

**Independent Review of Aid Effectiveness Secretariat
GPO Box 887
Canberra ACT 2601
Australia**

Independent Review of Aid Effectiveness

Dear Sir/ Madam,

We have been involved in the development sector over many decades and would like to offer comment as per the advertisement to assist the AID sector to become more effective and deliver sustainable development to recipient countries.

We are currently listed on the Infrastructure Support Services Period Offer and have had a close relationship within the Aid sector both in multilateral and bilateral organisations in Africa, Asia, Europe and the Pacific.

During a period of work with the PWD in Vanuatu I initiated a Competency Transfer Program which created a linkage between Australia, specifically Queensland and Vanuatu. Within this structure, staff from Public Works in Vanuatu received training in Queensland and the Vanuatu adopted manuals and standard designs from Queensland. This facilitated the building of roads, maintenance and plant to provide a system whereby Vanuatu staff were inspired and educated by the training in Queensland.

This gave Vanuatu direction in terms of using a single set of documentation and methodologies. The Queensland model was adopted as it provided infrastructure outcomes in a similar tropical, marine environment.

Attached are the documents that illustrate the Program.

This example links an Australian organisation directly whilst not usurping the role of a developing country's organisation. This offers support in the longer terms and provides expertise in the event of a catastrophe e.g. tsunami or earthquake.

Aid should strengthen a country and not make the people more reliant upon an outside agency. Many Aid Programs are based on political and ephemeral outcomes which damage a country's ability to advance to a higher degree of civilisation.

Australia must focus on the areas in which it can achieve a positive differential influence i.e. the Pacific and close Asian countries. With limited budgets, Australia must confine the spread and limit funding to the huge multilateral agencies eg United Nations and Asian Development Bank which offer very little to the real world and are ridiculed by their publicly perceived bloated political nature.

Many appointed Consultants have limited experience in developing countries and rely on Expatriates within the country to provide information that is collated in reports and proffered as a solution to the problems.

Greater integration of the donor agencies will allow a focussed approach to the development within a country. During the term in Vanuatu a severe earthquake caused extensive damage to bridging on the road network. Surplus Bailey

Bridging from NZAID, bridge projects from JICA and support from AUSAID allowed a rapid response to normalise the situation.

Another project I initiated was the Efate Ring Road which identified the social and economic benefits from upgrading the main road on Efate. This allowed the development of the tourism industry together with the construction industry on a sustainable basis. Much of this project work could be done from within Australian organisations thereby reducing high levels of Expatriate funding. Nowadays, better communication networks allow the use of more remote technologies with local organisations.

Further, there are many examples where inappropriate designs and limited construction management for infrastructure projects culminated in the inevitable destruction of the infrastructure during cyclones and earthquakes. The use of experienced and competent consultants who understand the cultural and environmental constraints would reduce the incidence of these costly mistakes. Similarly, agricultural, health, education and other sectors must contribute to developing countries in a sustainable manner. Australia is seen as a genuine and compassionate nation but the funding has to be applied wisely to generate trust on both sides of the developed divide.

As a Chartered Engineer, I see my role as the forging of a better world between the hammer of knowledge and the anvil of civilisation.

A greater benefit to humanity can be achieved through preventative rather than curative means. To illustrate; the resources expended in building a clean water supply project is far more productive than attempting to cure sicknesses caused by perpetually contaminated water supplies.

We would be willing to offer further discussion on the Review of Aid Effectiveness if requested.

Yours faithfully,

Richie Nichols & Kristina Hedin