

**FCO and British Council Management Response to Independent Commission for Aid Impact recommendations on:
FCO and British Council Aid Responses to the Arab Spring**

ICAI Recommendation	Accept/Partially Accept/Reject	Action already taken	Action to be taken	Target date
<p>Recommendation 1: The FCO should introduce explicit ‘theories of change’ into its country strategies to identify clearly what outcomes it hopes to achieve and how, particularly in the good governance area. It should then measure and report on progress towards outcomes, to produce a clearer picture of overall results.</p>	<p>Accept</p>	<p>AP Programme currently has joint AP/CP country delivery strategies that are refreshed on a yearly basis to reflect the changes in country.</p> <p>The AP quarterly reporting mechanisms document the progress towards outcomes at delivery and strategic level. This information is shared across the network and wider department to ensure overarching benefits of the programme are captured.</p>	<p><u>Review and Implementation</u></p> <p>FCO APPF in partnership with DFID’s APEF programme will review the current results and programme governance model to strengthen impact measurement in a way which is both proportionate and reflective of country content in preparation for financial reporting year 2014/15.</p> <p>This will include the introduction of a Theory of Change logical model where appropriate that identifies</p>	<p>All action Points January 2014</p>

			<p>enabling factors and conditions that impact delivery.</p> <p>FCO APPF will work with the Conflict Pool, DFID and wider partners to ensure that the good governance work stream adds value in a manner that is both focussed and achievable.</p> <p><u>Capacity Building</u></p> <p>FCO APPF and DFID's APEF will make use of expertise across both departments and the wider AP network to develop good practice toolkits and guidance to support implementation of strengthened approach at country level.</p>	
<p>Recommendation2: For the next annual round of APPF grants, the FCO should introduce grant-making procedures that distinguish amongst partners with different levels of delivery</p>	Partially accept	<p>We already have two Accountable Grant Agreements (AGAs) in place, which take account of the needs of the project and its operating environment. We have begun discussions with Legal Advisers on the possibility of developing a further</p>	<p>Continue to explore the options for developing a new grant giving contract.</p> <p>Review all processes and produce a report with recommendations</p>	November 2013

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<p>and financial management capacity.</p>		<p>contract for use with small organisations.</p> <p>Programme Office is reviewing the processes under which the FCO's Strategic Programmes are managed. This review will include the monitoring and reporting requirements for different levels of spend, bearing in mind the capacity of the implementing organisation. The review will have to take account of the FCO's capacity for overseeing numerous different contracts/agreements.</p> <p>APPF and DFID APEF will work in partnership to exploit potential opportunities to build the capacity of civil society organisations.</p>		
<p>Recommendation 3: During this financial year, the FCO should adapt its financial system to include new modules on programme management. It should support this with improved staff training and guidance</p>	<p>Partially accept</p>	<p>The FCO's accounting system works on the concept of accruals, or resource accounting. We are obliged to follow HMT rules on Managing Public Money when running projects and programmes. Prism was not designed to be a Project Management tool, and as such is admittedly</p>	<p>Financial Management will be a part of the review of processes noted in our actions for Recommendation2.</p> <p>Recommendations for possible changes/improvements will</p>	<p>November 2013</p>

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material.		imperfect. However, project and programme managers need to manage their finances in accordance with the FCO systems.	be made based on the review's findings. We will also work closely with the Corporate Service Centre on the provision of further training to accompany the existing suite of e-learning opportunities for Prism and finances in the FCO. This new training should be specific to project and programme work.	
<p>Recommendation 4: The FCO should invest more effort into sharing knowledge and experience among partners and country office programmes</p>	Accept	<p>The APPF network currently has formal (yearly network meeting) and informal (regional network processes) arrangements that support lesson learning amongst officers.</p> <p>The APPF team have begun to develop lesson learning AP technical expert and programme managers' networks to strengthen the collection and dissemination of good practice to</p>	<p><u>Strengthen Knowledge Management</u></p> <p>FCO APPF will work with DFID's APEF team to ensure that delivery partners visibly document data collection methods and outputs of knowledge generated by projects in the project completion reports and wider programme reporting</p>	All Action Points September 2013

		<p>partners and beneficiaries. This includes establishing technical advisers and project managers' network to begin documenting and disseminating network and country specific successes and lessons. The team have also established a tracker to monitor the challenges facing the implementation of individual programmes to share with project officers and wider FCO programme units.</p> <p>The APPF will be reporting to the Foreign Affairs Committee in June 2013 on the impact and lessons learned during the first 2 years of APPF funding.</p>	<p>mechanisms.</p> <p><u>Sharing AP Programme Outputs</u></p> <p>APPF will develop and implement an AP dissemination strategy to ensure that lesson learning and good practice is made available to a wider audience.</p> <p><u>Developing AP network</u></p> <p>APPF will develop lesson learning forums to strengthen opportunities to share good practice and collaboration opportunities amongst implementing partners, the wider AP network and technical adviser groups.</p>	
<p>Recommendation 5: The British Council should develop improved methods of measuring the institutional or social impacts of those projects that have broader goals</p>	Partially Accept	<p>Theory of change methodology frames our programme strategies.</p> <p>Internal reporting and externally commissioned research and evaluations outline progress against wider social and institutional impacts</p>	<p>To strengthen understanding of wider social and institutional impact by agreeing and delivering a rolling 18 month schedule of evaluations by business unit focussing on</p>	<p>Schedule of Evaluations agreed by September 2013</p> <p>Review of progress in undertaking evaluations by</p>

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beyond skills transfer to individuals.		beyond skills transfer.	priority programmes and geographies.	May 2014
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