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**Independent Evaluation of the Australian NGO Cooperation Program – Information Sheet**

13 December 2021

**Background**

The Australian NGO Cooperation Program is DFAT's largest support mechanism for Australian non-government organisations (ANGOs). In 2020-21 the ANCP distributed $132.9 million in grant funds to support 57 Australian NGOs, and over 2000 of their local partners, to deliver 406 projects across 50 countries. The [Partnerships for Recovery: Australia’s COVID-19 Development Response](https://www.dfat.gov.au/publications/aid/partnerships-recovery-australias-covid-19-development-response) (2020) identifies NGOs as a critical part of Australia’s international development efforts.

DFAT wants to ensure it has management and implementation arrangements in place that best support NGOs to continue their work in sometimes rapidly changing operating environments. It is therefore timely to assess, through this evaluation, how the ANCP management and implementation arrangements can adequately respond to this changing operating environment.

**Evaluation purpose and questions**

The purpose of the evaluation is to assess the ANCP as a modality. It seeks to identify ways to strengthen the management and implementation arrangements of the ANCP, particularly in response to the changing development and NGO context. The evaluation is primarily formative; however, a secondary summative focus will also assess high level impacts of the ANCP program.

Key questions for the evaluation are:

1. Is the ANCP modality, including management, implementation and funding arrangements ‘fit for purpose’ and how can it be improved?
2. Is ANCP supported by robust and appropriate monitoring, evaluation and learning processes?
3. What are the key trends and emerging issues in the NGO sector and international development context that may impact on the ANCP and how should DFAT and ANCP partners address these?
4. How effective is the ANCP modality in assisting ANGOs to reduce poverty and promote sustainable and inclusive development?

**Timelines**

The Evaluation is scheduled to be conducted from October 2021 to July 2022.

**Key Deliverables**

The evaluation team is expected to deliver:

* An Evaluation Plan, including a key issues paper
* An Aide Memoire
* A Key Findings Workshop
* A Draft and Final Evaluation Report.

**Evaluation Methods**

The evaluation is designed to facilitate ANGOs’ participation, with multiple opportunities to provide input and feedback. The data collection and reporting phase will take place over February to June 2022 and will include a range of methods to engage with NGOs, including but not limited to:

* Key document review
* Preliminary consultations
* Comprehensive review of program documentation
* Literature scan of NGO grant funding modalities and emerging trends
* Comparative analysis of major donors’ approaches/modalities to engaging with NGOs
* Key informant interviews (in Australia and overseas)
* Focus groups with NGO partners
* Survey or written submission
* Validation and sensemaking workshop

**Consultation processes**

We are aware of the large amount of NGOs and projects and plans that focus on some aspect of the key issues the evaluation will seek to address and we are coordinating our work with ANCP NGOs, the Development Practice Committee (DPC) and the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and other agencies to ensure rigorous consultation processes.

The evaluation plan, completed in January, will explain how ANGOs can engage with the evaluation.

**Pre-liminary focus group discussions – December 2021**

The evaluation team is currently working to develop an Evaluation Plan and Key Issues Paper. In late 2021 a purposive sample of NGOs will be invited to participate in some initial focus groups to help inform the team’s planning and to clarify the most relevant issues for the future of the program. The available times will be provided by separate email.

This invitation is for a cross-section of ANGOs that are engaged with the ANCP to participate in small focus groups to provide early input into evaluation planning. Participants will be able to provide more comprehensive input throughout the evaluation process.

**Confidentiality and research protocols**

Participation in consultation activities are voluntary and you do not have to answer the questions or provide any information that you do not want to. Any information provided during the various consultation and data collection activities will be used only for the purposes of this evaluation. All individuals will remain de-identified (unless agreed otherwise).

**Evaluation Team**

Tetra Tech International Development (Tetra Tech) works closely with international and local organisations to deliver international development projects and independent evaluations in pursuit of the sustainable development goals. We are trusted partners to our clients, including the UK Department for International Development (DFID), the Australian Government’s Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and the US Agency for International Development (USAID). We bring a robust monitoring and evaluation approach to our programs to ensure the best development outcomes.

**Questions**

More information about the project is available from the Tetra Tech evaluation team, please contact:

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