

To the Independent Review of Aid Effectiveness Secretariat:

I would like to contribute to the submission to the Review Panel.

There are a number of areas I would like to see Australia focus on more closely, but in particular I was alarmed to read that in 2009, almost half of Australia's aid budget was spent on high-paid Western consultants and expenditure on 'technical assistance.' I urge the Government to better acquire those with the necessary skill sets needed in aid work, and to promptly find solutions that result in reducing the expenditure on privileged Westerners charging exorbitant fees to helping those who are marginalised and poor.

I have, over the years, written to the Government to encourage generosity in achieving the Millennium Development Goals. This email serves the same purpose and urges that Australia's aid program priorities those Goals which are most lagging behind, and contributes towards Goals in the poorest countries in our region.

Despite the recent devastation our own nation has experienced, we must not let our own misfortune impact the ongoing, relentless misfortune of those who are less powerful and in the grip of poverty.

Yours faithfully,

Rev. Leanne Baker.