



CATHERINE MCGOWAN
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Mr Sandy Hollway AO
Chair
Independent Review of Aid Effectiveness

Dear Mr Hollway

Attached please find comments related to the review of Aus AID terms of reference

- a. The appropriate geographic focus of the program, taking into account partner country absorptive capacities
- d. The appropriate future organisational structure for the aid program, including:
 - AusAID's organisational structure for aid delivery

These comments are made with 30 years experience in rural engagement, community development and work with women in agriculture and development and specifically 5 years as a consultant to PNG Women in Agriculture, supporting the early development of this peak national non-government organization.

I would be happy to address the Review in person if additional information was required.

Yours sincerely

C. McGowan

Cathy McGowan AO

The appropriate future organisational structure for the aid program, including:

- AusAID's organisational structure for aid delivery

In summary:

Stronger and closer links between Aus AID and the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR) because of the inclusive nature and interconnections between research and development.

Greater attention to the systemically inclusion of women in all stages of agricultural research, development and extension.

Continuation of AusAID support for agricultural education and development in PNG.

Development and economic growth in PNG is underpinned by effective agricultural research. Organisations such as ACIAR play a central role in supporting research, in building the capacity of researchers and their organisations. In PNG the National Agricultural Research Institute (NARI) with strong support from ACIAR plays a critical role in meeting the growing demand for food as well as building an export market.

It is my belief that there are many opportunities to support and grow the agricultural economy in PNG through establishing closer links between the research, extension and development processes. Currently there are significant structural barriers which limit the ability of AusAID and ACIAR being able to work together for ex example to consult with small land holders, to

value add, form new networks, build capacity, enhance sustainability, improve environmental outcomes, address climate change issues, increase the social capital and trust and improve household incomes within the rural sector.

Through organisations such as PNG Women in Agricultural Development Foundation (PNGWiAgDF) which work across all aspects of the community there are many opportunities for ACIAR and AusAID to achieve their shared goals and outcomes.

However ACIAR only does research. AusAID does development. And currently neither AusAID or ACIAR in PNG have a focus on agricultural development. As a consequence of this disconnect, much of the excellent work carried out by ACIAR and its partner NARI remains within the institutions. And organisations such as PNGWiAgDF with the ability, the networks, the links and the desire to work in development partnerships are frustrated through the inability of these agency to work in an interdisciplinary way.

These artificial boundaries have an additional negative impact in PNG. The Department of Agricultural and Livestock (DAL) in many instances is unable to deliver agricultural extension, is unable to deliver the results of research to the many small landholders who are mostly women farmers.

Because of the pivotal role played by agriculture in PNG in underpinning the economy and the high percentage of the country's population (85%) which is engaged in small scale

agriculture, the consequence of these institutional failures, means that many of the opportunities and benefits which could be achieved by the Australian Aid effort are lost.

The solutions to increased efficiency are low cost and relatively easily achieved. There is good will between the key players and a desire to address these issues. NGOs such as PNGWiAgDF are ideally placed to work in partnership with NARI, ACIAR, DAL and AusAID to provide agricultural education and broker services across agencies.

Ms Catherine McGowan AO
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