Capacity Development Strategy 2018–2022

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Background

The Fiji Women’s Fund (referred to henceforth as ‘the Fund’) is an initiative of the Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development (Pacific Women) Program, funded by the Australian Government.

There is growing evidence that supporting women’s organisations and the women’s movement is the most effective way to bring about gender equality. Among recommendations from the global women’s movement is for donors to channel funding to women’s organisations. Women’s Funds are flexible, responsive, and accessible mechanisms for supporting women’s organisations and networks to advance gender equality.

In January 2015, the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) commissioned a civil society sector analysis that included women’s civil society organisations (CSOs). The analysis recommended that DFAT investigate the feasibility of establishing a locally managed women’s fund to support Fiji women CSOs.

In November 2015, DFAT commissioned a three-member design team to develop the Fund design. The design team consulted with a range of stakeholders including key women’s CSOs and rural women’s groups, government, private sector and development grantees.

The consultation highlighted the positive interest and support from women’s civil society organisations for the Fund to be locally owned and managed. However, there was strong consensus among women’s organisations that the process for localising the Fund required time and planning, and that this would be the key focus of the Fund while it is supported by DFAT until 2022.

The Fund will commit up to AU$10.5 million from July 2017 to June 2022 to women’s organisations, groups and networks. It will provide funding (that contributes to core funding -see Annex 1 for Fiji Women’s Fund grant structure) and capacity development support to women’s groups, organisations and networks in Fiji to expand and enhance their work on women’s empowerment and gender equality.

Objective and Outcomes

The Fund contributes to the Fiji Government’s key strategies that promote gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in Fiji. The National Women’s Plan of Action1 and National Gender Policy2 frame this empowerment process and is driven by the Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation. The Fund will also contribute to the Beijing Platform for Action3, Pacific Leaders’ Gender Equality Declaration (2012)4 and Sustainable Development Goals 2030.5 Gender equality and women’s empowerment is one of six investment priorities for Australian Aid and more than 80 per cent of all programs regardless of their objectives are required to effectively address gender issues in their implementation.6

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The Fund’s objective is to provide women’s groups, organisations and networks with the support that they need to improve women’s lives, particularly those in rural and remote areas or who are marginalised or disadvantaged.

In line with this objective and the shared Australian and Fiji Government development priorities outlined above, the Fund has identified three end-of-investment outcomes to be achieved by 2022. These are:

» Women’s groups, organisations, or networks supported by the Fund are empowered and have improved capacity (knowledge, skills, resources and relationships) to contribute to transformative change that improves women’s lives;

» Women’s groups, organisations, or networks supported by the Fund are more influential at different levels (individual / systemic and formal / informal) and are contributing to transformative change in women’s lives; and

» The Fund has transitioned to an independent local entity and has secured funding from donors, private sector, and local philanthropy.

The Fund works across four thematic areas which are;

1. eliminating violence against women
2. empowering women through increased economic opportunities
3. improving women’s participation in leadership and decision making
4. strengthening women’s groups and coalitions for change.

Rationale for the strategy

The Fund is in the process of developing a range of strategies to guide and strengthen the Fund’s program delivery and management. These are outlined in the program design to achieve the Fund’s long-term investment outcomes, which contribute to the Fiji National Development Plan and DFAT Aid investment goals. One of these is the Capacity Development Strategy.

The Capacity Development Strategy (referred to henceforth in this document as ‘the Strategy’) 2018-2022 sets out the Fund’s long-term strategic direction for capacity development. This Strategy articulates how the Fund will support grantees in strengthening their capacity to promote and achieve gender transformative change.7 The Strategy will be complemented by the Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) Strategy that will ensure that the Fund’s approach to gender equality and the empowerment of women are integrated into every aspect of its work to support grantees to reduce inequalities and exclusion.

The Fund will provide funding, capacity and network development support to its grantees and capacity and network development support to women’s groups, organisations and networks in Fiji, so that they can expand and enhance their work towards women’s empowerment and gender equality. Experiences of other women’s funds in their approach to collective capacity development indicate that there is value in investing in ‘... the transformative potential of focussing on collective capacity and collective well-

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7 Gender Transformative Change aims to move beyond individual self-improvement among women and toward ‘transforming the power dynamics and structures that serve to reinforce gendered inequalities. A gender-transformative approach to development goes beyond the ‘symptoms’ of gender inequality to address ‘the social norms, attitudes, behaviours, and social systems that underlie them. This approach entails engaging groups in critically examining, challenging and questioning gender norms and power relations that underlie visible gender gaps.’ Hilderbrand, E; Karim, N; Mohanraj, P & Wu, D. (2015). Measuring gender-transformative change: A review of literature and promising practices. p.5
being rather than individual skills and individual care. The Fund will also contribute to the development of the women’s movement in Fiji as a key grantee for equitable, rights-based development. Additionally, the Strategy will contribute to improving or changing what grantees do in areas of their own priority.

The Capacity Development Strategy will also be complemented by the Fund’s Communications Strategy, and other future strategies developed by the Fund.

### Development of the Strategy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scoping</th>
<th>Findings</th>
<th>Submission</th>
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| • Review of the Fund program design & literature  
• Review of grantees' organisational documents (from the EOI and proposal stages)  
• Consultation with the Fund Team to determine the outline and principles of the Strategy  
• Scoping exercise to determine grantees' strengths and capacity support requirements | • Use of information from the scoping exercise to develop the Strategy  
• Development of an inventory of capacity support required and strengths of grantees  
• Development of the Strategy | • Peer review of the Strategy  
• Submission to DFAT via Cardno |

The Strategy was developed in three stages. The scoping stage involved the review of the Fund program design, a review of grantees’ organisational documents, review of relevant literature and an internal consultation with the Fund Team to determine the Strategy’s outline. DFAT was also consulted to discuss the Strategy’s outline and expectations. To learn about the support required and strengths of grantees, a scoping exercise was conducted with grantees.

The second stage involved using the information from the scoping exercise to develop the Strategy.

An inventory demonstrating grantees’ strengths and capacity support requirements was developed to map out the Fund’s implementation plan.

The final stage involved sending the Strategy for peer review prior to submission to DFAT. The peer reviewers were Tara Chetty (Senior Gender Program Officer-Pacific Women), Sandy Thompson (NZ Civil Society Expert), Maria Diaz Ezquerro (FRIDA The Young Feminist Fund’s Capacity Building Officer), Ellen Ambags (Programme Associate, Mama Cash) and Farida Fleming (Pacific Women M&E Adviser).

All three stages have taken an inclusive and collaborative approach with the Fund staff and grantees. A key element in this approach is to ensure that the Strategy not only reflects the identity of the Fund but also the voices of its grantees who represent women’s groups, organisations and networks.

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8 Mama Cash. (2016). Funding transformative leadership: A case study of participatory capacity strengthening. p.8
Objectives of the strategy

The Strategy aims to achieve six objectives:

- **Foster** coalitions among and across grantees, and women’s groups, organisations and networks
- **Provide space** for grantees to self-identify capacity development support
- **Strengthen** existing structures (including knowledge, skills, resources) with grantees
- **Influence and encourage** transformative shifts in existing power structures to contribute towards gender equality and women’s empowerment
- **Promote** learning and reflection among women’s groups, organisations and networks
- **Facilitate** information, knowledge and skills sharing among women’s groups, organisations and networks
Principles of the strategy

The principles of the Strategy have been developed as a result of a collaborative discussion with the Fund team which are in line with feminist principles and principles outlined in the Fund’s Communications Strategy. Additionally, the principles support the commitments made by over 160 countries and around 50 other organisations in the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation.\(^9\)

The principles outlined here guide the implementation of the Strategy.

Approach

The Fund will adopt a strengths-based feminist approach when working with grantees. The strengths-based feminist approach has been coined by the Fund by reviewing two approaches: (1) strengths-based and (2) feminist theory. The strengths-based approach starts from the belief that every individual, groups, organisations and networks has a set of strengths and capabilities and the potential for growth, change and success. The strength-based approach recognises that individuals, groups, organisations and

networks hold the power to their own transformation. Feminist theory is guided by a common belief that ‘gender bias exists systematically and is manifest in the major institutions in society...’ 10

The strengths-based feminist approach recognises that capacity development of women’s groups, organisations and networks moves beyond just developing individual and collective strengths and works towards ‘transforming the power dynamics and structures that serve to reinforce gendered inequalities’. 11 Starting from a needs-approach encourages dependency which is disempowering. The strengths-based feminist approach focuses on opportunity, strengths, and empowerment.

For the Fund this means that women’s groups, organisations and networks work toward collective social transformation by engaging women and men that challenge and ultimately change the existing social structures and power relationships.

Framework for Implementation

The Framework for Implementation has been developed out of the recommendations made by grantees in the scoping exercise and therefore reflects the voices of grantees and how they see the Fund providing capacity development support. Using these recommendations, the Fund’s capacity development support will be delivered through seven priority activities: 12

Co-Mentoring: Co-Mentoring support provided to grantees will be externally sourced. The Fund acknowledges the power dynamics as a funder and its grantees and see values in grantees being provided mentoring support from external sources. Whether the relationship is considered formal or informal, the goal of co-mentoring is to provide individual professional development support especially at governance and leadership level and encourage reflection on practice. Co-mentoring is ‘based on the assumption that grantees and potential mentors equally contribute to the personal and professional growth of the other’. 13

Ongoing support: Ongoing support will be provided by the Fund staff. Ongoing support will contribute towards grantees’ organisational development. During the scoping exercise, grantees requested the Fund to be available as a ‘sounding board’ and requested that the Fund provide ongoing support during the lifetime of their projects. Grantees have identified challenges in working in their communities on issues of women’s equality and empowerment and require assistance with developing programs that are long-term and sustainable. Ongoing support will enable the Fund to work with grantees in developing programs that are context-specific for each grantee.

Cross-learning: Cross-learning recognises that every grantee has strengths and can provide technical assistance, mentoring and/or share experiences with other grantees. This opportunity enables grantees to reinforce their own learning as well as those of others. Direct interaction between grantees promotes active learning and reflection. Cross-learning will also include the Fund and sister funds (such as Mama Cash, FRIDA The Young Feminist Fund) to grantee learning opportunities.

Connecting Networks: Grantees see the Fund as a conduit for movement building. Connecting grantees to each other and other networks (including the private sector) is a vital aspect of capacity development. Connecting networks will lead to resource sharing, strengthened relationships, raised profiles and access

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Many grantees have requested that the Fund provide more opportunities for networking. Whilst the orientation and proposal writing workshops provided by the Fund have been able to connect a few grantees, these workshops have been held separately and have not brought all grantees together in one room. The Fund will facilitate more opportunities for networking, such as field exchanges.

**Annual Learning and Reflection workshop:** Learning and reflection workshops are an important part of the Fund’s MEL System. These workshops provide a critical space to reflect on work, get exposure to new ideas and test out new thinking with others. They are also essential for testing the Fund’s Program relevance in diverse contexts, tracking and testing innovation and synthesising evidence of contribution to longer-term outcomes in its four thematic areas. The reflection workshop will take place once a year with grantees as well as with the Fund’s stakeholders.

**Community of Practice:** CoP can provide opportunities for peer learning, promote and strengthen best practice. Support to CoPs should be demand-led and responsive to priorities of grantees and/or other grantees. Providing opportunities to share knowledge, skills and experiences with each other is a vital component to strengthening capacity. CoP will involve people in the Fund’s thematic areas who meet to share experiences and provide peer support. The Fund will coordinate these sessions and this will be demand-driven, i.e., grantees who are interested in joining a CoP will be brought together on a regular basis. The Fund anticipates that the structure of CoP will be fluid in nature. Interest has already been registered by a few grantees to set up CoP for finance officers and project officers/managers.

**Technical assistance:** The Fund acknowledges organisations need to be able to function effectively before social issues can be addressed. Grantees have identified the technical assistance they require. The Fund team will deliver technical assistance on financial management; monitoring, evaluation and learning; gender equality and social inclusion; and child protection, fraud and anti-bribery, and other technical assistance may be outsourced. For one-off requests, the Fund will prioritise what it can deliver internally and what it can resource externally. The technical assistance delivered by the Fund team will be accompanied by co-mentoring, ongoing support, cross-learning and connecting networks and will support grantees to move beyond a needs-based approach to a rights-based approach. The gender and social inclusion training aims to build women and men’s consciousness- the critical entry point in the Fund’s Theory of Change. This support should also encourage women individually and as grantees to engage with men and boys. It will also include attention to the gender equality rights-based foundation for addressing violence against women and other forms of gender-based violence, particularly through influencing change of harmful gender norms that discriminate against women.

**Monitoring, evaluation and learning for capacity development**

If the monitoring and evaluation of capacity development activities is to be effective, it is important to know what the purpose of the capacity development activity is, who the providers and recipients of capacity development are, and whose perspective we are interested in. The Fund has taken a theory driven approach to Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E), where we have visualised how change is likely to happen and the Fund has designed a Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Plan to capture this. This approach has been informed by the program Theory of Change (Annex 2) and Theory of Action. The Theory of Change is represented by the Program Theory diagram, which represents the Fund design, including the high-level program strategies and assumptions. The Theory of Action is represented by the Program Logic (Annex 3). The program logic is more operational in nature, and sets out the activity areas and the short, intermediate and long-term outcomes linked to the Fund’s intended objectives. The Program Logic also identifies the main assumptions underlying progress from short to intermediate to long term outcomes.
The Strategy will use the Development Assistance Criteria (DAC) evaluation questions from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) which is outlined in the Fund’s MEL Plan:

» **Relevance:** Has the Fund’s Capacity Development Strategy met the needs of its beneficiaries? Is the design of the Strategy suitable to its grantees and the context of gender equality?

» **Effectiveness:** Has the Fund’s Capacity Development Strategy met its objectives? i.e. is the Fund progressing towards its intended outcomes.

» **Efficiency:** Has the Fund’s Capacity Development Strategy been operationalised or implemented considering the value for money principles (See Annex 5)?

» **Impact:** Has the Fund’s Capacity Development Strategy contributed to long-term change for women in Fiji, particularly those who are marginalised and vulnerable?

» **Sustainability:** Has the Fund’s Capacity Development Strategy developed the potential or capacity for ongoing results and sustained change for women’s groups, organisations and networks?

Table 1 shows how the Fund will monitor and evaluate its capacity building activities against its objectives to demonstrate the achievement of the Fund’s long-term investment outcomes.

**Capacity Development Strategy Objectives**

What the Strategy is aiming to achieve

» Provide space for grantees to self-identify capacity development support

» Strengthen existing structures (including knowledge, skills, resources) with grantees.

» Promote learning and reflection among women’s organisations, groups and networks.

» Facilitate information, knowledge and skills sharing among women’s organisations, groups and networks.

» Foster coalitions among and across grantees, and women's organisations, groups and networks.

» Influence and encourage transformative shifts in existing power structures to contribute towards gender equality and women's empowerment

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14 Refer to the Pacific Women Value for Money Rubric.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inquiry questions</th>
<th>Priority Activity</th>
<th>Desired Outcomes</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Technical Assistance</td>
<td>The high-level activities that the Fund will focus on over the next four years</td>
<td>How will the Fund know if it has built capacity? What will success look like?</td>
<td>Quantitative or qualitative factor or variable that provides a simple and reliable means to measure achieving capacity development</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Relevance:</strong> Has the Fund’s Capacity Development Strategy met the needs of its beneficiaries? Is the design of the Strategy suitable to its grantees and the context of gender equality?</td>
<td>Financial management</td>
<td>Grantees report improved organisational financial processes and policies</td>
<td>Increasing number of grantees developing financial policies and establishing organisational processes round financial management (e.g. budgeting, preparing payment vouchers, being able to report)</td>
<td>Capacity development activity reports</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning</td>
<td>Grantees demonstrate increased knowledge, skills, confidence and experience in MEL</td>
<td>Increasing number of grantees developing and implementing MEL plans</td>
<td>Capacity development activity reports</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Grantees value MEL as a means of tracking change</td>
<td>Number of grantees attending MEL training and annual reflection workshops</td>
<td>FWF communication products</td>
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<td>Grantees use MEL tools to report activity, project and program outcomes</td>
<td>Grantee progress and completion reports</td>
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<td>Child Protection</td>
<td>Grantees demonstrate raised awareness on child rights and child protection, issues, services and including the legal regulatory environment in Fiji</td>
<td>Increasing number of grantees have a child protection policy in place and are implementing the policy</td>
<td>Capacity development activity report</td>
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<td>Grantees are empowered with skills and knowledge to proactively maintain an environment that aims to prevent and deter any actions, whether deliberate or inadvertent, that place children at the risk of any kind of child abuse, neglect or exploitation</td>
<td>Grantees report minimising risks to children</td>
<td>Grantee progress and completion reports</td>
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<td>Grantees understand the safeguards that are necessary when working with children and understand their own role in creating a safe environment</td>
<td>Number of grantees attending child protection training</td>
<td>Field visit reports</td>
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15 Refer to the *Pacific Women* Value for Money Rubric
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<tr>
<td><strong>Effectiveness:</strong> Has the Fund’s Capacity Development Strategy met its objectives? i.e. is the Fund progressing towards its intended outcomes.</td>
<td>▪ Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI)</td>
<td>▪ Grantees are able to apply the child protection policy in their daily work</td>
<td>▪ Grantees management structures and systems reflect gender equality principles</td>
<td>▪ Capacity development activity report</td>
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<td></td>
<td>▪ Grantees consciousness around gender equality and social inclusion is raised</td>
<td>▪ Gender equality and women’s empowerment focused training and support module, toolkits and materials developed and implemented by the Fund</td>
<td>▪ Number/examples of gender equality and women’s empowerment activities, projects and programs developed and supported by the Fund</td>
<td>▪ Grantee progress and completion reports</td>
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<td>▪ Grantees are utilising the understanding of GESI to improve their activity, project and program design</td>
<td>▪ Number of GESI trainings delivered to grantees</td>
<td>▪ Number of grantees participating in GESI trainings</td>
<td>▪ FWF communication products</td>
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<td></td>
<td>▪ Grantees are contributing to the Fiji women’s movement by advocating for the rights of rural, remote women and marginalised groups</td>
<td>▪ Number of grantees that have adopted GESI approaches in their work</td>
<td>▪ Number of grantees that have adopted GESI approaches, including disability, in their work</td>
<td>▪ Field visit reports</td>
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<td>▪ Resource Mobilisation</td>
<td>▪ Grantees demonstrate increased knowledge, skills, confidence and experience in resource mobilisation, business continuity and pipeline planning</td>
<td>▪ Grantees have a plan on how to mobilise for resources</td>
<td>▪ Annual learning and reflection workshops</td>
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<td>▪ Grantees demonstrate increased knowledge, skills, confidence and experience in communications</td>
<td>▪ Grantees establish a wider pool of donors</td>
<td>▪ Grantees are diversifying funding sources</td>
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<td>▪ Grantees are visible and have credibility in the Fiji women’s movement and other spaces</td>
<td>▪ Number of grantees attending resource mobilisation training</td>
<td>▪ Number of grantees attending communication and visibility training</td>
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<td></td>
<td>▪ Grantees implement ethical communication practices and have a policy on informed consent (do no harm) in regard</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Impact:</strong> Has the Fund’s Capacity Development Strategy contributed to long-term change for women in Fiji,</td>
<td>▪ Communications and Visibility</td>
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<td>▪ Grantees demonstrate increased knowledge, skills, confidence and experience in communications</td>
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<td>▪ Increasing number of grantees have established and implemented communication and visibility strategies</td>
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<td>▪ Number of grantees attending communications and visibility training</td>
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<td>Technical Assistance</td>
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<td>particularly those who are marginalised and vulnerable?</td>
<td>to text and photos of women, children and other marginalised/vulnerable groups</td>
<td>Number of Board/governance members attending training</td>
<td>Field visit reports, Annual learning and reflection workshop</td>
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<td>Organisational Governance &amp; Leadership</td>
<td>Grantees demonstrate improved governance and leadership structures</td>
<td>Number of leaders from grantees attending training</td>
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<td>Good governance and leadership practices are implemented</td>
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<td>Sustainability: Has the Fund’s Capacity Development Strategy developed the potential or capacity for ongoing results and sustained change for women’s groups, organisations and networks?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Business Advisory Services</td>
<td>Grantees demonstrate improved knowledge, skills and confidence in running businesses</td>
<td>Number of grantees attending training</td>
<td>Capacity development activity report, Grantee progress and completion report, FWF communication products, Field visit reports, Annual learning and reflection workshops</td>
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<td>Increasing number of grantees have developed a business plan and a marketing strategy</td>
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<td>Organisational Policy Development</td>
<td>Grantees are able to manage organisational risk (s)</td>
<td>Number of grantees attending training</td>
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<td>Grantees are able to use policies as a framework for decision making</td>
<td>Grantees have increasing number of organisational policies in place for decision making</td>
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<td>Grantees have reduced organisational risk(s)</td>
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<td>Project Management</td>
<td>Grantees demonstrate a systematic approach to managing projects</td>
<td>Number of grantees attending training</td>
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<td>Grantees implement systematic processes to managing projects</td>
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</table>
| Technical Assistance | | | | ▪ FWF communication products  
▪ Field visit reports  
▪ Annual learning and reflection workshops |
| ▪ Strategic Planning | ▪ Grantees demonstrate organisational strengthening and planning  
▪ Grantees demonstrate better allocation of resources that align with organisational goals | ▪ Increasing number of grantees have developed strategic plans that are reflected in the annual work plan | | ▪ Capacity development activity report  
▪ Grantee progress and completion report  
▪ FWF communication products  
▪ Field visit reports  
▪ Annual learning and reflection workshops |
| ▪ Women’s Legal Rights and Legal Literacy | ▪ Grantees demonstrate increased knowledge on women’s legal rights | ▪ Number of grantees attending training  
▪ Grantees are advocating for women’s legal rights  
▪ Grantees are developing and implementing policies to address sexual harassment | | ▪ Capacity development activity report  
▪ FWF communication products  
▪ Grantee progress and completion reports  
▪ Field visit reports  
▪ Annual learning and reflection workshops |
| ▪ Co-Mentoring  
▪ Ongoing support  
▪ Cross- learning  
▪ Annual Learning & Reflection Workshops  
▪ Connecting to networks  
▪ Community of Practice  
▪ Technical Assistance | ▪ Grantees demonstrate increased knowledge, skills, confidence and experience in various competencies (e.g. finance, governance, leadership, project management, monitoring and evaluation etc.)  
▪ Grantees demonstrate improved organisational performance and project and program delivery | ▪ Improved organisational performance  
▪ Number of new networks and partnerships created | | ▪ Grantee progress and completion reports  
▪ Field visit reports  
▪ FWF communication products  
▪ Annual learning and reflection workshops  
▪ Evaluation Reports for Type A grantees  
▪ Capacity development activity reports |