

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Title	Consultancy, Review of IWDA's partnership approach
Time commitment	The Consultant(s) must commence the Services no later than 17 February and complete the Services by 16 May 2025
Budget	Up to AUD24,400 (including any reimbursables)
Location	Home-based
Reporting to	Senior Program Quality Manager

Background

The International Women's Development Agency (IWDA) is an Australia-based organisation, working with and resourcing diverse women's rights and feminist organisations in Asia and the Pacific, and contributing to global feminist movements to advance our vision of gender equality for all. We exist to defend and advance the rights of diverse women and girls.

IWDA's approach represents a third way between the models of women's funds and international development NGOs: we resource the work of diverse women's rights organisations, enable them to be more effective by providing support that goes beyond money, and we make our own contributions to feminist movements through advocacy, knowledge creation and translation.

IWDA currently manages a portfolio of 15 multi-year programs with 22 partners across 8 countries with a total value of approximately \$32 million.

IWDA's work since our inception has been characterised by long-term partnerships with Majority World¹ organisations. We consistently reflect on what it means to work in partnerships and how we can best deliver our optimal contribution to the partnerships. Our focus on these questions has sharpened with actions taken to decolonise our approach to feminism and development, contained in our current Decolonial Framework and Strategic Plan to 2025, and are informed by the research on creating equitable South-North partnerships conducted in 2020 by Ofa-Ki-Levuka Guttenbeil-Likiliki².

We believe that a feminist approach to partnership in international development must deeply engage with the unequal power dynamics in these relationships. We know that as an international non-government organisation (INGO) based in the Minority world, working with and funding organisations in the Majority World, IWDA has power and privilege that our partners do not have access to. IWDA can leverage this locational power for the benefit of our partners. However, without a critical lens, IWDA risks reproducing oppressive systems of power, in so doing, taking resources, space, leadership and agency away from the groups

¹ IWDA chooses to use the term 'Majority World' in place of 'global south', 'developing world' or 'third world', and 'Minority World' in place of 'global north', 'developed world' or 'first world'. This is a political choice, as using this language demonstrates that 'global south' populations and cultures are in the global majority, thereby challenging the problematic hierarchies implied by other commonly utilised terminology.

² Creating Equitable South-North Partnerships: Nurturing the Vā and Voyaging the Audacious Ocean together (<https://iwda.org.au/resource/creating-equitable-south-north-partnerships/>).

we propose to serve. For this reason, our partnership approach is based on clear feminist principles and adopts a feminist decolonising solidarity lens.

IWDA's International Programs Partnerships Principles are intended to define a safe space between partner organisations and IWDA to ensure healthy sustainable partnerships. For the purposes of this consultancy, we see these principles as defining what it means to be an effective partner. The principles are:

- **Equality** - This is a core value of both feminism and partnership. We seek to start, develop, and conclude partnerships in equal voice, power, and agency.
- **Power-sensitivity** - We are active in identifying and acknowledging the multiple sources of power that exist in our relationships. These include but are not limited to the following dimensions of power: resources, knowledge, expert, geographical location, race, and sexuality. We seek to remain sensitive to power relationships and build partnerships that exercise 'power with' and 'power to'. We seek to be cautious and sensitive in all spaces where women operate, recognising power dynamics in these spaces and how gender identities interact with other identities to limit access to power.
- **Integrity** - We will model and encourage partnerships with integrity. We will be accountable, transparent and consistent in what we ask of ourselves and our partners.
- **'Do no harm'** - We will do no harm. We will respect our partner's political, social, economic and cultural situations. We will seek to avoid detrimental impacts on partners, by showing sensitivity and a commitment to learning (and where necessary, unlearning) and understanding contexts and partnerships.
- **Inclusivity** - The phrase 'nothing about me without me' encapsulates the rights of all people affected by a situation to be included in the decision-making processes that determine outcomes. We will embrace the strength of diversity to enhance social cohesion and harmony by cultivating greater understanding, empathy, and appreciation for the unique cultures, backgrounds, and perspectives that exist within communities.
- **Reflexivity** - We will be reflective and mindful of our position and values and how they affect our partnership relations. We will support our partners as we engage in mutually transformative learning journeys, including engaging in self-care. We will stay open to each other especially when feedback is difficult to hear.

We seek to understand and leverage our locational power so that we know when to:

- **Step up** and use our power to leverage resources and access for women's rights organisations, and make our own contribution to feminist movements;
- **Stand with** feminist movements in solidarity and amplify the work of global south actors;
- **Step back** when others are better placed to take the lead;
- **Sit with** uncertainty, embrace communal learning and deep listening, and accept that time is needed to collectively discern the best course of action.

IWDA provides partner organisations with a variety of organisational strengthening support as requested. In recognition of the core knowledge and skills our partners possess, we deliberately call this 'accompaniment' including Feminist Organisational Capacity Strengthening (FOCS) and Plan Your Power (PYP) toolkits which adapts mainstream advocacy planning processes to incorporate a deeper understanding of gendered, and other

intersecting, power relations to strengthen our movements for gender equality and ensure that allies incorporate the priorities of diverse women in their future advocacy. These are partner initiated and led opportunities, identified through due diligence reviews and annual planning processes, and include financial management, due diligence requirements, risk management and donor reporting. IWDA understands accompaniment should be time-bound to avoid risk of dependence and/or IWDA overstepping our role.

IWDA conducts partnership health checks with each partners every two years. For the past four years IWDA has also undertaken an annual Stakeholder Perceptions Review to understand stakeholders' perceptions of the effectiveness and relevance of IWDA's work, the extent to which we live our values, and how IWDA has supported partner organisations.

Purpose

In line with our feminist and decolonial values and approaches, the purpose of this consultancy is to improve IWDA's understanding of:

- Whether our approach to partnership aligns to partners' understanding of locally led development and decolonial approaches
- whether our approach to partnership is delivering the anticipated impacts for our partners and
- the most effective ways to partner with women's rights organisations

It will do this by documenting with concrete examples and case studies, the ways, and the extent to which, IWDA's approach to partnership and accompaniment has contributed to the operations, programming, governance and sustainability of their organisations. It will also identify where and how IWDA can improve our approaches to partnership and accompaniment support.

Findings from the consultancy will support IWDA to:

- Identify how our approach to partnership has evolved and opportunities to continue to strengthen the ways in which we work;
- Demonstrate accountability to our partners and our donors by detailing how our resources have been utilised to add value to our partners;
- Advocate for appropriate level of resourcing for the costs of a feminist / decolonial partnership approaches to donors, to the benefit of both IWDA and partners.
- Communicate our ways of working to other INGOs and Women's Funds;
- Contribute to the discussion on effective approaches to locally led development and decolonising international development.

Consultancy scope of services

i. Evaluation questions

Final evaluation questions will be agreed between IWDA and the consultant(s) in consultation with involved partners, and tailored as necessary to the agreed methodology.

We anticipate that evaluation questions will address the following areas:

1. In what ways, and to what extent, has IWDA's approach to partnership influenced the operations, governance, sustainability and programming of our grantee partners?
2. How does IWDA's approach
 - a. reflect IWDA's decolonial principles: (i) Perspective, framing and diversity matter; (ii) Pluri-verse not uni-verse; (iii) Power with – Anti-racist, anti-discriminatory, anti-oppression; (iv) Rights and responsibilities are equally important; and (v) Humility matters, which ensure that IWDA is challenging coloniality and applying decolonial principles to our work no matter whether we are stepping up, standing with, stepping back or sitting with³; and
 - b. align with partners' understanding of locally-led development, i.e., giving ownership of development activities and outcomes to local actors who are best placed to understand and respond to the needs of their communities⁴?
3. Are there unique or different approaches that IWDA is using?
 - How is IWDA's approach different from other INGOs? What are the strengths and the challenges within this?
 - How, and to what extent, has IWDA effectively adapted our approach to respond to changing partner needs/preferences?
4. What have been the unexpected outcomes for IWDA's partners?
5. Is there a value for money for partners in partnering with IWDA? (Using 4Es framework, which include: i) Economy: Does partnering with IWDA help to get the best value inputs? (ii) Efficiency: Does partnering with IWDA help to maximise the outputs for the level of inputs? (iii) Effectiveness: Does partnering with IWDA help the outputs deliver the desired outcomes and goals? (iv) Does partnering with IWDA help the benefits to be distributed fairly?

ii. Activities and deliverables

The evaluation will include a meta evaluation, supported by case studies of individual partners and recommendations for further improvement to IWDA's partnerships. This will be conducted through:

- a desk review of documented reflections on IWDA's contributions in partnership, and a limited number of interviews with current IWDA staff;
- consultations with organisations that have chosen to partner with IWDA, providing an opportunity for representatives from these organisations to provide confidential feedback and insights.

³ IWDA Decolonial Framework and Strategy (<https://iwda.org.au/resource/iwda-decolonial-framework-and-strategy/>)

⁴ Australian Council for International Development (ACFID): <https://acfid.asn.au/our-focus/inclusive-and-locally-led-development/>

The consultant(s) are expected to:

- Work closely with IWDA Senior Program Quality Manager to develop the methodology, including data collection tools, to ensure that the outputs of the consultancy will respond to IWDA's information needs;
- Submit a proposed methodology for ethics review, either to IWDA's internal review board or another relevant ethics review board. The methodology should include draft data collection tools and an analysis plan;
- Complete a desk review of selected program evaluations, previous consultations and strategic reviews with partners and IWDA reflections on our role in partnership, including the 4S Framework developed by IWDA on the basis of our work in partnership;
- Organise and conduct interviews with representatives from up to 7 organisations that currently partner with IWDA. Suggested list of partner organisations will be provided to selected consultant(s).
The consultant(s) need to cultivate trust and mutual understanding throughout stakeholder engagement and interview process, to enable people to feel confident in sharing feedback;
- Organise and conduct interviews with up to 10 current or former IWDA staff members;
- Prepare a concise draft report that clearly responds to the evaluation questions in the approved methodology and provides supporting data (e.g. de-identified quotes, descriptive, quantitative figures). The draft report should clearly describe methods used for data collection and analysis, and indicate the strength of evidence supporting each finding. The draft report should be shared with interviewees for their approval before it is submitted to IWDA;
- The report should include an executive summary of key value-add and recommendations for further improvement;
- Participate in a one-hour oral briefing and discussion with IWDA Executive Leader Team, Systemic Change and Partnerships Team and Senior Program Quality Manager to discuss findings and key themes, and identify any areas where the report could provide further detail or clarification; and
- Submit a final report.

No travel is anticipated as part of this consultancy. All interviews can be conducted remotely.

The consultant(s) may consider using a case study approach to support rich analysis and understanding of diversity across partnerships. For example, this could include inviting representatives from Majority World partner organisations to reflect on two case studies to discuss during the interview.

iii. Team composition

IWDA has a commitment that consultations with partner organisations will be undertaken by a consultant from, and based in, a Majority World country in Asia or the Pacific.

We are open to receiving applications from an individual consultant, or a team of two that includes consultants from and/or based in the Pacific or Asia or elsewhere, including Minority World countries.

Proposals from a team must clearly outline the roles and responsibilities of the two consultants, including who has responsibility for submitting draft and final reports.

iv. Support from IWDA

IWDA will engage with the consultant(s) to finalise the evaluation questions and discuss the draft methodology. We will support the consultant(s) through the ethics review process.

We will share all relevant documents to be included in the desk review, including IWDA's Partner Perceptions Reviews for FY2020/21 and FY2021/22, and IWDA's Stakeholder Perceptions Review for FY2022/23.

We will provide the consultant(s) with a list of potential interviewees, including contact details, and advise these potential interviewees that they may be contacted by the consultant(s). Consultant(s) are required to follow up with participants and arrange interviews, to provide participants with the opportunity to provide confidential feedback.

On request, we will arrange the translation of interview questions, consent forms, and participant information sheets, for the consultant(s) to share with participants in advance of the interview. This should be discussed with IWDA well in advance to ensure we can arrange quality translation.

We will provide timely (5 business days) feedback on deliverables submitted for approval.

IWDA will arrange for the final report to be published, including design and printing.

Deliverables to be provided

Deliverable	Timeframe or date	Audience	Milestone payment
Methodology submitted for ethics review	Three weeks after contract signed	IWDA	30%
Draft report	25 April 2025	Interviewees, IWDA	30%
Oral briefing with IWDA Senior Program Quality Manager, and other relevant IWDA staff	Within one week after draft report submitted	IWDA	-
Final report	16 May 2025	IWDA, interviewees, public release	40%

Requirements

The consultant, or team of consultants, should be able to demonstrate the skills and experience listed below:

Essential

- Substantial experience in cross-cultural communication;
- Understanding of INGO landscape;
- Experience conducting interviews, including remote interviews;

- Experience in gender analysis and/or stakeholder analysis;
- Deep understanding of feminist and decolonial research principles and partnerships; and
- At least one consultant from, and based in, a Majority World country in Asia or the Pacific.

Desirable

- Tertiary qualifications in a relevant discipline, such as social science or international development.

Safeguarding

This consultancy is not anticipated to result in contact with children.

Specific issues may emerge during stakeholder engagement that relate to child protection, the prevention of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment, and other Reportable Conduct. The consultant(s) will be required to review, sign and adhere to relevant IWDA policies and procedures including the IWDA Child Protection Policy and Code of Conduct, IWDA Whistleblower Policy and Procedure, and IWDA Conflict of Interest Policy and Procedure.

Expression of interest

Candidates are invited to submit expressions of interest providing the following:

- A cover letter that addresses the criteria as set out in the Requirements above (maximum 1 page);
- CV (maximum 2 pages per person);
- An outline of the proposed process and timeline to complete all outputs (maximum 1 page), including explanation of how the proposed process aligns with decolonial and feminist principles;
- Proposals from a team must clearly outline the roles and responsibilities of the consultants, and how the consultants will navigate power dynamics within the team (maximum 0.5 pages); and
- Daily rate and an outline of anticipated additional costs, to a maximum total of AUD24,400 (excluding GST for Australia-based consultants). The budget does not need to include translation costs.

Expressions of interest that do not cover these requirements will not be considered.

Expressions of interest are required by 16 December 2024 and should be sent to tluu@iwda.org.au with the subject 'EOI – Consultancy, Review of IWDA's partnership'.