

Election 2016

10 Questions on Aid – How the Parties Responded



AUSTRALIAN
COUNCIL
FOR
INTERNATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT

	Liberal Party of Australia	Australian Labor Party	Australian Greens	Family First
QUESTION 1				
What do you see as the primary purpose of aid?	The focus of Australian aid is to support sustainable economic growth, poverty reduction and stability in the Indo-Pacific.	Australian aid should support sustainable and inclusive growth to help people and nations lift themselves out of poverty. Aid is in Australia's interests because it can curb insecurity and reduce conflict.	Supporting local communities should be the focus of aid, not Australia's political or commercial interests.	Family First's focus is to alleviate poverty and provide people with opportunities.
QUESTION 2				
What is Australia's role in fostering peace and security in Asia and the Pacific?	The newly released Governance Strategy will underpin peace and security initiatives. The focus should be on building institutions and supporting interventions, like the Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands, when necessary.	Australia should be able to react quickly and generously to emerging peace and security issues, including disaster responses. Australia should seek to be a peace broker, and invest in human rights, good governance, civil society, and preventative diplomacy.	Peace and security is underpinned by community wellbeing. The Greens highlighted the role the health of people and the planet can play in delivering peace, security, education and good governance.	Peace and security are underpinned by close trade relationships. Family First supports placing Australian security personnel (by invitation of a country's government) to maintain law and order.
QUESTION 3				
How will your party reinvest in Australia's aid budget?	The Liberal Party will not commit to a time-bound target "until the Federal Budget is back on sustainable footing and Australia is in a fiscally strong position". The Liberal Party committed to index the aid budget to CPI from 2017–18.	The ALP has committed to reversing the 2016–17 Federal Budget cut of \$224 million to the aid program. The ALP also committed \$450 million over three years for UNHCR and \$40 million a year from 2017–18 for Australian NGOs. The ALP committed to reaching at least 0.5% GNI aid funding 'over time'.	The Greens are committed to reaching 0.7% GNI for Australian aid over the next decade. This policy has been costed by the Parliamentary Budget Office.	Family First believes Australia must set a target and commit to reaching 0.7% GNI funding for the aid program. Family First does not support the successive budget cuts to the aid program.
QUESTION 4				
How will your party ensure effective, transparent and predictable aid program?	The aid program would be delivered in line with the International Aid Transparency Initiative. The Liberal Party would continue to annually publish the DFAT Orange Book, Green Book, and Performance of Australia's Aid report.	The ALP will legislate for an independent evaluation of the aid program and measuring and reporting on aid effectiveness. The ALP is committed to reinstating the annual Federal Budget 'Blue Book' detailing aid expenditure.	The Greens would legislate for 0.7% GNI, reinstate a separate AusAID agency and dedicated Cabinet Minister that would be required to report annually to Parliament on the aid program.	Family First supports organisations that are signatories to ACFID's Code of Conduct (all ACFID members). Family First expressed support for emerging financial institutions like the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank.
QUESTION 5				
How will you deliver on the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly "leaving no one behind"?	In government the Liberal Party has actively engaged in negotiating the SDGs. The Liberal Party said a 'modern' aid program should focus on: economic growth and private sector investment; gender equality; peace and governance; and mobilising resources from diverse actors.	Australia should take the lead on SDGs in areas such as: preventable blindness, disability inclusion, gender equality and WASH. The ALP would consult the aid sector on these issues.	The Greens focused on the importance of climate change mitigation and Australia reaching 90% clean energy by 2030 for SDGs.	Australia should prioritise aid delivery for places and causes with the most potential to lift the most people out of poverty.
QUESTION 6				
How will your party deliver on the Paris Agreement on climate change?	The Liberal Party is committed to reducing national greenhouse gas emissions to 26–28% below 2005 levels by 2030. It would commit \$1 billion over five years to help developing countries build climate resilience and reduce emissions.	The ALP is committed to reducing national greenhouse gas emissions to 45% of 2005 levels by 2030. The ALP has a Climate Change Action Plan.	The Greens are committed to a target of 90% clean energy by 2030, an end to all fossil fuel subsidies, and to reducing national greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2040.	Family First believes that affordable energy is necessary for poverty alleviation; that increased CO2 is improving crop yields and so reducing hunger; and that technological advances are increasing the competitiveness of renewables so the industry could compete without government subsidies.
QUESTION 7 & 8				
How should Australia respond to humanitarian emergencies? How Can we be an effective partner in humanitarian crises?	In government the Liberal Party has increased DFAT's Humanitarian Emergency Fund to \$130 million with an additional \$220 million over three years to the Syrian crisis. The Liberal Party committed to system improvements through partnership.	Australia's role in the region should be pre-emptive where possible, and swift and generous. Australia should mobilise more than money – we should deploy skilled Australian volunteers, government and non-government personnel.	The Greens are committed to Australia providing its fair share of funding to global emergencies. The response said "disaster relief should be a primary function of our defence forces". The Greens also discussed prioritising the fair and efficient assessment of asylum seekers and closing off-shore detention centres.	Family First said generous relief is needed. Family First supports the placement of Australian security personnel (by invitation of a country's government) to maintain law and order.
QUESTION 9				
How will you foster an enabling environment for civil society groups?	In government the Liberal Party's funding for the Australian NGO Cooperation Program is a recognition of the value it places on civil society. The Liberal Party would continue to implement programs that foster a positive environment for civil society organisations in Australia and abroad.	The ALP said it believed in the independence of civil society and the right for civil society groups to advocate for the causes they believed in. It would commit \$30 million a year to the Australian NGO Cooperation Program.	The Greens said NGOs were key partners for the transparent planning, delivery and assessment of aid.	NGOs should be independent from government and not rely on government funding (to ensure that independence). Government support for NGOs should not increase the general tax burden on citizens.
QUESTION 10				
Is there anything else you'd like to tell us?	Innovation and gender equality are central pillars of the Liberal Party's vision to deliver change through the aid program. The Liberal Party welcomed ACFID's role in contributing to policy development and program delivery.	The ALP would re-evaluate the role of development in a merged DFAT and ensure the department's culture and practices gave appropriate prominence to development, and protected and prioritised development expertise. Australian diplomacy should be used to advance our aid objectives.	The Greens are committed to: gender equality and raising the status of women; access to basic services like health; a human rights-based approach to development; and a Tobin Tax on international financial transactions to support action on climate change and poverty alleviation.	Family First said it regularly advocated for the government to support NGOs on the ground as a key means of delivering value for money.