

Pacific Provider Development Fund Evaluation Findings and Management Response

Introduction

The current Lottery Pacific Provider Development Fund (PPDF) has, as its primary objective, the building of Pacific Community Organisations (PCOs) capacity and capability, and thereby increasing their ability to access Lottery funding.

The Evaluation

The broad aim of the PPDF evaluation was to assist the Board to make a funding decision about the possible continuation of the Fund post the 2007-08 financial year. Kahu Tautoko Consulting Limited completed the evaluation in May 2008. This memo provides a summary of the evaluation findings and a management response.

The evaluation addressed four specific objectives:

1. Provide evidence to the LGB to enable it to make a decision on future funding allocations to the PPDF;
2. Identify whether the LGB and PPDF is being responsive to the needs of the Pacific community;
3. Identify what is working and what is not working within the PPDF; and
4. Identify whether the capacity and capability of Pacific Community Organisations is being developed.

The evaluation report presents 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 relevant documentation, including PPDF applications.

Key Findings

The overall conclusion is that PPDF is a mechanism that has enabled the LGB to be responsive to the needs of PCOs through a programme of specific training designed for the purpose of promoting better funding outcomes. As a result PPDF has assisted some development of the capacity and capability of PCOs in the areas of organisational development which support good business practice, for example, governance and financial management. Further enhancements could occur to the capacity and capability development of PCOs if a wider range of capacity and capability building solutions were included for areas of funding in conjunction with training. This wider range of solutions could have a programme of mentoring and a training approach that

includes the medium to long-term development of PCOs through assistance with strategic and business planning.

The following details the key findings regarding the PPDF:

PCOs from the eight main Pacific communities in New Zealand (and across a range of geographical locations) had made successful applications to PPDF.

PPDF had been responsive to meeting most of the training needs of PCOs, however:

- Those needs are narrowly defined and there is little opportunity to assess the ongoing relevance of those needs in the PPDF process.
- PCOs have training needs and priorities outside the scope of PPDF but within PPDF there is no process for identifying and addressing these.
- The responsiveness has been impacted by shortfalls in the limited availability of Community Advisor support.

A salient response from PCOs about the training was that it would enhance the building of PCOs capacity and capability if it were part of a phased development plan. That plan, they suggested, would include mentoring, ongoing organisational development assistance and some infrastructural support. It should be noted, however, that the Board established PPDF for the distinct purpose of improving PCOs' ability to access Lottery funding and that PPDF is not intended to meet the wider operational or organizational development needs of PCOs.

Lack of clarity around the strategic purpose of PPDF

The objective of PPDF is to improve the capacity and capability of PCOs in areas of their organisation that are important for accessing funding, such as governance and management. In doing so PPDF aims to improve PCOs' ability to access other Lottery grants where they can then obtain funding for the wider needs of the organisation. The Evaluation highlights that this purpose is not well understood by a number of stakeholders and that the fund has often been considered a fund for the wider capacity and capability needs of PCOs. Consequently, there is a perception that the assistance offered by PPDF is too narrowly defined and that the fund does not meet the holistic needs of PCOs.

A significant number of those interviewed for the Evaluation suggested that PPDF would be more effective if it supported the broader developmental needs of PCOs and this is reflected in a number of the Evaluation's recommendations. In its 2 July 2008 paper to the Lottery Grants Board, the Department advises the Board not to act upon those recommendations that are based on the premise that PPDF could or should meet the wider developmental needs of PCOs. Such needs should be met through other Lottery committees and PPDF should maintain its focus on assisting PCOs to access those other Lottery funds.

The strengths of the PPDF process are set out as follows:

- Central coordination and standardisation of information.
- The usefulness of the information sessions on PPDF provided to Pacific communities.
- Strong support provided by advisors and strong relationships between advisors and PCOs, particularly (but not solely) where there are Pacific advisors.
- Availability of skilled Pacific training providers who can deliver training in Pacific languages.
- An increased ratio of successful applications for funding.

The evaluation also had findings regarding trainers and raises factors for consideration in relation to this group. (the trainers were not the focus of the evaluation or of PPDF). It was suggested that in relation to trainers the PPDF could be enhanced as follows:

- Development of a mechanism for monitoring training to identify consistent application of high quality tuition that incorporates Pacific values and principles to training.

The extent to which PPDF has contributed to the development of the capacity and capability of PCOs is difficult to measure but all parties interviewed agreed that:

- Some development has occurred, though it has mainly been for individuals, to a lesser extent for PCOs, and it is difficult to measure if a contribution has been made to the development of Pacific communities.
- The development is demonstrated through the raising of awareness of governance and management practices, the gaining of new knowledge, improved and changed governance and management practices and, in some cases, unification of group members.
- Development has also occurred through building a pool of Pacific training providers, though processes need to occur to ensure, and monitor, the quality of training providers.
- The extent of likely development depends very much on the stage at which a PCO is at when it applies; currently the PPDF process fits an established provider better than an emerging organisation.
- Effective development of PCOs must factor in the Pacific values framework that underpins the organisation; there is nothing in the PPDF process to ensure that the training addresses this (whether through content, delivery or both).

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

Evaluation Recommendation	Management Response
<p>PPDF should continue for at least a further two years, on the basis that it has had a positive impact on PCOs.</p>	<p>At its meeting on 2 July meeting, the LGB decided to continue PPDF for a further two years (i.e. 2008/09 & 2009/10) and disestablish the fund thereafter. The Board also agreed that an allocation of \$500,000 be made available to PPDF in 2008/09.</p>
<p>Policies and procedures for the operation of PPDF are clarified, and the supporting documentation consolidated so that it is readily accessible to Community Advisors and training providers. Currently documents are separately located, some are presented as formal policies, some are generic in nature and some are specific to the application of PPDF. Some procedures appear not to be formalised.</p>	<p>Based on the Evaluation, the Department prepared a paper to the Board for its meeting on 2 July 2008. The paper recommended that LG&C undertake work to ensure that the strategic objectives of the fund are adequately reflected in its operational policy and in the implementation of the funds. The Board agreed to this recommendation and confirmed that the strategic objective of the fund is to provide training assistance to build the capacity of Pacific community organizations so that they can improve their ability to access Lottery funding. The LG&C Lottery Social Sector Team is leading a working party to address this issue.</p> <p>Centralisation of the PPDF from National Office was a strength highlighted in the evaluation. The LG&C Lottery Social Sector Team will further concentrate on improvements in the clarification of policies and procedures, and also with centralised record keeping.</p>
<p>Community Advisor resource reflects the nature and extent of demand for PPDF in the regions where the fund is operative. The Community Advisor role is prescribed and documented and that adequate professional development and resources are prescribed to support the Community Advisors in their role of assisting Pacific communities with PPDF.</p>	<p>PPDF currently has 1.75 full time equivalent (FTE) regional Community Advisors and a 0.5 FTE Committee Coordinator committed to PPDF. Currently the 1.75 FTE are spread across the country. At its 2 July 2008 meeting the Board decided that the best use of this resource would be to concentrate the 1.75 FTE in the Department's Auckland region (the area with the most PPDF applicants). This will allow nearly two Advisors from the area with the highest demand to focus solely on PPDF applications.</p>

The Board has acknowledged that concentrating the PPDF advisor resource in Auckland means that PPDF clients outside of Auckland will be absorbed into the work plan of the Department's other regional offices. Despite not having a specific allocation of PPDF FTE, the other regional offices are able to manage the workload from PPDF grants in their region. All regional staff are supported to work with Pacific communities including attending Pacific Cultural Awareness training.

At its meeting on 2 July 2008, the Board also agreed that the Subcommittee move to two allocation meetings per year. This will spread the annual PPDF workload more evenly and avoid workload peaks for regional advisors.

The role of the PPDF advisors will continue to be clearly articulated and documented. This will include the following:

- clear communication of the objectives of PPDF;
- identification of the training needs of PCOs to achieve the objectives of PPDF;
- matching of trainers and PCOs;
- collaborating with other funders to ensure all of the PCOs' developmental needs are met;
- providing expert advice to enhance the development of PCOs and their ability to access Lottery funding;
- ensuring PPDF recipients go on to apply to other Lottery committees; and
- setting and monitoring of milestones and indicators of success.

The yearly training/networking meeting of PPDF Community Advisors will continue. In addition, LG&C has begun to provide Pacific Cultural Awareness Training to its entire staff, including PPDF Community Advisors. This training which is intended to assist staff in understanding the dynamics of Pacific communities is scheduled to be completed by 30 June 2009.

<p>The Capacity Needs Assessment Tool is reviewed to make it easier to apply to the needs of emerging organisations and flexible enough to factor into the assessment the operating environment of individual organisations.</p>	<p>The paper prepared for the LGB meeting on 2 July 2008 recommended that the needs assessment tool for assessing the developmental needs of PCOs be reviewed to ensure it is suitable for the needs of small and emerging organizations and is flexible enough to factor into the assessment the operating environment of individual organisations. The Board agreed to this recommendation and the Department will undertake this work.</p>
<p>Arrangements are formalised in the agreement between DIA and training providers which document the service deliverables, dates for delivery, reporting requirements and payment schedules.</p>	<p>LG&C has previously undertaken to clearly document business practices to enhance the monitoring of and accountability for training to ensure the delivery of consistent and better quality training.</p> <p>The Expressions of Interest (EOI) process for training providers has been enhanced after consultation with legal services.</p> <p>PPDF Community Advisors, regardless of location, are now provided with copies of all EOIs received to enable them to make comparison judgments of quality of available training and price etc.</p> <p>At its meeting on 2 July 2008, the Board decided that a process for creating specific contracts with training providers should be developed. Such contracts will clearly specify what training deliverables are expected and how trainers will be paid for the work. These measures will improve the quality, monitoring, accountability of training, and ensure consistent application of quality training. The LG&C Lottery Social Sector Team will undertake this work in consultation with the Department's Legal Services Team.</p>
<p>Consideration is given to allocating PPDF grants for mentoring and organisational development and consideration is extended to include whether this support might be an additional component to the PPDF Community Advisors' role or a function for the trainer.</p>	<p>The paper prepared for the LGB meeting on 2 July 2008 identified that the PPDF Subcommittee is able to provide grants for mentoring. The Board directed the Department to ensure that the mentoring component of PPDF is clearly communicated to all stakeholders.</p>

<p>Systematic evaluation processes are put in place to analyse information collected about PPDF activity including information from the completion of training. This information should be fed back to Community Advisors, Managers, training providers and the PPDF Subcommittee to assist with monitoring the performance of PPDF.</p>	<p>The paper prepared for the LGB meeting on 2 July 2008 recommended the development of an adequate monitoring framework. The Department proposed that information currently available regarding PPDF activity should be collated, consolidated and analysed to a greater extent than it currently is. This will include information collected on the completion of training and how successful PCOs are in making applications to Lottery distribution committees. The Board agreed to this recommendation and the Department will undertake this work.</p> <p>The Department will also revise the needs assessment tool to evaluate the level of capacity building post training delivery, as well as making better use of information currently collected. Results of the analysis of this evaluation will be provided to Community Advisors, Managers, training providers and the PPDF Subcommittee to assist with monitoring the performance of PPDF.</p> <p>At its meeting on 2 July 2008 the Board also requested that the Department monitor the effect of PPDF on the ability of PCOs to access non-Lottery funding. The Department will undertake to do this. The Board, however, acknowledged that access to this data is not always readily available and that any indicators are likely to be proxies.</p>
<p>Consideration is given to utilising a PCO's training needs assessment in conjunction with a newly commissioned post-training training needs assessment to act as a proxy indicator of development, in part determined by the degree to which the PPDF training has usefully met the PCO's need and what impact has occurred.</p>	<p>The Department will revise the needs assessment tool to evaluate the level of capacity building post training delivery. It is intended that the development of this tool and the ongoing analysis of the data is included in the 2008/09 work plan for the DIA Research and Evaluation Unit.</p>