

Independent Review of Aid Effectiveness Secretariat

I submit that the Australian Government implement the following changes to Australia's overseas aid programs:

Cease using international aid and development to further Australia's national interests:

- Remove reference to national interest from the objective of Australia's aid program
- Establish AusAID as a separate department (currently under the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade) with a Cabinet level minister responsible for international development.
- Africa is arguably the poorest continent and it is unlikely that Australia's national interests will be significantly affected by Africa. International development assistance should be based on need. With China and India emerging as major economic interests, (despite still having development needs), Australia's aid budget should be prioritised based on international needs, separate from our foreign policy national interests.

Improve the transparency, accountability and monitoring of Australian aid spending:

- Remove the Office of Development Effectiveness from AusAID, and following the example of the UK's Independent Commission on Aid Impact transfer it to an independent body.
- Publish timely, accessible and detailed information about all aid initiatives.
- Publicly release all parts of commercial aid contracts which do not satisfy the Department of Finance and Administration's 'Confidentiality Test'.

Reduce the proportion of aid money spent on Technical Assistance (TA) to at least the OECD average. Identification of TA needs should be led by aid recipients and use of local advisors prioritised over external advisors.

Require all aid providers to demonstrate how their initiatives are guided by host governments, communities and civil society organisations in the planning, implementation and evaluation of aid initiatives.

Demonstrate how Australia's policies on trade, investment, finance, migration and security are consistent with the promotion of poverty alleviation, gender equity and sustainable development.

Yours Sincerely

Eddie Ozols