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Straight Talk Evaluation Consultancy

Responsible to	Straight Talk Coordinator
Accountable to	First Peoples Program National Manager
Project Budget	\$15k

1. BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

Through a time of significant transition at Oxfam Australia (OAU), the work of the First Peoples' Team has been identified as an area of growth for the organisation, forming a key pillar of Oxfam Australia's future state. As a facilitator, networker and supportive partner, Oxfam will continue to provide Indigenous communities and organisations with the support to take action, build movements and create positive change.

The Straight Talk program was developed in 2009 by Oxfam aiming to increase the skills of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women to bring about change, connect them with the political system and to build on their political knowledge. The Straight Talk program created a pathway for participants to build ongoing relationships with female parliamentarians as high-level decision makers, as well as space to develop regional and national networks to support them in their change work. Currently, the First Peoples' Program Unit in OAU is implementing the program.

The Straight Talk program emerged from a commitment by Oxfam Australia to support the self-determination of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and further, to engage, support and empower Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women to put forward the solutions and ideas they have to solve their own problems.

In 2012 the program formed the focus of an Oxfam Women's Transformative Leadership project, which aimed to develop a greater understanding of women's leadership in relation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, and specifically, how transformational women's leadership is understood in the diverse communities of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australia. The evaluation will follow this focus, by further interrogating the ability of the Straight Talk program to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women to be effective change agents in their communities.

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Currently the program hosts a National Summit in Canberra every 2 years, plus a regional gathering every other year. The regional gatherings have a local focus which brings women together to further learn about political processes, discuss local issues of concern and generate ideas to collectively bring about positive change in communities. The National Summit brings women to Canberra to learn about Australia's political system and form powerful networks with each other and with women on Federal and State parliament.

Over 10 years, the program has connected with more than 1000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women from around the country. Straight Talk participants coming from a range of backgrounds, and bringing with them knowledge from different generations, as well as their experience living in urban, regional or remote communities.

Key stakeholders of the Straight Talk program can be categorised as follows:

Category of the Stakeholder group	Stakeholder	Level of interest/ Influence
Primary Stakeholders	Women participants	High interest, low influence
Secondary Stakeholders	Advisory committee	High interest, high influence
Other Key Stakeholders	Facilitators	Mid-to-high interest, mid influence
	OAU Straight Talk team Associate Director Australia Programs	High interest, high influence

2. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

In line with the commitment of the OAU strategic direction and Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) framework, the Straight Talk program will conduct an external evaluation.

The overall purpose of the evaluation is to assess the outcomes and impacts of the Straight Talk Program. The main objectives of the evaluation are:

- i. To assess the progression of the program's outcomes and impact on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women's lives since its inception.
- ii. To analyse whether the program has contributed to Oxfam's overall Goal: Gender Justice.

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- iii. To undertake an analysis of the Straight Talk Theory of Change underpinned by the current program deliverables.
- iv. To analyse the program's influence in brokering relationships in the Australian political system and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities
- v. To produce an impact report for OAU key stakeholders, donors and supporters

AUDIENCE

The evaluation findings will be used to contribute toward learning and further program development, informing more focused and targeted decision-making by the Straight Talk team and for future implementation of the program. The primary audience for the Straight Talk evaluation is Oxfam Australia stakeholders and key supporters. The audience can also be broadened to be suited to an external audience including the Oxfam confederation and learning outcomes used to develop a best practice model locally and internationally.

Use

The evaluation will form a will enable a process of critical analysis to examine outcomes of the program, capture the success of the program and to form an impact report. It will inform decision making, planning, and programming strategies. The evaluation findings will provide an information base, which is useful for Oxfam Australia's broader advocacy work to government around Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander affairs. It will also allow Oxfam to develop a robust and scalable way to articulate, measure and report on results and impact for our programs and develop new innovative products and income streams.

3. EVALUATION CRITERIA

This evaluation will measure the set of evaluation objectives while addressing the criteria of Impact, Effectiveness, Relevance and Process. The following are draft questions, which will underpin the evaluation criteria. These questions will be modified as necessary to fit with data collection methods chosen for the evaluation.

Program Impact

- What are the significant positive, negative or unintended changes that have occurred for participants?

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- i. Are more women increasing their capacity to be effective advocates and change agents in their communities?
 - ii. Are more women occupying formal and informal leadership positions?
 - iii. To what extent have participants voice or action been heard and accepted by duty bearers?
 - iv. What skills and knowledge did women gain?
 - a. In regard to leadership
 - b. In regard to political process and political skills
 - c. In regard to advocacy
 - v. What were the ways in which women connected with each other as a result of their participation in the program and if connections were made, how did this contribute to women's capacity to:
 - Be leaders in their community
 - Collaborate with people of influence
 - Advocate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues
- What were the politician's experiences of the program, and what changed for them personally as a result of their participation in the program?
 - What is the relationship between the program, gender justice, and transformational leadership?
 - a. In regard to women's and men's consciousness and commitment to gender justice
 - b. In regard to women's rights, opportunities and access to resources
 - c. In regard to access to institutions
 - d. In regard to reflection on ones relationship to power

Program Effectiveness

- To what extent have the strategies implemented by the program led to women engaging in the political system and making change individually and in their communities? Which program activities and processes were most/least effective in achieving the planned outcomes?
- Who in the national First Peoples' community benefits from the program?

Program Relevance

- How relevant are the outcomes to the context and priorities faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women?

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- How appropriate is the delivery model and what is the value add/contribution of Oxfam to the Indigenous Women's Leadership Space?
- To what extent does the program contribute to Oxfam's strategic directions?
- How has the program adopted feminist principles of equality, recognition of systems of power, privilege, intersectionality and a practical commitment to empowerment and change?
- What role does Straight Talk play in the First Peoples programming space and in particular where does it fit in the *First Peoples* leadership space?

Program Process

- What was the participants experience of the application process and how can this be improved (if necessary)?
- What were the participant's experiences of the regional summit and national gathering? a. Did they find the events culturally appropriate b. Did the events provide a safe space for women to come together to discuss political issues

4. METHODOLOGY

The evaluation will be a transparent and participatory process involving relevant Straight Talk stakeholders including participants nationally and the OAU Straight Talk evaluation team.

The evaluation should adhere to Oxfam Evaluation Policy, Evaluation Guidance, the Oxfam Common Approach to MEL and Social Accountability. The evaluation process will be conducted in a manner which remains sensitive to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural protocols and norms. The process will also be gender responsive, and reflect an understanding of the impact of gendered norms and expectations upon participants. The consultant will draw on their own experience in this area, as well as consulting with the Straight Talk evaluation team to ensure that methods and questions remain appropriate.

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Impact and outcome evaluation should begin with a review of the Theory of Change of the program, which underpins the intervention being evaluated, whether this is explicit or implicit in programming documents.

Specific processes

- Preliminary desk review of all relevant documents on the program, including but not limited to; Theory of Change narrative, Log-Frame, program strategy documents, design and planning documents, monitoring reports, donor reports, mid-term review, audio materials gathered at each Straight Talk National Summit, other program publications and existing related OAU reports
- Focus group discussions, key informant interviews, surveys and interviews with participants, as the primary data collection methods.
- The survey should collect both quantitative and qualitative responses from participants regarding the effectiveness of capacity development trainings and events undertaken by the program. Data will be dis-aggregated by gender, age and people with disabilities
- Case studies will also be collected as required to explore more deeply the effects of the Straight Talk program in the lives of individual participants and their communities and as illustrative examples.

Sample selection

A representative cross-sample of Straight Talk participants will be purposively chosen from across Australia, based on the overall number of women participants across the program's lifetime, as well as geographical location. A strong representative sample will be maintained by considering a number of factors such as the type of Straight Talk event attended, geographical variation, age, disability, urban, regional and rural participation and other socio-economic disparities. Participants that have a varying degree of activity with the Straight Talk program post gatherings should also be included.

Data Analysis

Data analysis will adopt a variety of validation methods to ensure that the data and information is used, and conclusions made carry the necessary depth. This includes using recognised analysis techniques and ensuring that the analysis is transparent and can be shared. The analysis should both demonstrate trends and divergent participant experiences and outcomes.

All the collected information will be analysed with stakeholders and using participatory techniques to address evaluation questions nurtured during the consultation process.

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5. SCOPE

The role of the consultant is to work with the Straight Talk working group to evaluate all dimensions of the Straight Talk program and the mechanisms around the program. The consultant will cover all the objectives of the evaluation through a combination of evaluation methods and questions suitable to meet the range, geographic scope and other variations. In line with the Straight Talk theory of change, the evaluation will explore specifically:

- The structure and design of the Straight Talk program gatherings and summit, that will ultimately identify the impacts of alumni and broader changes across their communities
- Oxfam's alignment to the Gender Justice pillar of work

The focus on outcomes of the evaluation will allow Oxfam Australia to assess our work at a strategic level, and show how our programmatic work can contribute toward high level strategic goals.

6. EVALUATION TEAM

The evaluation team will be made up of the hired external consultation, the Straight Talk Coordinator, and the Straight Talk working group.

Management of the Evaluation

The Straight Talk National Coordinator is responsible for the management of the evaluation, the quality of the evaluation and its presentation to the Associate Director of Australian Programs at Oxfam Australia. The Straight Talk working group will provide guidance and support through the evaluation process.

The consultant will be an independent external consultant with extensive experience in working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and communities and high-level evaluation experience, in particular participatory approaches.

7. EXPECTED OUTPUTS AND SCHEDULES

I. KEY DELIVERABLES AND TIMEFRAME

Development and approval of TOR (July 2020)

Engagement of Consultant and work plan (August-September 2020)

Inception Phase (September 2020-January 2021)

During this phase the consultant, the Straight Talk Coordinator and Straight Talk working group will work to further make clear and focus the Straight Talk evaluation, identifying outcomes against which the program's results be measured. Key outputs from this stage are a defined ToC and evaluation methodology and research methods.

Data collection (January-March 2021)

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This will include both quantitative desk research, and qualitative research field visits. Participatory feedback will be gathered via a variety of participatory methods, as deemed appropriate to the context and stakeholder group. Consultation with the advisory committee and other stakeholders will supplement this primary research. Emerging data reports will be shared with the ST team throughout this process, as required.

Interpretation of data and draft final report (March-April 2021)

The consultant will undertake a validation stage prior to report writing, engaging the ST team, the advisory committee and select participants to provide feedback on results and preliminary analysis. *All those working on the project insert job titles here* will be consulted at this stage. The Straight Talk Coordinator will provide a clear direction to the consultation at this point in the process. The reference group, First Peoples' Program manager and Associated Director will provide feedback on the Draft report

Dissemination of findings and follow-up (May-June 2021)

A comprehensive strategy for dissemination and use for the Evaluation Report, along with allocation of responsibilities, will be developed by the Evaluation Reference Group during the Preparation stage, in consultation with the consultant and Oxfam MEL staff.

CONSULTANT'S PROFILE AND QUALIFICATIONS

1. Demonstrated experience working and communicating with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in culturally appropriate and respectful ways is essential
2. Understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Culture and ways of working
3. Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) experience in community development programs with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities. Demonstrated experience in the development of Theory of Change & accompanying Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning frameworks, guides & tools.
4. Relevant program implementation experience with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities with demonstrated capacity for gender analysis and mainstreaming and disability inclusive programming
5. Experience in/knowledge of the inter-relationships between long term development, advocacy and campaign approaches & Rights Based Approaches
6. Strong analytical skills and ability to conduct social research including gender analysis and designing and implementing participatory approaches
7. Evidence of high standard of communication verbal & written skills

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1. KEY TERMS & CONDITIONS

- Payment will be on submission of Tax Invoice on delivery against milestones
- Quotes and/or tenders should be inclusive of all costs in relation to travel, meals, accommodation and other expenses related to the assignment
- All equipment and materials, including office accommodation, required for the assignment are to be provided by the contractor except where otherwise indicated in the Terms or Reference above
- Oxfam Australia may request written evidence of necessary coverage in relation to insurance (including workers' compensation), superannuation and taxation prior to commencement of the assignment
- The consultant must adhere to all Oxfam Australia policies and codes of conduct while undertaking this assignment
- A police check may be required prior to commencement of the assignment
- All other terms are laid out in the consultancy agreement

2. SCHEDULE OF PAYMENTS FOR CONSULTANT

Payment	Amount (AUD)	Requirement
1 st payment	\$7,500	
2 nd payment	\$7,500	

3. SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

Expressions of interest can be sent to worrinw@oxfam.org.au by 25 September 2020

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are strongly encouraged to apply. In addition, given the sensitivities and understanding of cultural norms required for the role, females of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent are strongly encouraged to apply.