

To the Independent Review of Aid Effectiveness Secretariat,

Thank you for giving members of Australia the opportunity to give their opinion on Australia's aid.

I think that Australia's aid program should prioritise the needs and interests of the world's poorest and most vulnerable people. Specifically, I ask that the program focuses on:

- 1- Achieving the Millennium Development Goals, especially those which are lagging behind, and in the poorest countries in our region
- 2- Prioritising the most marginalised and vulnerable people, such as those with disabilities, HIV positive status, or a mental illness and women, children, infants, or those who belong to an ethnic minority.
- 3- Establishing AusAID as a separate department, with a Cabinet-level Minister for International Development, focused primarily on good outcomes for the poor.
- 4- Implementing the Paris and Accra agreement on aid effectiveness to make aid more long term, aligned with country systems and needs, coordinated with all other donors, and accountable to beneficiaries
- 5- Empowering local communities through effective consultation and community ownership over projects, employing local people instead of large Australian corporations to implement the projects.
- 6- Reducing high-paid Western consultants and expenditure on 'technical assistance', which in 2009 consumed almost half of Australia's aid budget.
- 7- Working through NGOs by increasing the share of our aid delivered through NGOs to at least 10% of the aid budget
- 8- Improving the transparency and accountability of the aid program by providing up-to-date information about all funded aid activities to all stakeholders
- 9- Investing in effective multilateral funds like the Global Fund for HIV/AIDS

- 10- Engaging civil society in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the aid program. This should include relevant groups in Australia, in each country and in the communities affected by Australia's aid.

In short, I agree with the recommendations of TEAR Australia.
(www.tear.org.au/advocacy/articles/aid-effectiveness-review/)

Yours Sincerely,
Sarita Hales
School Student, Year 10