
PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT FRAMEWORK

Follow-up Review of Ministry of Women's Affairs

AUGUST 2013

State Services Commission, the Treasury and the Department of the
Prime Minister and Cabinet

**Performance Improvement Framework
Follow-up Review: Ministry of Women's Affairs**

**State Services Commission, the Treasury, and the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
Wellington, New Zealand**

Published: August 2013

ISBN: 978-0-478-40964-2

Web address: www.mwa.govt.nz and also available at www.ssc.govt.nz/pif

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PIF FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

In undertaking the Follow-up Performance Review the Lead Reviewer considered: *“What is the contribution that New Zealand needs from The Ministry of Women’s Affairs and, therefore, what is the performance challenge?”*

Context of Follow-up Review

In 2010/11 the Ministry of Women’s Affairs had a full Performance Improvement Framework (PIF) Review undertaken. The key challenges from that review were the need to:

- clarify the Ministry’s objectives and strategy
- be outward looking and client focused, through emphasising engagement with other agencies and stakeholders and responsiveness to Government priorities
- improve the quality, quantity and usefulness of policy advice and research
- prioritise work on the circumstances and issues confronting Maori and Pasifika women
- address concerns that the corporate services function is too expensive, not providing the right kind and level of servicing to policy managers and the Leadership Team is insufficiently integrated with the Ministry’s substantive work units.

Since the last review, a new chief executive officer (CEO) was appointed to the Ministry of Women’s Affairs in November 2012 and there have been changes in Ministerial responsibility and Government priorities. It is therefore timely to undertake a Follow-up Review

Scope of Follow-up Review

The focus of the Follow-up Review is on the progress the Ministry has made since the PIF was undertaken, including in the following areas:

- governance and leadership and, in particular, the clarity of the Ministry’s role/purpose, objectives and strategy
- the Ministry’s operating model
- the Ministry’s approach to impact measurement
- the capability and quality of human and support systems and processes
- culture and behaviours
- the Ministry’s approach to stakeholder and client relationship management.

The Follow-up Review, to the extent possible in the time available, has considered the work undertaken by the Ministry since the original PIF Review. In addition, the Follow-up Review has considered the Ministry’s performance challenge and described its Four-year Excellence Horizon.

Environment

Fiscal constraint and weak and uncertain economic conditions are likely to be features of the environment in which the Ministry will be operating for the foreseeable future. The Business Growth Agenda targets have set the high-level priorities that economic agencies operate within. The imperative to rebuild Christchurch will continue to dominate for a number of years. There is also a clear focus across government on Better Public Services targets. In particular, there is concern about outcomes for Maori and Pasifika peoples, vulnerable children and those of working age dependent on benefits, and victims of crime. Therefore, welfare reform, education and training, children policy, and crime reduction will garner high levels of ongoing attention.

As a consequence, operational policy is likely to continue to be where all of the action is and implementation risk across core government functions will be closely monitored. To be influential in the current and foreseeable environment, the Ministry must operate in this space.

The Ministry is potentially at a tipping point as factors in its surrounding environment are aligning in a manner that presents advantages from which it could drive a successful strategy. It has a new and motivated Minister and a new and experienced CEO. Gender diversity has become a global issue that is providing informative benchmarks and therefore focus, influential key champions of diversity have emerged (eg, the 25% Group and Global Women) and a range of research and evidence is available on the impact of diversity on economic performance.

This environment means a concerted effort and involvement on a handful of issues that matter to economic and social performance where gender issues need to be addressed can yield influence and impact for the Ministry. A significant lift in medium-term economic performance cannot be achieved without a focus on the role of women in the economy. Addressing gender issues, such as diversity on Boards, career pathing and career pipeline issues (entry and access at mid-career, young women into a broader range of careers) is a key economic imperative.

Finally, stewardship responsibilities that provide medium-term advice to future governments should remain a core accountability for all government departments.

Progress Since the 2010 PIF

The Ministry of Women's Affairs has made the following progress since the original PIF Review, notably it has:

- implemented changes as a result of review of back-office functions
- recently reviewed and refreshed its purpose, vision, priorities and intervention logic
- started to develop and implement its business strategy and operating model and initiated work on impacts
- utilised the *Statement of Intent* (SOI) and 2013/14 planning process to focus the work on vision and Government priorities, impact measurement and alignment across work streams
- developed the policy analysis skills of the Ministry. There continues to be strong performance on increased safety through the focus on the prevention of violence and sexual revictimisation, women in leadership and the Ministry's international representations roles
- initiated a stakeholder planning process and re-energised engagement at the CEO level
- ensured that the underlying financial and accountability systems continue to be sound

- taken steps to prioritise focus areas and to break down silos across teams
- recently focused on the need to be influential, relevant and sustainable. The Leadership Team has identified behaviours it needs to demonstrate to lead the Ministry.

While a strong platform has been set for the future, there are a number of areas that will require continued improvement and thoughtful implementation to deliver the emerging Ministry of Women's Affairs' vision, purpose, strategy and operating model, including:

- the need to fully specify and clearly articulate the Ministry's operating model; to define the required behaviours and competencies to give effect to the operating model; and then to use them to inform thought leadership roles in the new structure and appoint against them
- engaging with staff in the development and implementation of the business strategy and operating model is critical to deliver the Ministry's vision and priority outcomes
- clarifying the respective roles of corporate staff and policy staff. Developing an organisational culture that breaks down silos should be a focus for the Leadership Team. Recognition that the previous back-office reforms were not well implemented is important. There are unresolved issues around human resources (HR) support and the allocation of responsibilities that need to be explicitly addressed
- developing a client- and stakeholder-focused culture is vital to the future operating model. The Ministry needs to have a consistently held understanding of whom the client is and the nature of the relationship with them. Client relationship management is still fragile and there is inconsistent practice. Access to the right people at the right time is vital
- better understanding and demonstrating value for money (qualitative and quantitative). The next challenge is to determine the impact the Ministry is having. There is also a need to measure progress in implementing the new purpose, strategy and vision. New impact measures have been developed for the SOI – but questions remain if they are linked to specific and measurable outcomes
- making further progress on key target groups, which is insufficient at present, eg, Maori and Pasifika women. Opportunities to partner with other agencies with overlapping interests need to be vigorously pursued, including large operating agencies and smaller agencies, such as Te Puni Kōkiri and Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs
- taking advantage of the significant opportunities of the greater economic independence outcome priority for the Ministry. This is a focus of government policy and delivery agencies and the Ministry is least well positioned in this area. The Ministry has an opportunity to fundamentally reframe the focus on the role of women in the economy if it can establish a credible work programme in this area.

Key transition risks need to be managed through:

- a considered strategy to avoid loss of key people, and therefore institutional knowledge, during the implementation process
- ownership of staff at all levels of the purpose, strategy, vision and operating model
- clear communication with stakeholders and clients, both to manage expectations but also to partner to build impact

- securing sufficient internal change management and government management experience
- ensuring there is a critical mass of support across the Leadership Team to lead and drive change. The future strategy and operating model is still contested and, therefore, a significant challenge for the Leadership Team is to motivate and align staff to the strategy.

Performance Challenge – Outcomes

The performance challenge for the Ministry of Women’s Affairs is to improve social, economic and cultural outcomes for New Zealand women, including through:

- contributing to relevant Better Public Services targets, such as reducing violent crime by 20% over five years; reducing the number of people of working age on a benefit for 12 months; increasing participation in early childhood education; and increased trade qualifications
- primary prevention of violence against women through initiatives such as the Family Violence Ministerial Group and the Government’s Review of the Sexual Violence Sector
- contributing to the achievement of the Business Growth Agenda targets, such as the Canterbury rebuild and engaging women in economic growth areas
- other Government priorities, such as the percentage of women on public sector boards reaching 45% and those on private sector boards reaching 10%.

The Ministry has identified three priority outcomes to meet this performance challenge: more women in leadership, greater economic independence and increased safety from violence. Each of these outcomes is linked to Government priorities and supported by clear intervention logic and an agreed work programme.

Performance Challenge – Organisation

i Purpose and Targets

The most immediate and important organisational challenge is to adopt a motivating, differentiating and unifying sense of purpose, with a clear set of priorities that can deliver the Ministry’s desired impacts, particularly those relating to the Business Growth Agenda (BGA) and Better Public Services (BPS) goals. This should align the Ministry’s people and partners and define the contribution the Ministry will make to improve the social and economic outcomes of New Zealand women.

While the wider BGA and BPS targets have been set, the Ministry must ascertain the specific areas where it can make a critical contribution to ensure their achievement. The focus areas should reflect the Ministry’s comparative advantage in understanding what is unique about the circumstance of New Zealand women and its in depth knowledge of empirical evidence on matters of importance to New Zealand women.

ii Business Strategy

The business strategy describes what the organisation needs to do to meet its performance challenge. It is important to build momentum and confidence within the Ministry and amongst its partners and Ministers, that the Ministry has identified a business strategy that will support it to meet its performance challenge. The business strategy needs to:

- assist the Ministry to be relevant and influential
- deliver against current Government commitments
- identify the Ministry's impact through its interventions.

iii Operating Model

The operating model needs to:

- reflect the requirements of the business strategy – delivering on a portfolio of projects and Ministerial servicing outputs that provide focus and impact
- leverage the Ministry's deep understanding about issues that impact New Zealand women's economic, social and cultural outcomes, including:
 - a deep understanding of the issues confronting women, especially an understanding of what is unique or unusual about the New Zealand situation, including issues impacting on Maori and Pasifika women
 - strong relationships externally that enable it to enlist the support of others – especially those with overlapping areas of interest
 - a strong understanding of the evidential base of what policy settings and interventions are likely to be effective in improving outcomes for New Zealand women
- use a combination of governance arrangements, structure (cross-cutting project teams drawn out of the line for strategic initiatives), process requirements, and culture, reward and recognition policies to ensure flexibility and maximum impact is achieved across the Ministry's priorities
- develop a culture from the ground up that supports the Ministry's way of working. Some of the cultural characteristics likely to be important would include a strong focus on results, an outward orientation that enlists external support with a well integrated, 'one team' approach internally, the ability to give and take the responsibility necessary to be innovative and a willingness to be challenging on ideas.

iv Implementation

Because momentum is important and the Ministry has only recently set a new strategic direction, and is in the process of developing a new operating model, there is merit in managing the key initiatives through a portfolio approach with regular feedback loops, with clear milestones, quick feedback and maximum visibility across the Leadership Team that reinforces collective responsibility for managing and resourcing the overall work programme.

This portfolio management approach should support a performance management system the Leadership Team can use to ensure that the portfolio of initiatives stays on track, resources are reallocated as necessary and issues are elevated for resolution in a timely way. It would also ensure that the Leadership Team gives due consideration to the need for projects that have immediate impact and also some with medium-term impact, while others will be at an investment and capacity building stage for longer-term impact.

What Will Success Look Like?

In four years' time, the ultimate success measure is that the goal of delivering measurable improvements in economic, social and cultural outcomes for New Zealand women will be met. This will be the result of:

- knowing where the Ministry's future contribution will come from, with a credible plan to deliver those outcomes based on a broadly agreed role for the Ministry of Women's Affairs and a balanced portfolio of projects and business-as-usual activity. The credibility of that plan will be underpinned by a solid track record of delivery against well articulated priorities and the business strategy and a supportive operating model articulated in 2013
- a substantially increased scope for accelerated development in the future, because:
 - the caliber of the Ministry's contribution to the successful implementation of operational policy in areas such as welfare reform, prevention of violence, the Christchurch rebuild, education and training and women in leadership positions, will have earned the Ministry a place at the table when strategic policy initiatives are scoped and initiated
 - the Ministry will have repositioned itself as an expert on economic matters affecting women and the importance of improving outcomes for women to improve economic performance in New Zealand
 - Ministers will be confident in the Ministry's advice
- the foundation of a robust operating model giving the Ministry and its partners confidence it can deliver timely, expert and innovative advice on what works to ensure Government's wider BPS and BGA goals are met, especially as they impact New Zealand women.

In terms of the Ministry's operating model, the Ministry will be:

- defined by its business strategy and operating model. It will be skilled at identifying priorities that endure through time and deciding what things it will not do. The Ministry will be clear on its added value. People will know what the Ministry of Women's Affairs is, what it does and that it makes a difference to outcomes for women in New Zealand. It will have eliminated the churn around business-as-usual activities to focus on priority outcomes. Its project teams will deliver a balanced portfolio of initiatives through time and its business-as-usual activity will be streamlined and effective. The Ministry will meet its custodianship role and be well placed to advise future governments

- responsive to the opportunities its environment presents: it will be innovative, efficient and effective and focused on delivering practical results through partnering and leveraging its deep understanding of the issues confronting New Zealand women and the evidential base about what interventions are likely to be successful in the New Zealand context. It will be ambitious for New Zealand women and their families and have an impactful and influential team that makes a difference. It will attract, utilise and develop talent, with a reputation as both a great place to work and a great place to partner with. It will be known for sound implementation and big ideas
- widely respected and able to enlist other stakeholders in addressing issues of importance to women in the national interest. The Ministry will be known for the quality of its external relationships, its thought leadership; its ability to muster capability and partner to deliver in a timely and expert manner to get things done. Other players will come to the Ministry early for ideas, which they will take up and run with. The Minister of Women's Affairs will routinely get positive feedback from other Ministers about the contribution the Ministry makes
- dynamic, challenging of ideas and solutions focused. Its culture will value those who take risks and accept responsibility. Vision and energy will be harnessed in a manner that commits people inside and outside of the Ministry to its work programme and priorities.

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