

# ACFID Member Toolkit for Submissions to Australia's New International Development Policy

## QUICK GUIDE TO THE REVIEW

WHAT?	WHY?	WHEN, WHERE & WHO?
<p>Australia's Minister for Foreign Affairs (Minister Payne) and Minister for International Development and the Pacific (Minister Hawke) <a href="#">jointly announced</a> Australia would establish a new international development policy (IDP).</p> <p>The new IDP will guide Australia's "support for a secure, stable, prosperous and resilient Indo-Pacific", and build on the 2017 Foreign Policy White Paper.</p>	<p>Prior to the Federal Election, ACFID argued that a new modernised international development policy and performance framework was of critical importance for a more stable, peaceful and prosperous region and maintaining Australia's international relationships.</p> <p>ACFID argued that the existing policy was impeded by societal, political and environmental factors and budgetary and policy decisions were being made without reference to the existing policy and purpose.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Ministers <a href="#">formally announced</a> the Government's intentions to develop a new IDP on 10 December 2019.</li> <li>ACFID attended the launch and first consultations on 10 December, which included NGOs, managing contractors, individual consultants, think tanks and academics.</li> <li>Submissions to inform the new IDP are due by 31 January, with an expectation that the policy is completed by mid-2020.</li> </ul>
<p>The Government has <a href="#">stated</a> that a new IDP will direct "Australia's Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) program and wider whole-of-government development efforts and will ensure they are aligned to the Government's priorities."</p> <p>The Government <a href="#">plans</a> "to retain a targeted and efficient ODA budget of around \$4 billion per year".</p>	<p>ACFID sought a new international development policy to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>increase focus on stability and prosperity in the Asia-Pacific region, given 300 million people live in extreme poverty and 915 million live on \$1.90 - \$3.20/day.</li> <li>address new dynamics in the Asia-Pacific region unforeseen by the 2014 development policy.</li> <li>address shifting societal, political, economic and environmental circumstances.</li> <li>strengthen political rights, civil liberties and inclusive governance.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ACFID will be making a submission that represents its members, covering key issues (see below).</li> <li>ACFID encourages members to make their own submission.</li> <li>ACFID has launched a <a href="#">webpage</a> for members.</li> <li>Submissions (limited to five pages) should be lodged via <a href="mailto:development.submissions@dfat.gov.au">development.submissions@dfat.gov.au</a>.</li> </ul>
<p>The Government has <a href="#">stated</a> that the IDP will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>have an increased "emphasis on strategic and economic partnerships in the Indo-Pacific" and its Pacific Step-Up.</li> <li>reflect the increased focus on economic infrastructure and connectivity, private sector investment and Pacific labour mobility.</li> <li>"ensure Australia is positioned to effectively support our partners to respond to new and emerging priorities".</li> <li>"be accompanied by a streamlined performance framework".</li> </ul>	<p>ACFID asked that a new IDP provide:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>strategic clarity on purpose, with regional needs, poverty reduction and inclusive development prioritised.</li> <li>good governance, noting this requires strong Government and non-government institutions including social and academic institutions, civil society, media, church networks and business.</li> <li>targets covering health, education and civil society.</li> <li>inclusive and transparent infrastructure investment that maximizes social good.</li> <li>international development in the national interest aligned with <a href="#">ODI metrics on principled ODA</a>.</li> <li>greater emphasis on communicating the value and purpose of international development to the Australian public.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Ministers for Foreign Affairs and Minister for International Development and the Pacific will drive the creation of the new policy and coordinating input.</li> <li>The Government has appointed an <a href="#">expert panel</a> "to provide strategic, independent advice on the new policy and performance framework".</li> <li>DFAT has set up a taskforce to develop the new IDP which will be informed by submissions.</li> <li>Further face-to-face consultations (organised by the Australian Government) are expected to take place in early 2020.</li> </ul>

## ACFID'S WORKING PRINCIPLES FOR THE IDP

### A CLEAR PURPOSE

Consistent with the Sustainable Development Goals and DAC principles, the primary purpose of the IDP should be to address the development needs of the region by eradicating poverty and leaving no-one behind. This means focusing the IDP on the most vulnerable and marginalised people (in the bottom 60% of population by income in the Pacific, and bottom 40% elsewhere). The IDP should establish a balanced portfolio of investments for those most in need, whilst retaining flexibility to respond to urgent and sustained humanitarian situations.

In the minds of the Australian public, creating sustainable, long-term change for the poorest and most marginalised is where Australian international development derives its legitimacy. Not only this, but it is critical for peace and shared prosperity and creating a stable region which is aligned with Australia's interests.

### CREATING DEVELOPMENT IMPACT

Official Development Assistance (ODA) remains the gold standard for creating sustainable, long-term change for the poorest. It should be used as a benchmark for all Australia's development efforts and as a key measure of transparency for development partnerships.

The IDP should be aligned to the indicators and targets of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The IDP should result in Australia consistently ranking highly on the Aid Transparency Index.

The IDP should maintain Australia's strong commitment to mainstreaming gender equality.

The IDP should be consistent with Australia's global commitments and multilateral agreements such as the Paris Agreement and the partnerships required to achieve them.

When defining Australia's international development in the national interest, it should be principled. Using the ODI measure, a principled approach targets international development assistance to countries that need it most, supports global cooperation and adopts a public-spirited focus on development impact rather than a short-sighted domestic return.

In branching into new forms of development finance, the Australian Government should create a development finance institution with financial, international development and foreign policy expertise.

### ADDRESSING MAJOR REGIONAL ISSUES

The IDP must be clear in addressing the scale of climate change and environmental degradation such as, increasing natural disasters, water and food shortages, shifting disease patterns, and pandemics. This should be achieved through climate change mitigation, adaptation and resilience and be consistent with the Boe and Nadi Bay Declaration.

The IDP must be clear in addressing fraying international norms, human rights and closing civic space. Creating open and thriving societies should be a key objective for the IDP.

The IDP must be clear in addressing extreme poverty, but also growing inequality, which is creating unrest, stifling growth and further alienating marginalised people. It should explicitly focus on inclusive growth and consider access to basic health and education as key investments.

The IDP must be clear in maintaining its commitment to principled humanitarian action and fair-share contribution as the growing number of people in need of assistance grows.

### A GREATER AND MORE CONSISTENT BUDGET

A larger and more consistent program is a commitment to the Asia Pacific that shows we are a partner of choice and invested long-term in building a resilient region.

The Australian Government should re-introduce a target for increasing ODA against Gross National Income (GNI) and set a path to achieving it. This should include a floor for ODA enshrined in legislation and with a budget trajectory that ensures levels reach 0.7 per cent of GNI by 2030 to meet Australia's commitment to the SDGs.

### GENERATING PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The IDP should be delivered by the whole-of-government and by the whole-of-society. It should represent the character of Australia, bringing Indigenous Australians, diaspora communities and our diversity to the fore, harnessing the best of civil society,

businesses and universities. DFAT should invest heavily in programs and approaches which achieve maximum development impact, and through development providers who are heavily invested in the communities where they work.

DFAT should better tailor, brand and resource IDP communications to the Australian public. This should include a strategic communications plan and accompanying resources.

## APPROACHING YOUR SUBMISSION

ACFID recommends that you choose a small number of issues to address and provide propositional ideas or solutions to the problems you identify. To assist this, you may wish to include:

- Description of the changes you want to see in a new development policy
- Proposed focus areas, sectors or priorities for a new development policy
- Concrete examples of strongly performing programs or approaches, with supporting evidence
- Examples of new initiatives, and
- Embedded links to evidence, public commentary or other documents which support the points you wish to make.

In creating a new IDP, and in an environment of change, there will be greater scope for initiatives from the sector. This may include initiatives which have been proposed in the past, but which the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade have previously not been able to explore. Consider revisiting your ideas and proposals and matching them with the objectives and questions the Government is seeking to address in the creation of the new IDP.

You may wish to use this set of questions to help inform your submission. They are questions which ACFID advises will be crucial to the shape of the new international development policy.

1. Australia's international development program must deliver maximum impact and effectiveness. Consider how your programs deliver this and seek to channel this in your submission. Bring your best examples to bear. How should the current program change to deliver maximum impact and effectiveness?
2. Australia's international development program has to match a number of different development contexts, from the least developed to emerging middle-income nations. Does it need to maintain equal relevance across this broad set of contexts? If so, how does it maintain relevance, and vary its approach effectively? What sort of development partnerships does Australia need in this varied context? If possible, demonstrate how your organisation achieves varied programming in multiple contexts.
3. Poverty and inequality look different in South Asia compared to the Pacific; how does Australia's international development program approach each region differently?
4. How can the new IDP embed inclusivity across strategy, performance targets, financial resources and leadership?
5. How does Australia's international development program embed climate change adaptation and resilience across strategy, performance targets, financial resources and leadership?
6. How does Australia's international development program help create free and open societies within its region? What examples can you draw upon from international and national civil society organisations which help achieve free and open societies?
7. How does Australia's international development program create inclusive growth? Cite examples of how civil society organisations can help achieve this. How can NGO-private sector partnerships contribute to sustainable economic growth?
8. The Foreign Policy White Paper is clear that the primary test of Australia's international development is whether it delivers on the national interest. How does Australia's international development program remain focused on long-term poverty alleviation whilst delivering on the national interest? How do we ensure that the effectiveness of Australia's international development program is not undermined through short-sighted domestic return?
9. What are the risks and opportunities of closer cooperation between civil and military actors in the pursuit of development impact?
10. To your organisation, do targets within the international development program work effectively? What performance metrics should guide the international development program? If targets remain as a key measure, what targets should be removed or retained?
11. What should Australia's international development program be known for? And how does the Australian Government achieve greater public support for it?
12. In a 2015 Review, DFAT's own Office of Development Effectiveness described the ANCP program as "one of the best performing programs", reporting that it delivered 18.2 per cent of DFAT's development results for only 2.7 per cent of the aid budget. What improvements, expansions or alternatives do you envisage for the ANCP program? Is there another NGO-funding stream you would propose?