign Affairs, *2013-14 Budget Statement: Australia's International Development Assistance Program*, p. 11.

37 DFAT, *2015-2016 Development Assistance Budget Summary*, p.[4].

38 The Hon Julie Bishop, Minister for Foreign Affairs, 'A New Era in Diplomacy', *Media Release*, 1 November 2015 < foreignminister.gov.au/releases/Pages/2013/jb_mr_131101a.aspx?ministerid=4 > viewed 9 August 2015.

39 DFAT, *Submission 27*, p. 7.

40 DFAT, *Submission 27*, p. 7.

41 DFAT, *Supplementary Submission 27.2*, p. 7.

42 DFAT, *The 2014-15 Development Assistance Budget: A Summary*, p. 2, < dfat.gov.au/about-us/corporate/portfolio-budget-statements/Documents/2014-15-development-assistance-

Gender equality and women's empowerment was either a principal or significant objective in 55 per cent of the department's aid investments, some \$2.4 billion.⁴³

- 9.43 The 2013–14 figure of \$2192 million included \$202 million which was spent on programs that were focussed *primarily* on gender equality. This means that five per cent of DFAT's total investments in 2013–14 were for programs with gender equality as their primary or principal aim.⁴⁴
- 9.44 DFAT reported that the total global amount of bilateral aid targeting gender equality and women's empowerment tripled between 2002 and 2012 – from USD8 billion to USD24 billion. Most of this aid was for programs in health and education.⁴⁵
- 9.45 Within the OECD, Australia ranks relatively highly in terms of its focus on gender. For instance, in 2012–13 Australia ranked sixth in the OECD for the percentage of ODA expended on gender-related programs.⁴⁶
- 9.46 According to DFAT, the Australian aid program 'protects women's rights and promotes gender equality through a twin-track approach'. This approach incorporates 'gender mainstreaming' in a majority of DFAT's programs, alongside investments in gender-specific programs, which 'address priority areas' for women's human rights.⁴⁷
- 9.47 DFAT's priority areas in regards to gender programming mirror those defined by the OECD, which are: women's economic empowerment, family planning, women, peace and security, and women's participation and leadership.⁴⁸
- 9.48 The percentage of the Australian aid program focused on gender equality varies widely depending on country. For instance, DFAT explained that:
- ... more than 80 per cent of recent economic sector aid in Laos, Latin America, Timor-Leste, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu was principally or significantly focused on gender, but this was less than 20 per cent in Afghanistan, Burma, Cambodia, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, Philippines and Vietnam.⁴⁹

budget-a-summary.docx> viewed 3 July 2015.

43 DFAT, *Annual Report 2014–15*, September 2015, p. 117, <dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/corporate/annual-reports/annual-report-2014-2015/dfat-annual-report-2014-15.pdf> viewed 19 October 2015.

44 DFAT, *Supplementary Submission 27.2*, p. 9.

45 DFAT, *Submission 27*, p. 29.

46 DFAT, *Supplementary Submission 27.2*, pp. 9–10.

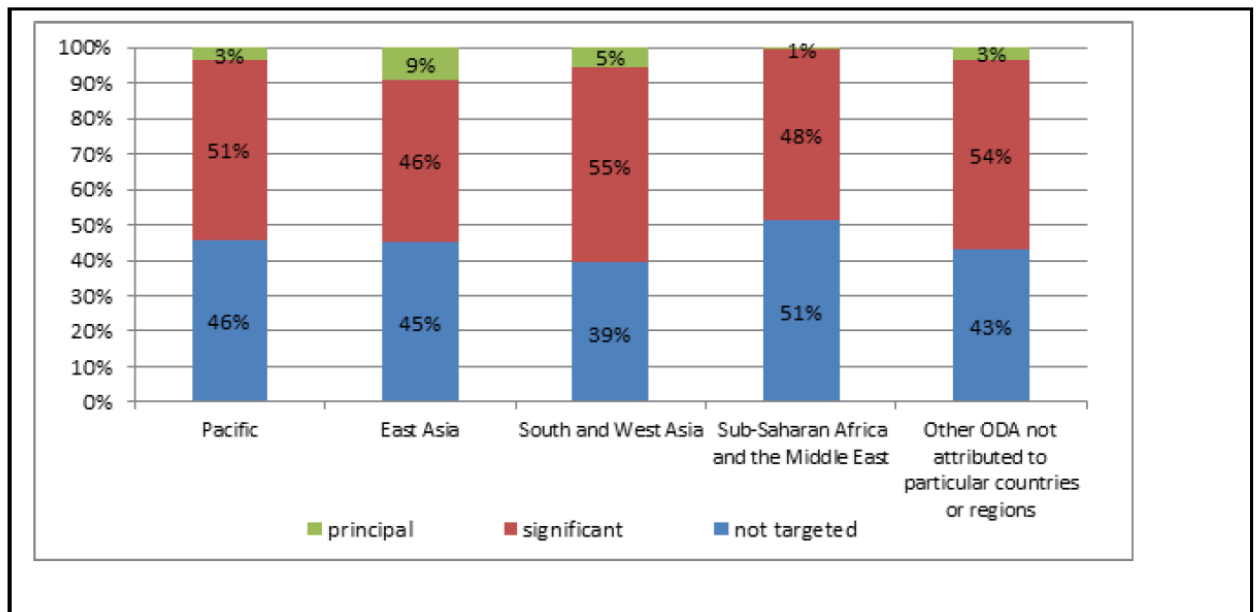
47 DFAT, *Submission 27*, p. 7.

48 DFAT, *Submission 27*, p. 8.

49 DFAT, *Submission 27*, p. 8.

9.49 A table provided by DFAT that shows the breakdown of gender-related spending by region is below.

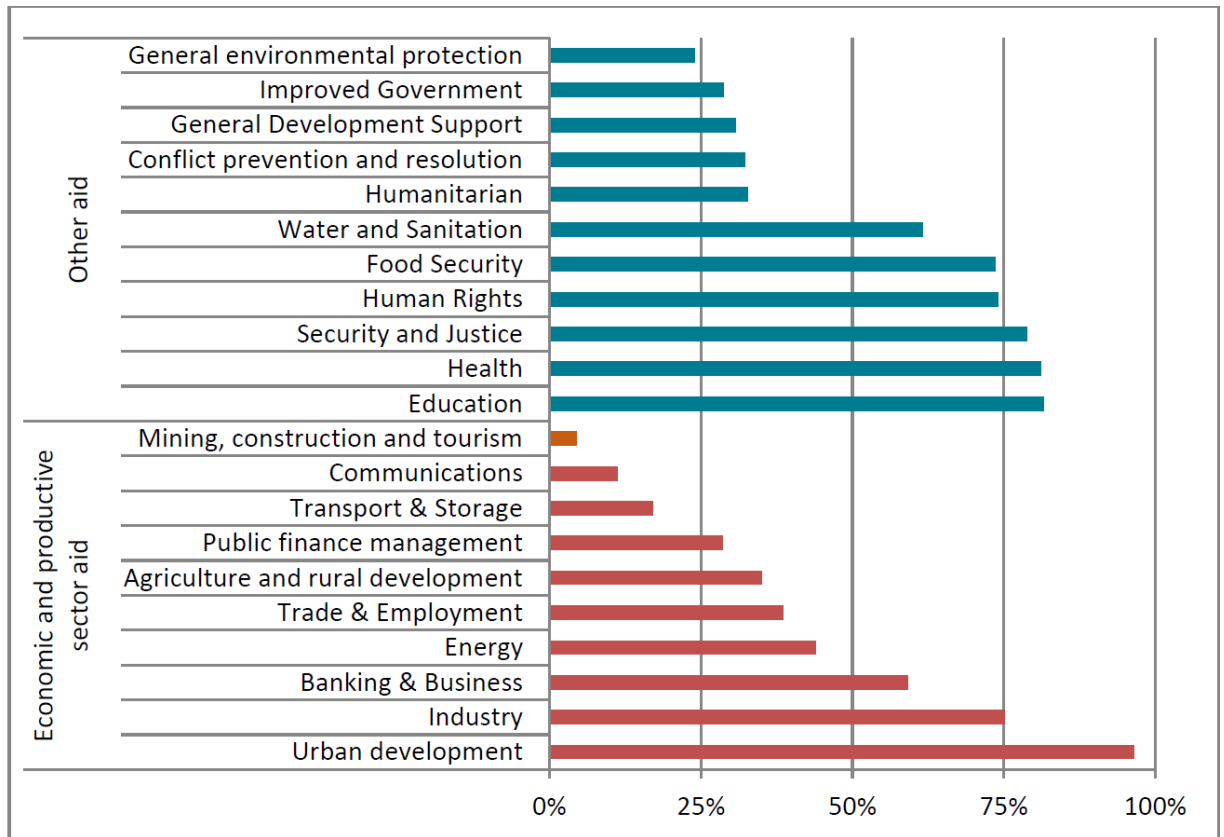
Figure 9.1 2013–14 DFAT's ODA by Region, investments that identify gender equality as an objective (%)



Source DFAT, Supplementary Submission 27.2, p. 8.

9.50 The focus on gender also varies widely depending on sector. Data from DFAT indicates that aid in government, finance, agriculture and other areas of economic development, is far less likely to be focussed on gender equality compared with sectors such as health and education. The table below shows the breakdown of gender-related spending by aid sector.

Figure 9.2 Proportion of Australian Government aid commitment that focuses on gender equality by sector, 2010–11 to 2011–12



Source DFAT, Submission 27, p 8. 2011–2012 data.

9.51 The Committee sought a list of all Australian programs that promote the human rights of women and girls in the Indo-Pacific region. The Department was unable to provide a comprehensive list, claiming:

Given that the majority of aid programs effectively integrate gender equality considerations, providing an exhaustive summary of all programs relevant to the human rights of women and girls will not be possible.⁵⁰

9.52 DFAT also stated that ‘it would be a significant diversion of DFAT’s resources to provide information on all of DFAT’s activities and achievements to-date advancing women’s rights in the region’.⁵¹ Instead, DFAT provided information about a number of specific programs with impacts on women and girls. These programs, and the associated investments, are reported below by region.

50 DFAT, *Supplementary Submission 27.2*, p. 24.

51 DFAT, *Supplementary Submission 27.3*, p. 1.

The Pacific

- Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development (Pacific Women). Total investment: \$320 million from 2012–2022. Some components include:
 - ⇒ PNG Gender Equality/Gender Based Violence Program. Total investment: \$72.8 million from 2008–2020.
 - ⇒ Femili PNG: the Lae Case Management Centre. Total investment: \$3 million from 2014–2017.
 - ⇒ PNG Oxfam Repatriation and Reintegration Program. Total investment: \$446 000 from 2014–2015.
 - ⇒ Solomon Islands Gender Equality Program. Total investment: \$7.5 million from 2012–2016.
 - ⇒ Pacific Women (Vanuatu). Total investment: \$6.72 million from 2012–2016.
- Pacific Regional Ending Violence against Women Facility Fund. Total investment: \$6.73 million from 2010–2018.
- PNG–Australia Law and Justice Partnership. Total investment (only partly gender-focussed): \$183 million from 2009 to 2015.
- Fiji Women’s Crisis Centre. Total investment: \$8.42 million from 2009–2015.⁵²

East Asia

- Empowering Indonesian Women for Poverty Reduction (Maju Perempuan Indonesia untuk Penanggulangan Kemiskinan or MAMPU). Total investment: \$60 million from 2012–2016.
- Timor-Leste Ending Violence Against Women (EVAW). Total investment: \$18.7 million from 2014–2018.
- Timor-Leste National Program for Village Development (PNDS). Total investment (only partly gender focussed): \$50 million from 2012–2017.
- Cambodia Ending Violence against Women (EVAW) Program. Total investment: \$7.23 million from 2013–2018.
- Vietnam Australian Development Scholarship (ADS) – PREP. Total investment (only partly gender focussed – 62 per cent of recipients were women in 2014): \$40.87 million from 2002–2016.⁵³

52 DFAT, *Supplementary Submission 27.2*, pp. 25–56.

53 DFAT, *Supplementary Submission 27.2*, pp. 25–56.

South and West Asia

- Afghanistan Elimination of Violence Against Women (EVAW) Program. Total investment: \$28.2 million from 2013–2017 (\$22.7 million from DFAT and \$5.5 million from the UK’s Department for International Development – DFID).
- Challenging Gender Based Violence Program in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and Sindh Provinces (Pakistan – two of four provinces). Total investment: \$7.5 million from 2014–2017.
- SRSP Livelihood Strengthening Program – Pakistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province. Total investment: \$11 million from – 2015.
- Combating Acid and Burn Violence in Bangladesh. Total investment: \$2.3 million from 2012–2014 and refunded 2015–2016.⁵⁴

Gender ‘mainstreaming’ across the aid program

9.53 DFAT’s ‘twin-track approach’ to addressing the human rights of women and girls through the aid program relies on the use of ‘gender mainstreaming’. Gender mainstreaming is a concept well understood and well supported by witnesses to the inquiry. For instance, the Secretariat of Pacific Community (SPC) defined gender mainstreaming as:

... the concept of assessing the different implications for women and men of any planned policy action, including legislation and programmes, in all areas and at all levels.⁵⁵

9.54 The Secretariat further observed that the failure to incorporate gender mainstreaming is endemic to Pacific policy:

Assessments by the United Nations Population Fund has found that the extent to which Pacific national development plans and strategies did this found that gender is ‘ghettoised’ – addressed in a separate section of strategies and plans, rather than being mainstreamed. Some countries’ plans and strategies made virtually no mention of gender issues.⁵⁶

9.55 DFAT conceptualises gender mainstreaming as the process of analysing all aid programs for their impacts on women:

Program managers are required to consider gender equality concerns during the design of an initiative. They are expected to analyse the differential impacts of an initiative on different groups

54 DFAT, *Supplementary Submission 27.2*, pp. 25–56.

55 Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC), *Submission 24*, p. 4.

56 SPC, *Submission 24*, p. 4.

of women and men and consider the inclusion of measures to ensure that women and men benefit equally.⁵⁷

9.56 The International Women's Development Agency (IWDA) revealed the consequences of what they called 'gender-blind decision making':

... decision making that does not consider the impact of a policy, program, project or other activity on women, men, boys and girls and on the economic and social relations between them – risks missing opportunities to progress the rights of women and girls and may result in unintended adverse consequences.⁵⁸

9.57 IWDA were especially concerned about a failure to consider gender in trade policy, saying:

The differential impacts of trade on women and men must be analysed and systematically factored into decision making if governments are to make trade policy choices that are effective, sustainable and contribute to outcomes that meet the needs of both women and men.⁵⁹

9.58 In its submission, DFAT contended that gender mainstreaming is a globally accepted approach, stating that:

... ASEAN has been focussed on mainstreaming gender equality outcomes throughout its work, in particular through the Social-Cultural Community (ASCC) Blueprint (2009–2015).⁶⁰

In fact, DFAT revealed that Australia, through its diplomatic program, 'aims to strengthen the strategic direction of APEC's work on women in 2014 by focusing on activities that support gender mainstreaming'.⁶¹

9.59 While DFAT stated that all programs must be considered for their impact on gender equality,⁶² not all of the programs are rated 'satisfactory' by DFAT.⁶³ In 2013, 73 per cent of programs were rated as 'satisfactory' in terms of their impacts on gender equality.⁶⁴

9.60 The 2015–16 Portfolio Budget Statement for Foreign Affairs and Trade indicates that gender mainstreaming remains an ongoing focus of the

57 DFAT, *Submission 27*, p. 7.

58 IWDA, *Submission 32*, p. 3.

59 IWDA, *Submission 32*, p. 4.

60 DFAT, *Submission 27*, p. 9.

61 DFAT, *Submission 27*, p. 11.

62 DFAT, *Supplementary Submission 27.2*, p. 4.

63 Programs are rated annually in 'Quality at Implementation' checks. See p. 23 for more detail.

64 DFAT, *Submission 27*, p. 47.

Government in 2015-16. It states that '[g]ender equality and women and girls' empowerment will be addressed across the aid program'.⁶⁵

- 9.61 DFAT pointed to a 2013 OECD Development Co-operation Peer Review of Australia, which found that 'women's empowerment [was] mainstreamed' throughout Australia's aid program, observing that Australia's aid program is:

... well positioned to promote gender equality in the difficult and varying context in which it operates, from the Pacific Islands and the Philippines to Afghanistan.⁶⁶

- 9.62 Other witnesses to the inquiry commented on the importance and relative efficacy of gender mainstreaming. For instance, Professor Margaret Alston from the GLASS Research Unit at Monash University highlighted the role that a well-developed understanding of the issue of gendered violence can play in aid planning:

The issue of violence against women is something that we need to be conscious of in terms of how we apply our aid. All of our aid programs should necessarily be underpinned by gender mainstreaming.⁶⁷

- 9.63 Dr Harris Rimmer explained that the failure to consider gender dynamics can hamper aid efforts, using the example of Bangladesh-based non-government development organisation BRAC, headed by Sir Fazle Hasan Abed winner of the 2015 World Food prize:⁶⁸

BRAC, again, is a fascinating example. Sir Fazle did not set out to improve the rights of women. He set out to improve the overall life expectancy and mortality rates of Bangladeshis ... His first program was around trying to stop children dying from diarrhoea ... He realised that, because of power dynamics and issues at the household level, it was not working. His program to introduce a basic diarrhoea hydration salts formula at the household level was

65 Foreign Affairs and Trade Portfolio, *Budget 2015-16: Portfolio Budget Statements 2015-16, Budget Related Paper No. 1.9*, p. 18.

66 DFAT, *Submission 27*, p. 5.

67 Professor Margaret Alston, GLASS Research Unit, Monash University, *Committee Hansard*, Melbourne, 3 November 2014, p. 28.

68 Sam Jones, 'Brac's [sic] Sir Fazle Hasan Abed wins 2015 World Food Prize for Reducing Poverty', *The Guardian*, 2 July 2015 < www.theguardian.com/global-development/2015/jul/02/brac-sir-fazle-hasan-abed-wins-2015-world-food-prize-reducing-poverty > viewed 23 September 2015.

not succeeding because of gender issues that he had not understood.⁶⁹

- 9.64 Sir Fazle overcame the failure of the program by redirecting the focus to include empowering women at the household level. Dr Harris Rimmer explained:

So he went back to the drawing board and dealt with those issues, and has improved overall Bangladesh's child mortality rate over 10 years. If you want to talk about measurable outcomes, BRAC has a lot of them. And that one is a classic. By being gender aware and gender sensitive, the overall success of the program was enhanced.⁷⁰

- 9.65 An example of DFAT's work to mainstream gender across the aid program can be found in DFAT's 2015 *Health for Development Strategy*, which, as discussed in chapter five, features women's empowerment as one of four primary investment targets.⁷¹

- 9.66 While most witnesses supported gender mainstreaming, Abt JTA suggested that the resources of DFAT are at risk of being spread too thinly if the Department tries to incorporate gender into all aspects of the aid program. Abt JTA proposed instead:

Prioritising the aid program's gender resources, including budget and staff time, to 'Tier One Programs' that are most likely to have an impact rather than the uneven mainstreaming of gender into all programs.⁷²

- 9.67 IWDA also pointed out the limitations of gender mainstreaming, saying:

Transformative change requires greater investment in targeted initiatives that address inequality and support women's rights.⁷³

- 9.68 Ms Irene M. Santiago, Lead Convenor of 'Women. Seriously', asserted that gender mainstreaming must be accompanied by building women's movements, which lobby governments and help to create the political will for change in areas of women's empowerment.⁷⁴

69 Dr Harris Rimmer, ANU Gender Institute, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 23 September 2014, p. 5.

70 Dr Harris Rimmer, ANU Gender Institute, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 23 September 2014, p. 5.

71 DFAT, *Health for Development Strategy 2015-2020*, June 2015, p. 15, <dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/Documents/health-for-development-strategy-2015-2020.PDF> viewed 6 July 2015. Among other indicators, the health strategy is set to be evaluated in terms of the following question: 'Are we contributing to gender-equality outcomes?'

72 Abt TJA, *Submission 59*, p. 1.

73 IWDA, *Submission 32*, p. 9.

74 Ms Irene M. Santiago, *Submission 85*, p. 2.

- 9.69 DFAT's own assessments have found that attempts to mainstream gender into economic programs have often been disappointing. A 2014 Office of Development Effectiveness (ODE) report, *Smart Economics: Evaluation of Australian Aid Support for Women's Economic Empowerment*, which looked at 28 major economic aid programs, found that:
- The majority of initiatives reviewed (70 per cent) made basic attempts to promote gender equality in their design or implementation. In each of the five sectors examined, the Australian aid program had designed or implemented initiatives that addressed issues related to gender equality and women's economic empowerment. On the whole, however, these efforts were piecemeal, and the trade sector presented particular challenges.⁷⁵
- 9.70 The ODE further expressed the view that gender mainstreaming is not sufficient in areas of entrenched gender-based disadvantage:
- Gender mainstreaming has been the norm in most countries and institutions since the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995. However, some research has recently shown that gender mainstreaming as a stand-alone approach has not performed as hoped in producing results for women.⁷⁶
- 9.71 An ODE review of the aid program in 2009 expressed similar concerns:
- There is a risk that gender equality issues will get lost in any shift to sector-wide approaches to providing support, unless Australia and other development partners make a conscious effort to pursue them as part of the sectoral policy agenda.⁷⁷
- 9.72 IWDA concluded that gender mainstreaming can work, as long it is done in a meaningful way. IWDA asserted that:
- Initiatives that 'mainstream' gender equality and women's empowerment should have specific, detailed implementation plans that show how gender will be integrated and resourced.⁷⁸
- 9.73 In its 2015 Submission to the Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Inquiry into the International Aid (Promoting Gender Equality) Bill 2015, DFAT described in detail the strategies that are

75 DFAT, Office of Development Effectiveness (ODE), *Smart Economics: Evaluation of Australian Aid Support for Women's Economic Empowerment*, August 2014, p. 3.

76 DFAT, ODE, *Smart Economics: Evaluation of Australian Aid Support for Women's Economic Empowerment*, August 2014, p. 21.

77 ODE, AusAID, *Annual Review of Development Effectiveness 2009*, p. 52.

78 IWDA, *Submission 32*, p. 8.

currently in place to build staff capacity to mainstream gender considerations throughout the aid program. These include:

- The *Aid Programming Guide*: this guide is used by DFAT program managers to guide their practices and includes information on incorporating gender equality into aid program management.
- The *Gender Equality Good Practice Note*: this document sets out DFAT's 'strategic objectives for gender equality', and provides guidance for aid management relating to women and girls.
- Gender specialists: DFAT employs a number of gender specialists 'who provide technical advice and support on gender equality across the aid program'.
- Procurement of outside gender specialists: to fill gaps in DFAT's knowledge, the Department maintains an Aid Advisory Services Standing Offer (AAS) for gender equality, which allows for fast 'access [to] a range of high quality companies and individual advisers with expertise on gender and development'.⁷⁹

Training and capacity building

9.74 Despite the strategies noted above, the ODE's *Smart Economics* report identified a lack of staff capacity to respond to gender in programming, saying only about one third of Australian aid staff 'felt confident about how to incorporate gender within a project cycle'.⁸⁰

9.75 The ODE recommended that DFAT staff who have been posted, as well as those in Canberra, be provided with training and capacity building so that they:

... are familiar with context-specific evidence on gender to support economic diplomacy, and proactively identify investment opportunities relating to gender equality in dialogue with public, community and private-sector stakeholders.⁸¹

9.76 The ODE cited results from a recent needs assessment conducted by the University of Queensland which demonstrated a gap in the knowledge and confidence of DFAT staff in regards to gender. It found that:

... while 70 per cent of survey respondents were aware of the Australian aid program's gender policy, levels of understanding of

79 DFAT, Submission to Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Inquiry into the International Aid (Promoting Gender Equality) Bill 2015, pp. 5–6.

80 DFAT, ODE, *Smart Economics: Evaluation of Australian Aid Support for Women's Economic Empowerment*, August 2014, p. 5.

81 DFAT, ODE, *Smart Economics: Evaluation of Australian Aid Support for Women's Economic Empowerment*, August 2014, p. 4.

the overall strategy and each of its four pillars were low. Only 35 per cent of respondents felt confident in completing the gender section in Quality At Implementation(QAI) reports.⁸²

- 9.77 The Committee asked DFAT for additional information about their staff training and capacity building in regards to gender, and the Department explained that it provides:
- An e-learning module on gender equality and women’s empowerment: this module is compulsory for ‘all staff who are preparing for their first posting and all staff preparing for a posting to work on the aid program overseas’.
 - A briefing on the women, peace and security agenda: this is compulsory for officers who are being posted to Afghanistan or the Solomon Islands. It is also recommended for ‘officers being posted to conflict or post-conflict regions’.
 - A new face to face gender equality training program, which began in 2015 and has been delivered to 78 staff across DFAT.⁸³
- 9.78 The new training course provides participants with an introduction to gender analysis, and:
- ... an overview of the evidence base for work on gender equality, in particular the three pillars of DFAT’s work on gender equality: women’s participation in leadership, including in peacebuilding; women’s economic empowerment; and ending violence against women and girls.⁸⁴
- 9.79 The course also incorporates an exercise where participants have to ‘identify entry points and strategies to promote gender equality in a transport program’.⁸⁵

Effectiveness of Australia’s aid program

- 9.80 DFAT’s initial submission to the inquiry provided a short description of the process used by the Department to ‘ensure that the Australian ODA that is administered by the Department does not disadvantage women

82 DFAT, ODE, *Smart Economics: Evaluation of Australian Aid Support for Women’s Economic Empowerment*, August 2014, p. 72.

83 DFAT, *Submission 27.3*, p. 8.

84 DFAT, *Submission 27.3*, p. 8.

85 DFAT, *Submission 27.3*, p. 8.

- and promotes equal opportunities and outcomes for women and men', and two specific program examples.⁸⁶
- 9.81 The material provided was insufficient to answer term of reference four – 'the effectiveness of Australian programs to support efforts to improve the human rights of women and girls in the Indian Ocean–Asia Pacific region'. As a result, the Committee asked the Department for more information, which it provided in July and August 2015.
- 9.82 This additional material, along with evidence provided to the Committee by DFAT (including ODE reports), the Attorney-General's Department (AGD), the Australian Federal Police (AFP) and others, provided the basis for an assessment of Australian programs in relation to gender issues.
- 9.83 DFAT's own evaluations have consistently identified promising work alongside a need for improvement. For instance, the 2014 report *Performance of Australian Aid 2013–14* found that, while Australia's gender polices were best practice, 'effectiveness in the areas of governance and gender equality could be further improved'.⁸⁷
- 9.84 Concern with the effectiveness of Australian aid programs in promoting women's human rights is not new. In 2009, the ODE's *Annual Review of Development Effectiveness* found that strategies to boost gender equality had 'yet to be translated effectively into performance results'. In fact, the ODE argued that 'gender equality work in most projects is largely peripheral and rarely influences their strategic direction'.⁸⁸
- 9.85 The ODE's report discussed the Women and Child Health Project in PNG, which 'did useful work to introduce a gender approach and to address gender-based violence'. However, the ODE also reported that:
- ... the independent completion report did not find evidence of impacts on the health status of women and children or their access to services. It also found that this work did not inform the subsequent sector-wide approach.⁸⁹
- 9.86 A more recent example is the 2014 ODE report on the impacts of Australian aid for women's economic empowerment. DFAT provided the report to the inquiry as an example of recent reviews into the effectiveness of their programs. The report presented a detailed analysis of the trade

86 DFAT, *Submission 27*, p. 47.

87 DFAT, *Performance of Australian Aid 2013–14*, p. 1.

88 AusAID, Office of Development Effectiveness (ODE), *Annual Review of Development Effectiveness 2009*, p. 51.

89 AusAID, ODE, *Annual Review of Development Effectiveness 2009*, pp. 51–52.

and economic aspects of the aid program, looking at 28 programs valued at \$867 million, analysing their impacts on women and gender equality.⁹⁰

9.87 The ODE report found that less than 30 per cent of aid in areas such as trade, business and banking, agriculture, transport and energy could ‘demonstrate an explicit focus on gender equality’. The authors concluded that this represented ‘missed opportunities to help women in developing countries improve their economic status, and thereby contribute to local, national and regional economies’.⁹¹

9.88 The report identified that DFAT’s gender policies and strategies were ‘very good’, and represented global best practice, and it also listed a number of programs that provided ‘good practice examples’. These were:

- the Solomon Islands roads project, where women represented 40 per cent of hired labour;
- the Laos power to the poor project, through which electrification rates for female-headed households in the pilot area increased from 63 to 90 per cent;
- the Vanuatu technical and vocational training program, where 91 per cent of women who completed training reported increased profits after one year; and
- the Bangladesh microfinance project, which reached more than 52 000 women and resulted in greater control over assets, increased household decision-making and reduced violence against women.⁹²

9.89 However, the ODE concluded that good practice examples were ‘the exception, not the rule’. The evaluation found that Australian aid ‘can do more’ to promote gender equality and women’s empowerment in economic sectors, and that there:

... are real opportunities available to Australia to enhance women’s contributions to business and economic growth and support efforts to reduce barriers to women’s workforce participation.⁹³

9.90 DFAT agreed to all four recommendations, which were designed to help the Department ‘invest strategically in economic pathways for women’. These were:

90 DFAT, ODE, *Smart Economics: Evaluation of Australian Aid Support for Women’s Economic Empowerment*, August 2014, p. 2.

91 DFAT, ODE, *Smart Economics: Evaluation of Australian Aid Support for Women’s Economic Empowerment*, August 2014, p. 1.

92 DFAT, ODE, *Smart Economics: Evaluation of Australian Aid Support for Women’s Economic Empowerment*, August 2014, p. 2.

93 DFAT, *Performance of Australian Aid 2013–14*, 2015, p. 61.

- Strategic economic sector investments: DFAT should invest more strategically in all economic sectors.
- Gender equality strategies and economic diplomacy: DFAT should articulate clear commitments for gender equality and women's economic empowerment in its program strategies, program designs and economic diplomacy efforts.
- Capacity, resources and incentives: DFAT should build the capacity of the Australian aid program to implement existing policy relating to the inclusion and empowerment of women in the economic sectors.
- Performance and evaluations: DFAT should improve monitoring and evaluation in the economic sectors to capture results for women.⁹⁴

9.91 Recently, DFAT has pointed to initiatives it has introduced to increase strategic investment in gender equality, including:

- a focus on three key areas where 'progress toward gender equality has been slow'. These are: 'women's voice in decision-making, leadership, and peacebuilding; women's economic empowerment; and ending violence against women and girls';
- the establishment of a new Gender Equality Fund, as part of the 2015-16 Federal Budget; and
- additional efforts to align the aid program and diplomatic efforts.⁹⁵

9.92 In its submission, DFAT expressed an awareness of the need to ensure funding for gender-focussed initiatives remains strong:

It will be important to maintain adequate levels of Australian ODA that contributes substantially and effectively to these priority areas, since significant gender equality challenges remain and new challenges are emerging throughout the Indo-Pacific region.⁹⁶

DFAT's self-assessment methods

9.93 In addition to labelling aid investments with the OECD DAC gender marker, DFAT evaluates aid investments through 'Aid Quality Checks' (previously called 'Quality at Implementation' assessments).⁹⁷

9.94 Up until 2015 all aid initiatives with a total value of more than \$3 million have been required to complete an annual Quality at Implementation

94 DFAT, *Performance of Australian Aid 2013–14*, 2015, p. 61.

95 DFAT, Submission to Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Inquiry into the International Aid (Promoting Gender Equality) Bill 2015, p. 2.

96 DFAT, *Submission 27*, p. 8.

97 DFAT, *Submission 27*, p. 47.

assessment. The threshold for completing this assessment was increased to \$10 million in 2015, and the assessments renamed 'Aid Quality Checks'.⁹⁸

- 9.95 Aid Quality Checks mean that all major initiatives are assessed according to six criteria, one of which is the 'effectiveness of their strategies to advance gender equality and promote women's empowerment'. A rating against this criteria is based on responses to these six 'propositions':
- Analysis of gender equality gaps and opportunities substantially informs the investment.
 - Risks to gender equality are identified and appropriately managed.
 - The investment is making progress as expected in effectively implementing strategies to promote gender equality and women's empowerment.
 - The Monitoring and Evaluation system collects sex-disaggregated data and includes indicators to measure gender equality outcomes.
 - There is sufficient expertise and budget allocation to achieve gender equality related outputs of the investment.
 - As a result of the investment, partners increasingly treat gender equality as a priority through their own policies and processes.⁹⁹
- 9.96 As previously stated, 73 per cent of aid initiatives implemented by DFAT scored a rating of 'satisfactory' (or better) for the gender equality criteria in 2014. This represents a majority of aid initiatives and DFAT aims to increase this to 80 per cent by 2016.¹⁰⁰
- 9.97 Initiatives with a satisfactory score tend to be concentrated in particular sectors, especially health and education, where most programs focus on women and girls. On the other hand, the ODE found that in economic sectors DFAT's '[m]onitoring and evaluation (M&E) of gender outcomes is weak', and in some cases non-existent, with only one quarter of programs surveyed reporting on gender outcomes at all.¹⁰¹
- 9.98 This weakness is not limited to the economic sphere, because:
- ... other work by the Office of Development Effectiveness (ODE) has found that gender equality performance is an ongoing area of weakness across the Australian aid program.¹⁰²

98 DFAT, *Submission 27*, p. 47.

99 DFAT, *Supplementary Submission 27.2*, p. 6.

100 DFAT, *Submission 27*, p. 47.

101 DFAT, ODE, *Smart Economics: Evaluation of Australian Aid Support for Women's Economic Empowerment*, August 2014, p. 5.

102 DFAT, ODE, *Smart Economics: Evaluation of Australian Aid Support for Women's Economic Empowerment*, August 2014, p. 5.

- 9.99 In its review of the aid program Quality at Implementation reports in 2014, the ODE found that the gender equality criteria had ‘received the second-weakest rating by initiative managers (after monitoring and evaluation) for the past three years’.¹⁰³
- 9.100 Other findings by the ODE have cast doubt on the efficacy of some of the Department’s past evaluations. For instance:
- The 2012 stocktake of the rural development portfolio notes that QAI reports on gender equality featured a great deal of ‘repeated text, sometimes over multiple years, and focus on process (such as appointing a gender adviser, or developing a plan) rather than outcomes’.¹⁰⁴
- 9.101 Most of DFAT’s program assessments are conducted by the staff responsible for the program, with some use of peer-review. The ODE has expressed a concern that this may be distorting the results. For instance, in 2014 the ODE reported that some program managers were ‘over-rating’ their programs:
- Overrated self-scoring of gender equality within the QAI system accounted for about one-quarter of all ratings in 2012. Training is needed for staff to conduct good-quality gender analysis and incorporate this into design, M&E and reporting.¹⁰⁵
- 9.102 As noted, in June 2015 DFAT provided a submission to the Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade’s Inquiry into the International Aid (Promoting Gender Equality) Bill 2015. DFAT’s position was that the Bill was not required because DFAT’s ‘current systems and processes meet the intent of this legislation’.¹⁰⁶
- 9.103 In its submission, DFAT admitted that ‘[h]istorically, gender equality ratings have not been as robust as those for other aid quality criteria.’¹⁰⁷ However, it also argued the Department’s methods for evaluating gender equality outcomes had been improved.¹⁰⁸

103 DFAT, ODE, *Smart Economics: Evaluation of Australian Aid Support for Women’s Economic Empowerment*, August 2014, pp. 23–24.

104 DFAT, ODE, *Smart Economics: Evaluation of Australian Aid Support for Women’s Economic Empowerment*, August 2014, p. 72.

105 DFAT, ODE, *Smart Economics: Evaluation of Australian Aid Support for Women’s Economic Empowerment*, August 2014, p. 69.

106 DFAT, Submission to Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Inquiry into the International Aid (Promoting Gender Equality) Bill 2015, p. 2.

107 DFAT, *Supplementary Submission 27.2*, p. 6.

108 DFAT, Submission to Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Inquiry into the International Aid (Promoting Gender Equality) Bill 2015, p. 2.

- 9.104 More recently, DFAT submitted that its staff had increased their focus on ensuring the gender ratings were robustly assessed when preparing reports for 2014–15.¹⁰⁹ The Department has also reported that it is working to ensure ‘rigorous, credible’ and robust reporting in relation to its programs by empowering the ODE to undertake ‘strategic evaluations of particular programs or thematic areas’, under the guidance of an Independent Evaluation Committee.¹¹⁰

Critical perspectives

- 9.105 Submissions and evidence to the inquiry presented a variety of views on DFAT’s self-assessment practices in relation to their gender programming.

- 9.106 Mr Stuart Schaffer, Director of International Programs at Save the Children Australia, suggested that DFAT’s incorporation of gender needs to be more strategically focussed, particularly at the whole-of-country level:

The Australian aid program does do a fair bit of analysis on gender related issues, particularly at the activity level, but I think it can be pushed up so that gender issues are thought about in a more holistic way when people are developing programs.¹¹¹

- 9.107 Mr Schaffer went on to highlight ‘the need to do a fulsome gender analysis of the issues that impact on a particular country’, as well as an analysis of cultural barriers to women’s empowerment, and plan aid and diplomacy accordingly.¹¹²

- 9.108 Abt JTA was more critical, arguing that ‘much of the funds reported as gender focussed are not serious, sustained nor maximising their potential to improve the lives of women and girls’.¹¹³

- 9.109 Abt JTA also suggested that DFAT’s criteria for measuring results, which mostly focus on quantitative data, may not provide sufficient evidence to judge the success of programs. The submission stated:

With women and girls comprising half the population in most countries, it is inevitable that they will be recipients of programs, but this does not mean that programs are optimising the impact that they can have. This is not because of a lack of good intentions

109 DFAT, Submission to Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Inquiry into the International Aid (Promoting Gender Equality) Bill 2015, p. 14.

110 DFAT, *Performance of Australian Aid 2013–14*, 2015, p. 4.

111 Mr Stuart Schaefer, Director of International Programs, Save the Children, *Committee Hansard*, Melbourne, 3 November 2014, p. 10.

112 Mr Schaefer, Save the Children, *Committee Hansard*, Melbourne, 3 November 2014, p. 12.

113 Abt TJA, *Submission 59*, p. 2.

but rather the reality that gender expertise and funding is being spread too thin and current program design and implementation models make it difficult to innovate and adapt where the greatest gender gains could be made.¹¹⁴

- 9.110 A further issue with DFAT's assessments methods, according to Abt JTA, was that:

Few contracts contain explicit milestones and incentives to deliver women's empowerment outcomes. Gender audits and reporting stimulate 'box ticking' but limited serious action.¹¹⁵

- 9.111 IWDA echoed the view that assessment of gender outcomes was at risk of being a 'tick-box' exercise, and said:

Gender equality is an important policy priority and acknowledged as essential for sustainable development. Implementation should be a formal requirement in the same way that budget management is.¹¹⁶

- 9.112 Ms Joanne Crawford, Research and Policy Adviser at IWDA, identified a lack of follow-through when it comes to gender strategies in the aid program:

... we have very consistent commitments, but the knitting together of that thing through programming to resourcing and accountability is much weaker. We have evaporation at every point, and so, even though there are strong commitments, we still see lack of traction and performance.¹¹⁷

- 9.113 Ms Joanna Hayter, Chief Executive Officer at IWDA, further suggested there may be a breakdown between the policy aims of the aid program in relation to gender and the practice on the ground:

The accountability from policy to practice is really the weakness in the aid program in terms of addressing human rights and, in this case, women's rights. It really is where everything falls down – the internal and the external.¹¹⁸

- 9.114 The ODE found that effective performance on gender equality too often relied upon individuals. It reported that:

114 Abt TJA, *Submission 59*, p. 2.

115 Abt TJA, *Submission 59*, p. 2.

116 IWDA, *Submission 32*, p. 8.

117 Ms Joanne Crawford, Research and Policy Adviser, IWDA, *Committee Hansard*, Melbourne, 3 November 2014, p. 18.

118 Ms Joanna Hayter, Chief Executive Officer, IWDA, *Committee Hansard*, Melbourne, 3 November 2014, p. 18.

... in the absence of clear incentives or department-wide mechanisms to address gender equality, the personal commitment of initiative managers and partners was a key factor in how well initiatives actually pursued gender equality.¹¹⁹

- 9.115 In its submission, IWDA recognised recent efforts to increase the focus on gender equality noting that:

... funding commitments to programs that have a focus on gender equality and women's empowerment have been growing, and this is important and welcome ...¹²⁰

However, IWDA also argued that the claims made by DFAT that over 50 per cent of Australia's aid budget is spent on initiatives that promote gender equality 'can currently not be substantiated'.¹²¹

- 9.116 According to IWDA, Australia's arrangements for tracking its gender spend 'are incomplete'. IWDA explained:

Currently, the aid program only tracks and reports actual expenditure where gender equality and women's empowerment is a specific line – where it is a 'principal objective'.

...

Where gender equality and women's empowerment is a 'significant objective' – broadly speaking, where it is mainstreamed – there is no mechanism for collecting and reporting actual expenditure. In the context of development, where a range of factors can lead to expenditure being delayed or re-focused, commitments are not the same as expenditure.¹²²

- 9.117 Further, because most of Australia's gender-related expenditure is in programs where gender is not a primary but 'significant' objective, IWDA argued that 'there is no tracking and reporting of expenditure information in relation to most of Australia's gender equality focused aid commitments'.¹²³

Flagship gender programs

- 9.118 Alongside the Department's efforts to mainstream gender considerations throughout the aid program, DFAT funds a number of programs where the primary focus is gender equality and/or women's empowerment. As

119 DFAT, ODE, *Smart Economics: Smart Economics: Evaluation of Australian Aid Support for Women's Economic Empowerment*, August 2014, p. 53.

120 IWDA, *Submission 32*, p. 9.

121 IWDA, *Submission 32*, p. 9.

122 IWDA, *Submission 32*, pp. 9–10.

123 IWDA, *Submission 32*, p. 10.

previously stated, these programs in 2013–14 represented five per cent of DFAT’s total aid spend, or \$202 million.¹²⁴

- 9.119 Witnesses repeatedly highlighted DFAT’s flagship gender programs as demonstrating best practice in gender programming. DFAT also pointed to these programs as examples of their most successful work in empowering women and girls. Three key programs – Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development, the Micro-enterprise Development Program in Nepal, and the Empowering Indonesian Women for Poverty Reduction (MAMPU) project – are discussed here.

Pacific Women

- 9.120 The Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development program (Pacific Women) is arguably Australia’s most high profile gender program in 2015. Pacific Women is a ten-year \$320 million program designed to ‘improve the political, economic and social opportunities of Pacific women in 14 Pacific countries’. The program has been allocated long-term funding – from 2012 to 2022.¹²⁵ Since the launch in August 2012 of Pacific Women, over \$54 million has been spent.¹²⁶
- 9.121 DFAT explained that the program works on many different fronts to promote women’s safety, empower women for leadership roles, and tackle entrenched discrimination. Some of the activities undertaken so far include:
- Australia has worked ‘with UN Women and the local government in Port Moresby to improve produce markets to increase women’s safety and their income’.
 - Australia has provided facilities for electronic banking to over 200 women stall holders in the Gerehu Market, which has seen their savings double since January 2014.
 - In Fiji, 12 000 pregnant women were provided with counselling and testing for sexually transmitted infections.¹²⁷
 - Australia supported the Papua New Guinea Business Coalition in working with the private sector to increase the number of women business leaders, and develop policies for women at work.¹²⁸
 - Through the Pacific Women’s Parliamentary Partnership Program, DFAT seeks to address the low representation of women in Pacific

124 DFAT, *Supplementary Submission 27.2*, p. 9.

125 DFAT, *Submission 27*, p. 29.

126 DFAT, *Supplementary Submission 27.3*, p. 17.

127 DFAT, *Performance of Australian Aid 2013–14*, p. 28.

128 DFAT, *Annual Report 2013–14*, p. 95.

parliaments by 'facilitating dialogue, exchanges, mentoring and training between Australian and Pacific Islands women Members of Parliament and parliamentary staff'.¹²⁹

- The Department funded a gender advisor in Tonga.¹³⁰

9.122 Other activities include the provision of support to the Solomon Islands, Samoa, Kiribati and Tonga to identify challenges to implementing national laws aimed at reducing high rates of sexual and gender-based violence. This support has been provided through the Pacific Islands Law Officers Network.¹³¹

9.123 Many witnesses to the inquiry offered praise for the program, including Dr Harris Rimmer who described Pacific Women as 'a very innovative program'.¹³² However, few witnesses offered evidence on the effectiveness of the program, with DFAT saying that it is still:

... too early to assess whether activities and outputs are contributing to achievement of improved economic security and rights for women, after just one year of implementation.¹³³

9.124 This view was echoed by Dr Lesley Clark, the Director of PacificPlus Consulting, who stated:

It is too early to assess the effectiveness of the PWSPD program but it is the most significant in the region, both in terms of scope and budget that is aimed at improving gender equality and it should be supported.¹³⁴

9.125 DFAT representatives indicated that evaluating effectiveness is a priority the Pacific Women program, pointing to the practice of receiving 'six monthly reports from UN Women, which is our implementing partner, across a number of indicators'.¹³⁵

9.126 DFAT also specified that they are working to capture qualitative measures of effectiveness. Ms Newbury explained:

One of the ways we are trying to measure this is by talking to the women themselves. We ask what changes they are seeing in their

129 DFAT, *Annual Report 2013–14*, p. 95.

130 DFAT, *Submission 27*, p. 32.

131 DFAT, *Performance of Australian Aid 2013–14*, p. 28.

132 Dr Harris Rimmer, ANU Gender Institute, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 23 September 2014, p. 2.

133 DFAT, *Supplementary Submission 27.3*, p. 17.

134 Dr Lesley Clark, Director of PacificPlus Consulting, *Submission 30*, p. 6.

135 Ms Tracey Anne Newbury, Director, Gender Equality and Disability Inclusiveness Section, Pacific Regional Branch, DFAT, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 17 June 2014, p. 5.

lives as individuals and, as a group of women, what benefit our program has.¹³⁶

- 9.127 Despite limited data on the program's effectiveness at this point, DFAT highlighted the Markets for Change program, which it says is on track to improve the safety of produce markets for women in Fiji, Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands. DFAT explained that the program does this through providing better infrastructure, empowering women leaders through Market Vendor Associations, providing agricultural training and increasing financial literacy.¹³⁷
- 9.128 DFAT's *Performance of Australian Aid 2013–14* report found that there had been 'a substantial reduction in crime and violence reported at Gordons Market since the establishment of a police unit in September 2013'.¹³⁸
- 9.129 The SPC also praised the Department's role in promoting women's safety in the Pacific, saying: 'Australian contributions to development have led to safer environments for Pacific women'.¹³⁹
- 9.130 DFAT also pointed to the Channels of Hope for Gender program as a success story.¹⁴⁰ The program seeks to 'change negative attitudes around gender-based violence and gender inequality in order to commence a process of change in social norms'. For this program, DFAT funded World Vision to work with church and community leaders in five marginalised urban communities in Honiara to change attitudes around women's roles and women's rights.¹⁴¹
- 9.131 Under Pacific Women, DFAT has also provided funding for the Solomon Islands Women in Business Association. The Department reported that, since its establishment in 2005, 'the Association's membership has increased from 100 to more than 480 women'.¹⁴²

Micro-enterprise Development Program

- 9.132 The Australian Government has funded the Micro-enterprise Development Program (MEDEP) in Nepal since its inception in 1998. The program 'aims to expand employment opportunities and alleviate poverty of the ultra-poor and socially marginalized'.¹⁴³

136 Ms Newbury, DFAT, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 17 June 2014, p. 5.

137 DFAT, *Supplementary Submission 27.3*, p. 17.

138 DFAT, *Performance of Australian Aid 2013–14*, p. 28.

139 SPC, *Submission 24*, p. 7.

140 DFAT, *Supplementary Submission 27.3*, p. 18.

141 DFAT, *Supplementary Submission 27.3*, p. 18.

142 DFAT, *Submission 27*, p. 33.

143 DFAT, *Submission 27*, p. 32.

- 9.133 MEDEP works to contribute to poverty reduction by creating ‘micro-entrepreneurs’, helping them to grow their businesses, and working with the public and private sectors to facilitate micro-businesses.¹⁴⁴
- 9.134 DFAT submitted that MEDEP has played a successful role in women’s empowerment in Nepal, ‘bringing them out of their traditional reproductive roles and providing them access to and control over productive resources/land and public services’.¹⁴⁵
- 9.135 The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Nepal reported in 2013 that MEDEP had ‘created 9 464 new micro-entrepreneurs, 68 per cent of whom were women’.¹⁴⁶
- 9.136 The UNDP’s 2013 MEDEP progress report also highlighted the representation of women and ethnic minority groups within the leadership of the program, saying that this had led to more women, Dalits and Indigenous nationalities benefiting from the entrepreneurial loans.¹⁴⁷
- 9.137 DFAT echoed this view, saying that MEDEP had ‘successfully promoted a more gender sensitive and socially inclusive structure within its implementing partners’. DFAT provided the example of the Business Development Service Providing Organisations, which have increased the proportion of female executive members to 55 per cent.¹⁴⁸
- 9.138 The UNDP report also found that the program was helping to transform traditional gender roles ‘from the household to income generating’, and that this has led to economic empowerment for the women involved, and increased their confidence.¹⁴⁹
- 9.139 DFAT reported that MEDEP’s next phase will work to incorporate its model of ‘micro-entrepreneurship development’ into the Government of Nepal’s own microenterprise development programs, which are led by the Ministry of Industry.¹⁵⁰
- 9.140 DFAT asserted that:
- Since its establishment, MEDEP has helped directly create more than 70 000 micro-entrepreneurs and 75 000 jobs, with approximately 60 per cent of the micro-entrepreneurs supported, and jobs created, being for women.¹⁵¹

144 DFAT, *Submission 27*, p. 32.

145 DFAT, *Submission 27*, p. 32.

146 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Nepal, *Annual Report 2013*, p. 2.

147 UNDP Nepal, *Micro-Enterprise Development Program Progress Report 2013*, p. 8.

148 DFAT, *Submission 27*, p. 32.

149 UNDP Nepal, *Micro-Enterprise Development Program Progress Report 2013*, p. 18.

150 DFAT, *Submission 27*, p. 32.

151 DFAT, *Submission 27*, p. 32.

Empowering Indonesian Women for Poverty Reduction

- 9.141 Another flagship program for women's empowerment is the \$60 million Empowering Indonesian Women for Poverty Reduction (MAMPU) program. By working to improve the lives of up to 300 million poor women in Indonesia, DFAT asserts that 'MAMPU will increase poor women's access to jobs, family planning, and protection against domestic violence'.¹⁵²
- 9.142 Abt JTA identified the MAMPU program as one of DFAT's most effective programs, saying:
- MAMPU demonstrates an excellent approach to tackling gender issues and DFAT would benefit from understanding what is working in MAMPU and seek to replicate these successes in other priority countries.¹⁵³
- 9.143 Abt JTA asserted that MAMPU was unique because it was:
- ... designed to focus on the issues that are important to women in Indonesia—jobs, quality reproductive health services, safe migrant worker arrangements, reduction in violence and access to social protection programs.¹⁵⁴
- 9.144 DFAT recounted that MAMPU partners have achieved the following in 2013–14:
- Developed 'relationships' with 103 newly elected members of Indonesia's regional parliaments between October and December 2014.
 - Have been invited to sit on a Presidential working group for 'women, poverty and children', where they can 'influence new priorities, including on social protection and migrant workers'.
 - Successfully lobbied over 200 national parliamentarians on a proposed amendment to the *Law on the Placement and Protection of Migrant Workers*. DFAT revealed that the draft of the amendment has been 'successfully elevated to the legislative agenda for debate in the national parliament in 2015'.¹⁵⁵
- 9.145 DFAT reported that 'over 15 000 women have been directly involved in MAMPU activities'. According to DFAT, these women
- ... have reported positive changes in their lives, including greater confidence to speak in public, greater awareness of MAMPU

152 DFAT, *Submission 27*, p. 30.

153 Abt TJA, *Submission 59*, p. 3.

154 Abt TJA, *Submission 59*, p. 3.

155 DFAT, *Supplementary Submission 27.2*, p. 44.

themes and in some cases opportunities to speak and be leaders in their communities.¹⁵⁶

- 9.146 According to Abt TJA, the MAMPU program owes its success, at least in part, to the fact that it has avoided attempting to ‘import foreign solutions in a very complex and specific cultural and religious setting’, instead working with local organisations and parliamentarians ‘to innovate, gather evidence and better advocate for reforms that improve women’s lives’.¹⁵⁷

The Australia Awards

- 9.147 The Australia Awards are scholarships and fellowships offered by DFAT, the Department of Education, and Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR). These awards offer:

... the next generation of global leaders an opportunity to undertake study, research and professional development in Australia and for high-achieving Australians to do the same overseas.¹⁵⁸

- 9.148 DFAT describes the Australia Awards as ‘a key pillar of the aid program, helping to meet the long term human development needs of Australia’s developing country partners’.¹⁵⁹ The Australia Awards website states that:

The Awards strive to develop leadership potential and stimulate lasting change by empowering a global network of talented individuals through high-quality education experiences in Australia and overseas.¹⁶⁰

- 9.149 DFAT explained that in 2013–14, the aid program provided around 4 450 new Australia Awards to awardees in 113 countries, and that there were over 6 000 awardees in Australia at any one time. They also stated that over 80 per cent of Australia Awards recipients come from the Indo-Pacific region.¹⁶¹
- 9.150 In line with Australia’s focus on the Indo-Pacific region, in 2014 the largest recipient countries for Australia Awards were Indonesia, Vietnam and Papua New Guinea.¹⁶²

156 DFAT, *Supplementary Submission 27.2*, p. 44.

157 Abt TJA, *Submission 59*, p. 3.

158 Australia Awards, ‘About the Australia Awards’, <www.australiaawards.gov.au/Pages/about.aspx> viewed 10 August 2015.

159 DFAT, *Performance of Australian Aid 2013–14*, p. 43.

160 Australia Awards, ‘About the Australia Awards’, viewed 10 August 2015.

161 DFAT, *Performance of Australian Aid 2013–14*, p. 43.

162 Australia Awards, ‘About the Australia Awards’, viewed 10 August 2015.

- 9.151 Expenditure for the Australia Awards program was an estimated \$362.5 million in 2013–14, with over 1930 students successfully completed their studies that year (a 98 per cent success rate).¹⁶³
- 9.152 In 2013–14 DFAT asserted that the Australia Awards ‘successfully promoted gender equity in the program, with 50 per cent of scholarships and 47 per cent of fellowships awarded to women’.¹⁶⁴
- 9.153 The Committee heard that Australian scholarships are highly valued within the region.¹⁶⁵ Professor Betty Lovai of the University of PNG reported increasing competition for scholarships. She suggested that demand is outstripping supply across the university, the public and private sectors and in the community.¹⁶⁶
- 9.154 ACIAR referred to successes under its fellowships, with fellowship holders moving into senior positions on return, and a growing number of women, more than 50 per cent recently, being among its awardees.¹⁶⁷
- 9.155 However, there were also criticisms of the program. Coffey International which manages Australia Awards Programs on behalf of DFAT, advised:
- Our experience tells us that there is a need to change the mindset of men and women to enable opportunities to allow women into decision making positions and for women to believe that they are capable of participating meaningfully in decision making processes.¹⁶⁸
- 9.156 As mentioned in chapter seven, Coffey called for a redesign of the Australia Awards program to open up more opportunities for women and to address the gender gap. In particular, it considered that the current approach of awarding the scholarship to an equal number of men and women applicants does not offset women’s disadvantage in many countries in the region.¹⁶⁹
- 9.157 Another concern was the lack of attention to post-scholarship outcomes for women. Coffey reported that its scholarships effectiveness assessment processes had found that women in several countries are struggling to fully utilise their skills upon return. It noted that the Mongolian awards program is the only program which specifically factored this in upfront

163 DFAT, *Performance of Australian Aid 2013–14*, p. 43.

164 DFAT, Annual Report 2013-14, p. 116.

165 Emeritus Professor Susan Bambrick, Member, representing Governor District 24, Zonta International, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 6 May 2015 p. 47.

166 Professor Betty Lovai, Private capacity, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 3 February 2015, p. 4.

167 Dr Nick Austin, CEO, ACIAR, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 18 September 2014, pp. 37–38.

168 Coffey International, *Submission 90*, p. 8.

169 Coffey International, *Submission 90*, pp. 7–8.

program design, with dedicated funding allocated to promote women's leadership.¹⁷⁰

- 9.158 Emeritus Professor Bambrick recommended badging a group of awards 'Womens' Leadership Awards'.¹⁷¹ Secondly, she proposed government to government commitments to employ women awardees on return.¹⁷²
- 9.159 The 2014–15 Budget increased commitments to the Awards Program by \$31.7 million, bringing the overall allocation nearly \$350 million, and providing for over 4 500 scholarships and fellowships.¹⁷³
- 9.160 According to the DFAT website, the ODE is currently working on an 'evaluation of the contribution of Australia Award Scholarships to women's leadership'.¹⁷⁴

Work of other Australian agencies

- 9.161 There are a number of other government agencies that deliver Official Development Assistance, and some of this work has components that aim to empower women and help women and girls to enjoy their human rights. These programs are discussed below.

Australian Federal Police

- 9.162 The Australian Federal Police (AFP) is a major donor to projects in the region, with ODA expenditure in 2013–14 of \$130.7 million. AFP programs included:
- the Pacific Police Development Program, which undertook development programs in Nauru, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Tonga and Vanuatu;
 - the Timor-Leste Police Development Program, which focused on enhancing the capability of front-line policing services of the Policia National de Timor-Leste; and
 - the Cybersafety Pasifika Program, which equipped police in various Pacific countries with the knowledge and resources to educate their communities in all aspects of cyber safety.¹⁷⁵

170 Coffey International, *Submission 90*, p. 8.

171 Emeritus Professor Bambrick, Zonta International, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 6 May 2015 p. 49.

172 Emeritus Professor Bambrick, Zonta International, *Committee Hansard*, Canberra, 6 May 2015, p. 47.

173 DFAT, *The 2014-15 Development Assistance Budget: a Summary*, 2015.p. 2, <dfat.gov.au/> viewed 10 August 2015.

174 DFAT, Office of Development Effectiveness, 'Current Work' <dfat.gov.au/aid/how-we-measure-performance/ode/current-work/Pages/current-work.aspx> viewed 10 August 2015.

9.163 The AFP also worked to build the capacity of police forces in the region, focussing on the:

... development of the community policing capability of the Royal Papua New Guinea Constabulary, supported the development of a credible policing capability in the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force and supported the refurbishment of forensics facilities in Pakistan and the training of Pakistan law enforcement authorities.¹⁷⁶

Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research

9.164 The Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR) is another significant donor with expenditure in 2013–14 of \$94.1 million.

9.165 ACIAR funds partnerships in agricultural research in a number of countries in the Indo–Pacific region, and has generated ‘new knowledge and technologies and built greater human capacity and capability’.¹⁷⁷

9.166 In 2013–14 ACIAR managed a number of programs in the Indo–Pacific region, including PNG. Some of ACIAR’s partnerships promoted women’s empowerment through funding:

... better ways to improve the livelihoods of women smallholder vegetable producers by helping them to improve their business knowledge and skills, develop their financial literacy and open new market opportunities.¹⁷⁸

Attorney-General’s Department

9.167 The Attorney-General’s Department (AGD) managed ODA expenditure in 2013–14 of \$4.3 million. This was focussed on working with partner countries throughout the Indo–Pacific region, including PNG and Indonesia, to:

... develop and improve capacity and technical expertise in law and justice agencies; help combat organised crime and corruption including through assistance to ‘follow the money’; strengthen legal frameworks on people smuggling and human trafficking; improve domestic crime and policing laws; and build the capacity of police and other law and justice officials.¹⁷⁹

175 DFAT, *Performance of Australian Aid 2013–14*, p. 62.

176 DFAT, *Performance of Australian Aid 2013–14*, p. 62.

177 DFAT, *Performance of Australian Aid 2013–14*, p. 62.

178 DFAT, *Performance of Australian Aid 2013–14*, p. 63.

179 DFAT, *Performance of Australian Aid 2013–14*, p. 64.

9.168 In its submission to the inquiry, the AGD explained that the Department's programs:

... support the Government's investment priority of gender equality and empowering women and girls, by helping to remove the barriers and impediments to enhancing the human rights of women and girls.¹⁸⁰

9.169 The Department aims to achieve this 'by incorporating gender equality principles in the design, delivery and evaluation' of programs.¹⁸¹

Australia-Asia Program to Combat Trafficking in Persons

9.170 DFAT explained that Australia is co-chair with Indonesia of the Australia-Asia Program to Combat Trafficking in Persons (AAPTIP) program. The program works to 'enhance cooperation on human trafficking through the Bali Process' and is led by the Attorney-General's Department (AGD).¹⁸²

9.171 In its submission, the AGD described recent activities it has undertaken, including working with Indonesia as part of a committee co-chaired by Indonesia and the International Organisation for Migration to 'develop a further set of policy guides on the identification and protection of victims of trafficking'. The AGD reported that the policy guides were endorsed at the Bali Process Senior Officials Meeting in May 2015.¹⁸³

9.172 The AGD described the guides as:

... a valuable and practical tool in assisting countries in the region to criminalise human trafficking and understand the international legal framework around trafficking in persons, in particular the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children.¹⁸⁴

9.173 In March 2015 Australia also co-chaired the first meeting of the Bali Process Working Group on Trafficking in Persons, with Indonesia, and co-hosted the working group's first event, a regional symposium on labour trafficking, with Thailand.¹⁸⁵

180 Attorney-General's Department (AGD), *Submission 94*, p. 1.

181 AGD, *Submission 94*, p. 1.

182 DFAT, *Submission 27*, p. 37.

183 ADG, *Submission 94*, p. 3.

184 AGD, *Submission 94*, p. 4.

185 AGD, *Submission 94*, p. 3.

- 9.174 DFAT advised that the ADG had worked closely with portfolio agency partners including the Australian Federal Police and the Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre in progressing this work.¹⁸⁶
- 9.175 According to DFAT, the AAPTIP will run for five years and ‘will build on the success of previous programs by further strengthening criminal justice responses to trafficking at both national and regional levels’, through:
- training judges and prosecutors, and helping investigators to increase convictions;
 - establishing a research fund to improve the collection of statistics to inform policy; and
 - focussing on ‘the needs of victims as they move through the criminal justice process, and on gender, reflecting the fact that trafficking affects men, women and children differently’.¹⁸⁷

Pacific Police Development Program

- 9.176 The AGD works with Pacific partners under the Pacific Police Development Program (PPDP) to ‘ensure that crime and policing legislation adequately provides for the protection of victims of violence against women and the prosecution of perpetrators of such violence’. This assistance is provided through regional forums such as the Pacific Islands Law Officers Network and the Pacific Islands Chiefs of Police.¹⁸⁸
- 9.177 According to the AGD, the program has provided technical assistance and supported legal policy capacity building, through:
- helping to develop the Cook Islands Crimes Bill, including drafting ‘modernised sexual offences’ and provisions to address domestic violence;
 - helping to develop the Kiribati Penal Code Amendment Bill to ‘strengthen and modernise sexual offence provisions’; and
 - helping Nauruan stakeholders to develop new family violence legislation and reform the *Criminal Code*, including in regards the sexual offences provisions.¹⁸⁹
- 9.178 Assistance provided under this program has also helped to build police capacity in dealing with gender-based issues, including violence, and to ‘enhance opportunities for women in policing’. For instance, in Kiribati the AGD provided ‘tailored training to the Pacific Islands Chiefs of Police

186 DFAT, *Performance of Australian Aid 2013–14*, p. 64.

187 DFAT, *Submission 27*, p. 38.

188 AGD, *Submission 94*, p. 2.

189 AGD, *Submission 94*, p. 2.

Women’s Advisory Network about their powers and duties under police legislation’.¹⁹⁰ The AGD and their partners also delivered a policing policy course through the Pacific Police Policy Network to ‘legislative drafters at the Regional Drafters Forum and to law and justice officials in Cook Islands, Kiribati, Nauru, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Tuvalu’.¹⁹¹

- 9.179 The AGD has also supported the Pacific Law Library Twinning Program, which has worked with Pacific libraries, including libraries in the Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, PNG, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Tuvalu for the last ten years to provide professional development, especially to women.¹⁹²
- 9.180 In 2014–15 the AGD also ran a Legal Policy Development Champions Program with ten Pacific law and justice officials, half of whom were women. The course used a ‘train the trainer’ approach, bringing participants to Canberra to learn skills they could take back to their home countries and deliver to others.¹⁹³

Strongim Gavman Program—Law and Justice

- 9.181 The Strongim Gavman Program, or ‘Strengthening Government Program’, (SGP) in PNG is also overseen by the AGD, but funded by DFAT. The Program has eleven advisers deployed in four PNG agencies supporting PNG with law and justice issues, including anti-money laundering, anti-corruption, and family and sexual violence.¹⁹⁴
- 9.182 SGP advisory assistance supported the PNG Department of Justice and Attorney General to develop the Family Protection Act and Regulations. The Act came into effect on 11 March 2014. SGP also supported the establishment of the Family and Sexual Offences Unit.¹⁹⁵
- 9.183 The program works to build the capacity of PNG law and justice officials, by providing five SGP advisers in the PNG Office of the Public Prosecutor. One of these is attached to the Family and Sexual Offences Unit, and one supports broader family and sexual violence prosecutions in the PNG Office of the Public’s regional offices.¹⁹⁶

190 AGD, *Submission 94*, p. 2.

191 AGD, *Submission 94*, p. 2.

192 AGD, *Submission 94*, p. 3.

193 AGD, *Submission 94*, p. 3.

194 AGD, *Submission 94*, p. 1.

195 AGD, *Submission 94*, p. 1.

196 AGD, *Submission 94*, p. 1.

9.184 In the following chapter the Committee presents evidence of the efficiency of Australia's aid program in relation to women's rights and canvases the various proposals for improvements made in evidence.

