

# **TI Indo Pacific Partnership for Strong, Transparent, Responsive & Open Networks for Good Governance (IPP STRONGG) Mid-Term Evaluation 2023 - Management Response**

## **Introduction**

This management response outlines how Transparency International Secretariat (TI-S) plans to follow up on the findings and recommendations of the mid-term evaluation of the TI Indo Pacific Partnership STRONGG 2020 – 2023.

The independent evaluation of the programme was undertaken between November 2022 and January 2023. It provides useful reflections and feedback on the programme strengths as well as areas that can be strengthened in its final year of implementation, as well as giving practical recommendations for consideration in any new phase from 2024.

TI-S is very much encouraged by the findings of the evaluation. In particular, we welcome the confirmation of the continued relevance of the programme, of the progress and impact it is making across its different objectives and against the gender action plan. We see the programme as a key mechanism to support TI's presence and impact in the region, and are pleased to be enabling civil society to contribute to anti-corruption across the region, supporting people to participate in anti-corruption initiatives, and providing civil society input into policy and institutional anti-corruption reforms.

The recognition of the value of flexibility in the programme design and implementation towards being adaptive and responsive to local contexts is also an important finding that we strongly agree with. We thank our partners DFAT and MFAT for recognising the importance of flexibility and support for local civil society organisations in this unique programme, especially in the challenging contexts of the Covid-19 pandemic and narrowing civic space in the region, as it has allowed the positive progress confirmed by the mid-term evaluation.

## **Feedback on Recommendations and TI-S response**

Overall, TI-S accepts all the recommendations made by the mid-term evaluation. Our follow up for the TI IPP STRONGG programme will focus on the first two sets of recommendations: those for the remainder of the IPP STRONGG Programme (1 – 6) and those for the development of a potential next phase (7–15). Given the number and detail of recommendations made, we will prioritise actions around the areas highlighted below, while taking all the evaluation findings and feedback into consideration. The recommendations for the operational environment (16–24) fall outside the immediate scope of the programme implementation team, and are related to a number of different teams at TI-S as well as in chapters. As such, we will share and discuss these with them, both for their wider consideration and specifically as to how the operating environment can be strengthened to support future work in the Indo-Pacific region. With more time needed to fully consider the implications of this set of wider

recommendations, we will reissue this management response later in 2023 with an addendum summarising how they will be implemented.

- **TI-S follow up for the remainder of the IPP STRONGG Programme implementation**

TI-S will consider the recommendations of the mid-term evaluation in the 2023 work plan of the programme, and for this final year will focus on delivering and communicating impact. In particular:

1. **We will maintain momentum and current focus to achieve the programme objectives.** This will include leveraging knowledge products developed, such as the Global Corruption Barometer (GCB) Reports for Asia (2020) and the Pacific (2021), the seven country Pacific Perceptions of Corruption Report, TI New Zealand Corruption and Anti-Money Laundering Report in the Pacific, as well as other national level reports prepared. We will also maintain momentum on our support of citizen engagement, and we will consider opportunities for further reach where this is feasible within the time and current capacity of the project.
2. **We will develop a regional engagement plan to support increased regional advocacy for the remainder of the programme.** This will build on our ongoing advocacy coming from the GCB and other tools. As part of this, we will continue to work closely with TI Australia and TI New Zealand as well as other chapters who have contacts with regional actors. A first discussion of this was held with Pacific chapters at a regional meeting in February 2023, and TI's recent engagement in the Summit for Democracy regional Indo Pacific meeting in Korea in March 2023, already marked the next opportunity to continue this discussion with Asian and Pacific chapters.
3. **We will expand plans to deliver capacity development for Chapter staff,** developing a diversified programme of support using several mechanisms to strengthen chapter capability, including individual staff exchanges, group trainings, and bilateral support. Exchanges will be planned between May and October 2023. As part of our workplan for 2023, we have already included a series of online and in-country security trainings, for chapters in higher risk contexts. Similarly, in-country dedicated support on monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) focused on this specific programme's MEL framework, will be provided to Pacific chapters, enabling the wider understanding of the whole team. Group trainings will be organized on communicating impact and on gender mainstreaming. Support on resource mobilization will primarily be provided through bilateral regional adviser support, though we will look into further training opportunities as relevant.

- **TI-S Follow up for the development of a potential next phase of the IPP STRONGG Programme**

TI-S will seek to build on the successes of the TI IPP STRONGG programme by developing a new phase from 2024 onwards, and will seek continued funding support from DFAT and MFAT to leverage these longstanding partnerships and existing experience. In doing so, we will take the mid-term review recommendations into consideration. In particular:

1. **For programme design and fundraising, we will take a diversified approach and focus on the flexibility of funding and seek continued institutional funding support for chapters where possible.** TI-S will support chapters in their national fundraising at country level or joint collaboration, as well as seeking renewed and new regional fundraising opportunities. We will continue to coordinate with TI Australia and TI New Zealand, and to seek opportunities to leverage chapter expertise.
2. **We will include an updated analysis of trends and risks when planning a new phase,** while recognising the confirmed relevance and interest to continue making progress against the current programme theory of change. The context relating to national developments and to the influence of foreign policies of major powers in developing countries in the Indo Pacific, continues to undergo changes, and needs to be considered, including any successful strategies for civil society. A higher level of risk assessment/management is already being worked on in 2023 and would be rolled out in any new programme.
3. **We will seek to further increase alignment, mapping and articulation of impact contribution to other current TI regional and global anti-corruption projects, and to the TI global strategy,** to ensure clearer visibility of the programme's contribution to the strategy, and to amplify impact at national, regional, and global levels.
4. **We will consider new research and evidence to be included in the new phase,** recognising that research has been extremely useful as a starting point for further advocacy, while also being time and cost intensive. Future research and TI reports will need to be more realistically supported with budget for TI-S research and communications staff.
5. **We will ensure realistic budgeting for TI Secretariat functions** that facilitate and support programme implementation such as research, communications, security, risk management and MEL, without proportionally reducing budget available for the regional team or partners. This will be important to facilitate wider support for programme activities.
6. **We will continue to include and emphasize capacity development initiatives (particularly on gender mainstreaming, MEL and risk management).** This is important to ensuring resilience of national chapters as local anti-corruption actors, and to maintaining momentum and peer learning, particularly by continuing to highlight the results of new approaches being undertaken in the region.
7. **We will develop and document a strategic approach to regional engagement and advocacy** earlier in the programme implementation, outlining specific objectives and activities based on national and regional priorities, stakeholder analysis and communications planning.
8. **We will build on the baseline and MEL framework as well as capacity built to date.** While keeping the elements of the MEL framework that have been shown to be useful, future programming MEL approaches will strive to further calibrate the balance between data collection, which has improved significantly over past years, and participatory analysis and learning processes following on from this. Beyond the emphasis on narrative data, future MEL efforts will aim to focus on developing capacity around impact documentation. Project guidance documents will be adapted to support partners to further strengthen the planning, implementation and monitoring of their work.

### Final remarks

TI gratefully acknowledges the support of DFAT and MFAT as important partners in our work. The consistency of support for TI-S and chapter work in the region at both national and regional level, has enabled continuity in our anti-corruption efforts, and longer-term changes and impacts to be seen. We look forward to continuing to work together to promote transparency and accountability against corruption, strengthening good governance in the Indo Pacific region. We will be happy to discuss the conclusions of this report, and to engage in a dialogue over the course of 2023 around the potential for continued future collaboration.

We also extend our thanks to the evaluators in enabling this process to be such a useful learning exercise for TI-S, which has added value to our organisation beyond just the scope of this project.