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The Planning Institute of Australia (PIA) is supportive of the Australian Government's proposals to increase total official development assistance to developing countries. PIA is also supportive of the Office of Development Effectiveness, the purpose of this review, and is thankful for the opportunity to participate.

Focus of aid should stay in the Asia/Pacific region, but Africa and South Asia should have increased levels of aid. Areas of the Pacific where aid per capita is high should ensure aid is being spent equitably. Rather than set priorities between low and middle income countries, allocate greater funds to countries where larger portions of the population struggle with lower incomes per capita. Ensure that approaches between low and middle income countries differ.

Sectoral policies should be flexible and meet the needs of the people in country. When using Millennium Development Goals in sectoral processes consider the gaps within the approach and ensure the program addresses inequality. Aid for basic services and soft infrastructure should be a priority, with health and educational outcomes alongside economic.

Ensure throughout sectors that activities impact on the rights of women, children, the disabled, and internally displaced persons. Ensure that all hard infrastructures meet access standards for people with disabilities. Ensure that gender justice and equality is central to all activities and research.

Increase support for professional membership bodies, and support planners and built environment professionals in developing countries to share information, skills, and to participate in learning exchanges utilising models such as those used in the [PIA Post Tsunami Reconstruction Planning Support project](#). Increase support for in-country tertiary academic institutions, reduce Australian scholarship schemes, and build upon international partnerships between Australian and foreign universities. Within these partnerships increase funding for technical research, in areas of natural disasters, water/sanitation, climate change, and environmental planning.

Whilst it is recognised that smaller projects require greater administration, support for grass roots organisations and innovative/experimental projects should remain. Provide longer term funding rounds, five years where possible, to ensure that projects have the time and space for quality work which will meet the needs of communities and beneficiaries.

Ensure that multilateral organisations are spending aid effectively, and seek Professional Institutes and their networks in providing management support to multilaterals. Where ever possible, support to develop capacities of professionals in country should be a priority, building capacity within government, indigenous non-government organisations, and community based organisations. Regional professional institutes should be supported as centres for technical capacity development. Where roles require experienced and skilled technicians, consultancy rates should remain competitive.

Aim to reduce staff turnover within AusAID, and ensure that staff are gender balanced with women in decision making positions. Support dual accountability and ensure that the Australian government is transparent and accountable to the governments, organisations, and people in the developing countries where it works, using appropriate and accessible communication tools.