



Call for Think-Pieces

1. Purpose

To stimulate a broader and deeper conversation, and longer-term thinking on Australia's role, ACFID is inviting short think-pieces on what Australia's international development agenda should be over the medium term to 2025. We are keen to profile and explore bold perspectives and ideas on how Australia can best play a strategic and effective role in the Asia-Pacific and other geographic regions, and in meeting global challenges.

We would like the pieces to consider global and regional trends, the changing nature of development cooperation, and Australia's strengths and expertise,

ACFID will publish selected think-pieces on ACFID's [blog](#), through various media channels, and as part of an ACFID publication entitled, *Australia Ahead of the Curve: An Agenda for International Development to 2025* which will be profiled at ACFID's Conference in October 2016. Think-pieces received will also be published on ACFID's website.

ACFID will then continue to engage with the ideas generated in these think-pieces to inform a policy forum in early 2017 and a policy paper on Australia's international development efforts, which may take the shape of a charter for Australia's international development.¹

As the peak body for Australian NGOs involved in international development and humanitarian action, the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) is focused on ensuring Australia is an effective global player in international development and humanitarian action, whether through Australian Government policies and programs, through the work of Australian NGOs, academic institutions and private sector actors, or through collaboration between these actors.

2. Rationale

The nature of international development is changing. By 2025, it is likely that the locus of global poverty will overwhelmingly be in fragile, mainly low-income and

¹ The idea of a Charter would be similar to Germany's Charter for the Future, though we note the German Charter was developed through national consultation, led by Government (see <http://sd.iisd.org/news/german-chancellor-welcomes-charter-for-the-future-ahead-of-g7-presidency/>)

African states, rather than middle-income countries.² At the same time, the importance of global issues – conflict, climate change, migration, trade, tax and infectious disease – is rising and emerging donors such as China are playing an increasingly important role. Against this backdrop, new institutions, business models and practices are shifting the focus and operation of the international development sector.³ Such changes are reflected in the global Sustainable Development Goals – a comprehensive new framework to end all forms of poverty, reduce inequalities and protect the environment up to 2030. Australia’s region continues to face particular development challenges with uneven progress on poverty reduction and development across Asia and the Pacific and the increasing impact of issues such as climate change, urbanisation, income inequality and persistent gender inequality.

Australia has long played a role in international development cooperation, and has maintained an official government aid program in something like its present form since the 1970s. Australian NGOs and other actors working on international poverty alleviation have been operating for even longer. Surrounded by developing countries in the Asia Pacific, Australia has played an active role in our region as well as, to varying degrees, in Africa, the Middle East and Latin America. Australia’s development assistance has changed considerably in recent years, with a new policy framework, significant cuts to funding levels, and new institutional arrangements with the former Australian Agency for International Development integrated into the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

Despite it being an enduring and important part of our international engagement, the contribution of Australia’s international development efforts is rarely the focus of national policy debates or public discussion. ACFID is seeking to change this by surfacing and amplifying the views and perspectives of opinion leaders from a range of sectors on the nature of Australia’s international development agenda over the medium to long term.

ACFID is inviting think-pieces on what Australia’s international development agenda should look like in 2025, and why. This, we hope, will help to ensure that Australia continues to play a strategic and effective role in international development and humanitarian assistance, and has the right policies, structures and partnerships in place to support this.

3. Writing a think-piece

ACFID is inviting think-pieces of 500 to 2,500 words – or shorter, opinion style pieces of 800-1,200 words – in response to the following question:

- What should Australia’s role be in assisting developing countries and responding to global development challenges to 2025 and beyond?

² Overseas Development Institute <http://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/7723.pdf>

³ Ibid

In responding to this question, and considering the factors and trends affecting global poverty and Australia's strengths and expertise, you may like to consider:

- **Why** – Why should Australia use international development efforts as a means of engaging with the world?
- **What** – What should Australia's international development efforts prioritise? What challenges or opportunities should be the principal focus of those efforts?
- **Who** – Who should the primary recipients and beneficiaries of Australia's international development efforts be?
- **How** – How do we achieve our goals? How should government, civil society and NGOs, academia and business play their part?
- **Where should we start?** – What are the top three propositions for change and what do we do now to fully benefit from these changes in 2025?

Authors are invited to respond to the discussion from an overarching perspective, in terms of Australia's role and focus overall, or to hone in on a particular issue or theme in their area of interest or expertise, such as humanitarian response, public health or climate change.

4. Submitting a think-piece

Think-pieces can be submitted to ACFID up until December 2016. For our internal planning purposes, we ask that potential authors provide us with notice that they intend to submit a think-piece in advance of writing. Please submit your think-pieces and direct any queries to Alice Ridge at submissions@acfid.asn.au or (02) 6281 9223. All submissions must include your full name, your occupation, your affiliations or organisational ties, and contact details.

The think-pieces will then be reviewed by ACFID and an external advisory committee for publication based on the following considerations:

- Does the think-piece offer a new or different perspective on Australia's future international development agenda?
- Does the think-piece respond to the changing nature and/or challenges of international development?
- Is the think-piece well-reasoned and evidence based?
- Is the think-piece written in an engaging and accessible style?

ACFID may edit selected think-pieces and consult authors with any major revisions. Authors will retain copyright but grant ACFID permission to publish their think-piece on ACFID's webpage, in other media and as part of ACFID's publication, *Australia Ahead of the Curve: An Agenda for International Development to 2025*. Unless otherwise stated, all submissions will be treated as non-confidential.