

Pacific Provider Development Fund Evaluation Findings and Management Response

Introduction

In March 2006, the Department of Internal Affairs (DIA) commissioned a formative evaluation of the redeveloped Pacific Provider Development Fund (PPDF).

The broad aim of the PPDF evaluation was to assess the success of the redeveloped PPDF and identify factors that enhance or impede the Funds development in the period to 30 June 2006. Judy Paulin and Liz Tanielu completed the evaluation in August 2006. This document provides a summary of the evaluation findings and a management response.

Background

PPDF was set up by the New Zealand Lottery Grants Board and is supported by a secretariat located in the Local Government and Community Branch of the Department of Internal Affairs (DIA).

PPDF was established in 2001 as a short-term fund to enable eligible Pacific social service providers to access training and mentoring in corporate governance, financial management and general business management. This followed a cultural audit of lottery grants which found that Pacific communities were not receiving an equitable share of lottery funding, and that Pacific applicants were often declined due to inadequate financial and management systems. The Fund's operation was reviewed in 2004, and the PPDF was subsequently revised based on findings arising from the review. These findings included the following:

- The PPDF produced positive goodwill in the Pacific community and demonstrated the Board's commitment to improving its responsiveness to Pacific people but other intended outcomes, such as improved provider development for Pacific groups could not be consistently or significantly demonstrated;
- The achievement of the PPDF's intended outcomes was limited by changes to its original focus and by the intensive nature of the support required for such a fund which was not reflected in its initial resourcing; and
- Given the issues that had been identified, the review did not support the PPDF continuing in its current form.

In August 2004, the Board confirmed its commitment to the PPDF and to improving its responsiveness to the Pacific community. It agreed the PPDF could not continue in its current form and it put the PPDF's 2004/05 funding round on hold pending modifications to ensure greater focus and accountability.

In 2001/02 \$500,000 was available for distribution and \$332,040 approved in grants; in 2002/03 \$582,360 was available for distribution and \$581,368 approved in grants; and in 2003/04 \$445,662 was available for distribution and \$230,959 was approved in grants.

In the 2005/06 funding round the subcommittee approved a total of \$199,229 from funds available of \$200,000. This was an average of \$4,859 approved in assistance to 41 Pacific applicant groups for capacity development training.

There were seven Pacific ethnic groups: Samoan, Cook Island Maori, Tongan, Fijian, Tokelauan, Tuvaluan and Kiribati peoples, represented among those likely to benefit from the training. All Pacific ethnic groups including Niuean were likely to benefit from the services provided by the remaining five successful applicant groups.

There were three priority areas in which the PPDF Subcommittee most frequently approved capacity development training: corporate governance (76%), financial management (56%) and vision and mission development (54%).

The recommended allocation to the PPDF was \$350,000 in 2006/07¹

The Formative Evaluation

In March 2006, DIA commissioned an evaluation of the redeveloped PPDF, the broad aim of which was to assess the success of the redeveloped PPDF and of factors that enhance or impede its development in the period to 30 June 2006.

The overall evaluation objectives were:

- How effective has the process of redesign and development of the PPDF been for Pacific groups? (What factors have had an effect, positive or negative, on the redevelopment of the PPDF and what factors have assisted or inhibited the process of implementation?);
- How successful is the PPDF in assisting Pacific groups to obtain more equitable access to lottery funds?;
- What works well and what does not work well in terms of Pacific provider development processes; and
- What processes have Pacific groups in place to demonstrate their accountability for the use and management of PPDF funds? How might these processes be improved?

The evaluation report presents formative evaluation findings drawn from the perspectives of Pacific applicant groups, key stakeholders in the PPDF, and key informants in other social sector government agencies with a Pacific provider development fund. The report is supplemented by analyses of

¹Pacific Provider Development Fund Modifications: An investment approach to improving responsiveness to Pacific Communities, New Zealand Lottery Grants Board, Agenda Item 5.5 4 May 2005, page 11

relevant documentation, including PPDF applications, outcomes and two other relevant evaluations¹.

Features of the redeveloped PPDF included:

- A new Lottery Grants Board PPDF Subcommittee to allocate funds to Pacific groups for specific training and mentoring;
- A better resourced Secretariat to provide overall information and assistance to Pacific groups before and following the submission of their applications;
- The development of collaborative arrangements with other funders;
- PPDF funds for Pacific groups to be paid directly to approved training providers and mentors; and
- The external evaluation of the PPDF and of the modified approach to ensure more effective provision of information to Pacific applicants and ensure that they are better able to successfully apply for funding from other committees (and possibly other funders).

Key Findings

The following details the key findings regarding the PPDF:

How effective has the process of redesign and development of the PPDF been for Pacific groups?

The views of Pacific applicants and key stakeholders are that the redevelopment process has been effective over the past nine months namely:

- The quality of the PPDF applications is improved;
- There is a relatively high rate of applications approved and an average amount of funds approved;
- The newly established PPDF Subcommittee's composition and decision making process is clearer; and
- There is an increased level of PPDF dedicated staff; the regional advisors and secretariat are better resourced to provide information and assistance to Pacific groups about PPDF related matters.

² Koloto A, Sharma S, Stowers F, Pepe T, Makaua L, Tuisano N, Finau C, Time T, Lemihio P. (2006) *Pacific Peoples Provider Development Fund Evaluation: Final Report*. Unpublished report for the Department of Child, Youth and Family Services and the Ministry of Social Development.

Paulin J, Tanielu L, Kingi V. (2005) *An Evaluation of the Pacific Capacity Building Strategy*. Internal report for the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs.

How successful is the PPDF in assisting Pacific groups to obtain more equitable access to lottery funds?

- In the 2006 funding round \$199,229 was allocated to 41 Pacific applicant groups serving seven specific Pacific ethnic groups: Samoan, Cook Islands Maori, Tongan, Fijian, Tokelauan, Tuvaluan, and Kiribati peoples (as well as Pacific peoples as a whole). An average grant amount of \$4,859 towards training in one or more areas of capacity development was distributed amongst the successful applicant groups;
- There were 60 applications; 41 of which were successful. Four applications from Pacific groups were referred onto other Lottery committees; and
- In 2003/2004 approximately 2.7% of successful applications for funds across all Lottery committees excluding the PPDF were groups whose projects benefited Pacific peoples. With the inclusion of the PPDF the percentage rose to 4.4%. The minimum measurement to gauge whether Pacific groups are accessing Lottery funds will be when the percentage of successful Pacific applicants is proportionate to the 6% representation of said nationalities within the New Zealand population.

What works well and what does not work well in terms of Pacific provider development processes?

- Building Pacific provider capacity takes time to achieve and both the government funders and the Pacific providers need to be properly resourced;
- Reasonable timeframes are required that take into account the fact that Pacific providers may be under-resourced and inexperienced in the submission of applications for funding;
- There are now dedicated advisors with specific responsibilities for PPDF. The role of regional advisors in assisting Pacific groups with the preparation of PPDF application forms is similar to that of dedicated officials in several agencies who had specific responsibilities for the achievement of Pacific Capacity Building milestones for Pacific Peoples. This has enabled the provision of one-on-one, face-to face interaction with the Pacific groups, many of whom are first time applicants requiring progressive and intensive assistance and reinforcement;
- Training needs to be tailored to each Pacific provider's needs and skill level; and
- All members of an organisation – Board members, managers, staff and volunteers – need to participate in the training. This is more likely to lead to members gaining a shared understanding of their respective roles and responsibilities and to smooth the way for more effective implementation of the organisation's practices and procedures.

What processes have Pacific groups in place to demonstrate their accountability for the use and management of PPDF funds? How might these processes be improved?

Once Pacific providers have received their training, the training providers invoice DIA. Payment is made directly to the training providers. This new arrangement, which has the support of about two-thirds of the Pacific applicant groups interviewed, reduces Pacific groups' financial accountability for the training funds. In terms of accountability for the training itself, Pacific groups and training providers will be able to use the new capacity assessment tool to assess Pacific groups' knowledge and skill on a particular indicator in a particular capacity development area prior to delivery of training and again following the training. The pre-post assessment results will form the basis of accountability reports by the Pacific groups and trainers to DIA.

The evaluation also identified the following issues, which are accompanied by a management response:

Evaluation Recommendation	Management Response
<p>The dates for publishing and distributing the material about the PPDF funding round should be revised. For example, for the February funding round, the PPDF material should be distributed in September. It is also recommended that the regional advisors use the capacity assessment tool with Pacific applicant groups earlier (by about a month) in the process. For example, the tool for the February applicants should be implemented sooner, in March rather than April.</p>	<p>The PPDF funding cycle has been revised. The closing date for PPDF applications is 16 March 2007 and the Subcommittee meets 18 June 2007. The timeline is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publication and distribution of PPDF material commenced in September 2006 • Advisors held fono / networking October 2006 – March 2007 • Applications submitted March 2007 • Capacity Assessment tool applied March – mid May 2007 • Reports are submitted to Secretariat end May 2007 • Subcommittee meets 18 June 2007.
<p>Regional advisors using a more interactive approach in their face-to-face communications at community meetings about the fund in order to draw out whether those in attendance fully understand the presentation content.</p>	<p>LG&C is developing a spreadsheet to record all interactions with community groups.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional advisors will be expected to use spreadsheets to record community meetings. The interactive face-to-face approach is part of all advisors best funding practice. <p>The interactive approach will focus on using interactive techniques to ensure Pacific groups actually understand the information given. For example, asking questions to participants; or creating a scenario (to ensure key messages are understood); and</p>

	<p>a Q&A session to frequently asked questions.</p> <p>LG&C continues to place a strong emphasis on all advisors identifying those Pacific groups that would be likely applicants for the Fund.</p> <p>It is anticipated that all LG&C staff will be participating in Pacific Awareness training as part of their professional development and performance management programme. Training will be conducted over 2007/2008.</p>
<p>Encouraging Pacific applicant groups to draw on those members with more advanced English language skills (particularly younger members) to assist with the completion of the PPDF application forms.</p>	<p>Regional Advisors are able to encourage Pacific applicant groups to seek those with more advanced English language skills to assist with the completion of the PPDF application forms in a number of ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advisors are solution focused and can assist with the completion of the application themselves; • Through community development networks, advisors can provide other groups/individuals to assist with the application process; and • When advisors present PPDF information at fono; advisors can emphasis the need to get assistance in the completion of the application form. <p>As part of the capacity assessment tool process, Regional Advisors will encourage applicant groups to include all members of an organisation: Board members, managers, staff and volunteers inclusive of young members to participate in the training identified. Including young members or members who have more advanced English will assist succession planning, upskilling of LG&C staff members, as well as assisting in the completion of PPDF application forms.</p>

<p>The Secretariat developing standardised processes around how the PPDF Subcommittee relates to the Lottery Grants Board and around approval processes.</p>	<p>PPDF Subcommittee members have received induction training and have been provided with the Lottery Grants Board Committee Members' Handbook. As part of the induction training, the PPDF Subcommittee were advised of the relationship between the Lottery Grants Board and the process of the distribution of PPDF funds. The Presiding Member of the PPDF Subcommittee has a presence on the Lottery Presiding Members Policy Advisory Group.</p>
<p>The Secretariat encouraging the Network to progress work on the development of common criteria for the selection of training providers and a joint list of approved training providers to help build capacity among Pacific providers in the social sector.</p>	<p>The PPDF Secretariat will be developing collaborative arrangements with other funders through their representation on the Pacific Provider Development Funders' Network (the Network). The Secretariat will work with the Network to progress the work on the development of common criteria for the selection of training providers and consider a joint list of approved training providers. Contact has been made with the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs, Children, Youth and Family Services (CYFS) and Te Puni Kokiri. This work will progress in 2007/2008.</p>