

Management Response & Recommendations Action Plan

Evaluation Report Title:

Impact Evaluation of the Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD): Mid-Term Evaluation Report

Response to Evaluation Report (overarching narrative)

The Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD) was established in 1992 as an Executive Non Departmental Public Body (NDBP), sponsored by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) to support the strategic aims of the FCO. Under the three year funding package from FY2012-13 to FY2014-15, FCO provides £3.5 million per annum grant-in-aid and DFID a further £2 million per annum accountable grant, within an overall grant of £16.5 million.

This Mid-Term Evaluation forms part of an overall evaluation of WFD and aims to:

- Evaluate, at the midway point, the progress of the Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD) in achieving the results and outcomes envisaged in the Business Plan submitted and approved in 2012; and
- Reflect upon key questions relevant to the functions and form of WFD as a support to the required triennial review of NDPBs conducted by FCO.

In line with the Terms of Reference, the Mid-Term Evaluation focuses on accountability by assessing whether WFD's programme has produced the intended results, and on learning by providing lessons learned and recommendations for WFD's future implementation. The Mid-Term Evaluation was carried out between December 2013 and March 2014 (finalised in June 2014 after quality assurance process complete).

DFID recognises the Mid-Term Evaluation provides useful insights into the operation of WFD and identifies a number of areas where adjustments are needed. DFID welcomes the recommendations to strengthen WFD's context analysis and diagnostics, to narrow and focus efforts, to bring together the parliamentary and party strands of WFD's work and to strengthen the monitoring and evaluation framework.

Challenges and findings from the Mid-Term Evaluation are summarised below:

Key Challenges to Effective Programme Management

- **Lack of a unified management structure**, resulting in disconnection between staff of the UK's political parties and WFD's parliamentary programme staff, and in use of inconsistent implementation methods.
- **Overall, intervention logic lacks a well-targeted and strong democracy focus linking parliament and political party programmes.** From 2012 up until the Mid-Term Evaluation, WFD has implemented 170 programmes in 42 countries. The number and spread of programmes creates challenges with regard to WFD's capacity for and quality of programme/project cycle management as well as coherence amongst projects.
- **Intelligence gathering and diagnostics are limited.** The review found no formal institutional mechanism for sharing information. The insufficiency of detailed analytical information may reflect weaknesses in information gathering and interpretation.
- **The 'institutional memory' is dispersed**, with no formal mechanism found for documenting and sharing experiences. Despite some improvement, WFD's Monitoring and Evaluation Unit does not fully capture the Foundation's work with political parties.

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Key Findings – Impact

Output 1: Parliamentarians, including female parliamentarians, in 10 legislatures undertaking their key legislative, oversight, financial scrutiny and representative roles.	Partially Meeting Expectations
Output 2: Minimum of 10 political parties, in countries selected by WFD, having strengthened internal structures and external networks, enabling them to formulate, communicate and campaign on policy-based messages that offer a genuine choice to citizens.	Meeting Expectations
Output 3: Civil society organisations in 5 countries, and women’s groups in 3 countries, engaging effectively with parliaments, parties and other stakeholders.	Partially Meeting Expectations
Output 4: Enhanced WFD’s strategic focus and strengthened coordination, including party-to-party, parliamentary and cross-party work; deepening WFD’s technical expertise and professionalism (drawing on best practice, learning and development, improved programme management, communication tools, etc.); reforming WFD structure and governance arrangements, as set out in WFD’s Change Agenda.	Partially Meeting Expectations

A Triennial Review of WFD is currently underway. According to Cabinet Office guidelines, the purpose of a Triennial Review is to assess whether a non-departmental public body is still needed and is complying with principles of good corporate governance.

DFID has held detailed discussions with the WFD board and team about the findings of this Mid-Term Evaluation. DFID would have welcomed greater detail and specificity in some of the findings and the recommendations of this Mid-Term Evaluation, although many of these will be developed further as part of the Triennial Review process. The Mid-Term Evaluation draft reports, findings and recommendations have been shared with the authors of the Triennial Review.

DFID’s management response to each of the recommendations is set out in the table below. In cases where decisions and responses cannot be made in advance of the Triennial Review recommendations, these decisions and responses will be addressed in the latter half of 2014, particularly through WFD’s implementation plan which will combine responses to both the Mid-Term Evaluation and the Triennial Review.

WFD observations

WFD agrees with DFID that some better specificity in some of the review findings would be welcomed as this would serve to provide better understanding of the evaluator’s interpretation of the programme results at the mid-term. For instance, they may highlight a possible oversight by the evaluators to appreciate the wider context of the programmes that in turn lead to the evaluators over-estimating expected impact at the mid-term point. One example would be the failure to account for the time-lag between seeing impact of work at regional levels, the focus of the first half of such programmes, and impact at national levels for which evidence will manifest in the second term of the programme.

We also agree with DFID that the evaluation provides useful insights into the operation of WFD, for instance the recommendations to strengthen context analysis and diagnostics, and action to address

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this has already started. As the report notes, several recommendations deliberately feed into the Triennial Review and therefore their implementation will be better considered when that report publishes.

As expressed in the terms of reference, a key focus of the evaluation is the learning opportunity for WFD via the lessons taken from the experience and the recommendations WFD will receive in the course of the programme. WFD therefore looks forward to next stages of the evaluation being constructive in adding to our learning.

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Recommendations	Accepted or Rejected	If “Accepted”, Action plan for Implementation or if “Rejected”, Reason for Rejection
1. General		
1.1 WFD needs to ensure a consistent and adequate approach to ensuring a thorough political context analysis before it works in any given country (Short Term)	Accepted	<p>DFID/HMG will encourage the CEO of WFD and Triennial Review implementation steering group to embed a stronger approach to context analysis as WFD develops its strategic plan and implementation plan for the findings of the two reviews. (Within four months following release of TR.)</p> <p>Development of detailed country context analysis should be prioritised in the countries of greatest focus for WFD.</p> <p>DFID has already provided political economy analysis training to five members of WFD in July 2014 in response to this recommendation.</p>
1.2 Where a decision is made to provide support in a country or region, WFD must conduct a thorough and consistent needs assessment and mapping of current work in this field, to ensure the Foundation can identify entry points for support and outputs that do not conflict or create redundancies with other implementers’ work. (Short Term)	Accepted	<p>As above, DFID/HMG will encourage the WFD CEO and TR implementation steering group to develop a thorough approach for conducting context analysis and needs assessment in each country as part of WFD’s strategic and implementation plans. Any decision to provide support in a country should be based on country analysis and needs assessment.</p>
1.3 WFD needs to develop one corporate strategy with regard to how and with whom it provides assistance. (Medium Term)	Accepted	<p>Agree that one overarching strategy should guide the work of both party and parliamentary activities. Mechanisms for oversight of the strategy will be determined as an outcome of the Triennial Review.</p>

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Recommendations	Accepted or Rejected	If “Accepted”, Action plan for Implementation or if “Rejected”, Reason for Rejection
1.4 WFD needs to clarify the roles and responsibilities of the Board of Governors, the executive management and the parliamentary and political wings of the Foundation within the organisation. (Medium Term)	Accepted	To be addressed as part of response to the Triennial Review.
1.5 WFD needs to establish a formal venue/processes where information and knowledge can be shared amongst Parliamentary Assistance and Political Party Assistance staff. (Medium Term)	Accepted	DFID/HMG will support the CEO of WFD to ensure that the strategic and implementation plans address any gaps in sharing information, for example, planning frameworks and results monitoring as well as country-specific political analysis.
1.6 The exchange of information through all aspects of the programme must be systematised. (Medium Term)	Accepted	DFID/HMG will support the CEO of WFD to ensure that the strategic and implementation plans address any gaps in sharing information, for example, planning frameworks and results monitoring as well as country-specific political analysis.
1.7 WFD must reduce the breadth of its work, both globally and within any given programme. (Medium Term)	Accepted	To be addressed as part of response to the Triennial Review and follow up strategic and implementation plans. (Within four months following release of TR.)
1.8 To maximise the impact and the value of the work of WFD, the Foundation must find strategic entry points where the work with parliaments and political parties intersects to provide real results. (Long Term)	Accepted	For the core countries where WFD works, this intersection between party and parliamentary work is critical and should form part of the WFD’s country analysis and approach. For countries where WFD maintains only a watching brief it may not be necessary to find an intersection between party and parliamentary engagement.

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2. Parliamentary Assistance		
2.1 Trust between WFD and its partners is critical to ensuring a significant transfer of knowledge and, in turn, results that achieve outputs and outcomes. (Short Term)	Noted	Not a specific recommendation but can be incorporated into WFD’s strategic planning, particularly in consideration of the long-term nature of some of the sister party relationships.
2.2 WFD must adopt new and results-oriented methods of capacity development if it is to achieve its outputs and outcome with regard to parliamentary assistance. (Medium Term)	Accepted	Measurement of capacity development within WFD’s parliamentary assistance will be important. The CEO/Board should take this forward through WFD’s strategic planning.
2.3 Regional programming must be coupled with national interventions to support partners in applying the knowledge they have gained through regional activities. (Medium Term)	Accepted	Given the emphasis on detailed context analysis, it may be that WFD choses to focus on specific countries over its regional work. This decision should be made in the context of HMG’s priorities.
2.4 In formulating a parliamentary assistance programme, WFD must pay greater attention to ensuring ownership and commitment by national partners and beneficiaries. (Long Term)	Accepted	WFD will need to determine how to ensure national partners’ ownership and commitment in each specific context. Partners’ incentives and commitment should be incorporated into WFD’s context analysis and strategic planning.

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3. Political Party Assistance		
3.1 Develop frameworks for each party’s work that includes indicators and other measurements that capture the long-term, qualitative nature of party assistance. (Short Term)	Accepted	Measurement of capacity development within WFD’s party assistance will be important. The CEO/Board should take this forward through WFD’s strategic planning.
3.2 WFD political party assistance must focus on the provision of technical advice. (Medium Term)	Partially Accepted	The degree to which political party assistance focuses on the provision of technical advice should depend on context and objectives.
3.3 In future programmes, the primary output for the work of the political parties must be focused on political system reform and not just individual party reforms. (Long Term)	Accepted	To be addressed as part of the response to the Triennial Review. DFID/HMG will work with WFD as it develops its strategic plan and implementation plan for the findings of the two reviews. DFID will monitor that this is incorporated through the project completion report.
3.4 WFD must be more proactive in using the UK parties’ trust-based relationship with sister parties to promote development objectives. (Long Term)	Accepted	To be addressed as part of the response to the Triennial Review. DFID/HMG will work with WFD as it develops its strategic plan and implementation plan for the findings of the two reviews. DFID will monitor that this is incorporated through the project completion report.

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4. Partnerships and Management		
4.1 WFD has to become better at sharing information and coordinating its work with donors and implementers. (Short Term)	Accepted	DFID/HMG will work with the CEO of WFD on what is included in regular reporting to HMG. WFD should set out in its strategic plan how it can communicate its plans and share information in country with a range of donors and implementing partners.
4.2 WFD must decentralize its operations if it is to achieve results in its work with parliaments and political parties. (Long Term)	Accepted	To be addressed as part of response to the Triennial Review.
5. Planning, M&E, Logframes		
5.1 The monitoring of WFD’s programmes needs to be more coherent and a culture of M&E still needs to be established in the Foundation. (Medium Term)	Accepted	There are several recommendations around M&E. The new M&E adviser should examine these recommendations as a priority task and propose improvements to the Board through the strategic plan.
5.2 Results from monitoring by WFD need to be better reflected in how future programming is implemented. (Medium Term)	Accepted	There are several recommendations around M&E. The new M&E adviser should examine these recommendations as a priority task and propose improvements to the Board through the strategic plan.
5.3 Any future logframe needs to be properly elaborated and used by WFD itself with explicit links between activities / outputs and outcomes (Medium Term)	Accepted	To be addressed as appropriate in the context of any future programme design.

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6. Recommendations for DFID & FCO		
6.1 Provide more comprehensive and specific guidelines to WFD, so as to facilitate the coherence and harmonisation of activities between FCO/DFID and WFD.	Accepted	This recommendation will be addressed as part of a response to the Triennial Review. DFID and FCO will provide greater strategic context against which WFD can plan its engagement.
6.2 Prioritise objectives, themes, activities and the geographical scope of programmes, with absolute priority to be given to FCO/DFID strategic and priority countries, and ensure that these priorities are communicated to WFD’s beneficiaries	Partially Accepted	The overarching message is agreed. To be addressed as part of the TR (as in response 1.7) and through 1.6, above.
6.3 Require systematic mapping of a country or region based on clear criteria before formulating a programme (e.g. areas where the best results can be achieved, FCO priorities)	Accepted	This fits with earlier recommendations around context analysis. This should form part of the strategic planning – referenced also in the Triennial Review.
6.4 Ensure that WFD country and regional programmes apply context-specific approaches	Accepted	DFID/HMG will encourage the CEO of WFD and Triennial Review implementation steering group to embed a stronger approach to context analysis as WFD develops its strategic plan and implementation plan for the findings of the two reviews. (Within four months following release of TR.) Development of detailed country context analysis should be prioritised in the countries of greatest focus for WFD.
6.5 Ensure that programme proposals provide specific success criteria and indicators of effectiveness and impact	Partially Accepted	Agree it is important for WFD to ensure programme proposals provide specific success criteria around impact. However HMG has no formal role in approving programme proposals so this is a recommendation for WFD.
6.6 Ensure that the WFD objectives with regard to its individual programmes are regularly reviewed, to reflect the national and regional contextual changes	Partially Accepted	Agree that programme flexibility is important and regular review is a good way to ensure that programmes adapt to changing environments. Depending on the outcome of the Triennial Review, it is unclear whether or not HMG will be involved in project objectives at this level.

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<p>6.7 Initiate and facilitate communication and collaboration with a full range of institutions and stakeholders in the field, in order to better harmonise and coordinate policies, priorities and programmes relative to “democracy development” issues</p>	<p>Partially Accepted</p>	<p>The principle is agreed, however WFD should lead the communication and collaboration with other organisations undertaking democracy assistance, while bearing in mind HMG’s wider goals and priorities. If WFD needs points of contact then, where appropriate, HMG may provide them.</p>
<p>6.8 Provide training to WFD and political party staff on what is expected by DFID & FCO with regard to conducting context analyses and M&E</p>	<p>Accepted on PEA / Partially Accepted on M&E</p>	<p>HMG has already provided training to 5 members of WFD on political economy analysis, in response to the findings and recommendations of this MTE. DFID does not have available training on M&E to provide to WFD but WFD may be able to source M&E expertise elsewhere.</p>