

INCREASE THE IMPACT OF AUSTRALIAN AID FOR THE POOREST PEOPLE

When it comes to Australia's contribution to helping end extreme poverty, nothing replaces an effective official aid program to reach the poorest people and help find solutions to the toughest problems. Australia must live up to its pledge to support the recently agreed Sustainable Development Goals in its own aid program, with alleviating poverty and inequality as its cornerstones.

WHAT THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT SHOULD DO

CLARIFY OUR PURPOSE.

Make eliminating extreme poverty, reducing inequality, promoting sustainable development and protecting human rights the official purpose of Australia's aid program.

HARMONISE OUR AID PROGRAM.

Align the aid program with achieving all 17 Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.

SET CLEAR STANDARDS.

Ensure all aid projects require safeguard policies that set clear standards on human rights and the environment. This must include ways for people to let the Australian Government know when important standards are not being met by Australian aid projects.

ACHIEVE GREATER TRANSPARENCY.

Ensure Australia's aid remains transparent by publishing an official, comprehensive *Aid Budget Statement* that covers total, country, thematic and multilateral aid allocations annually with the federal budget.

WHY

Aid is a special kind of investment that the Australian Government — and many other governments — make. It is about helping people and lifting our collective prosperity for everyone's benefit. Targeted in the right way, Australian aid can reach people and places that other types of investments, including by business, simply cannot.

Aid reaches out to those people who might otherwise be missed and gives them a chance and an opportunity to build a better life. It connects people to services, to enjoying their human rights and to social and economic opportunities that otherwise could be forever out of reach.

The government's official mission statement on aid and our aid investments needs to match this special purpose. That means an aid program focused squarely on eliminating extreme poverty, reducing inequality, promoting sustainable development and protecting people's rights. Realigning the aid program with these priorities would be in line with the principles in the recently agreed *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation*, which both recognise the central challenges of poverty and inequality. These agreements call on sustainable development and the defence of human rights to overcome these challenges.

Ensuring the Australian aid program addresses the central task of helping people overcome poverty would also reflect the priorities and focus of our peers' aid investments. For example, the UK Government has legislated that the core purpose of its aid spending is poverty alleviation.

Aid also has to be accountable, both to the Australian public and to the people we are hoping to support. That's why we need a commitment to always publish an official, comprehensive *Aid Budget Statement* on budget night each year. It's also why every aid project, no matter who is delivering it, should include strong safeguards to protect poor and marginalised people and a way for communities to easily raise complaints or concerns with the Australian Government.

ABOUT OXFAM

Around the world, one person in three lives in poverty. Oxfam is determined to change that by mobilising the power of people against poverty. Globally, Oxfam works to find practical, innovative ways for people to lift themselves out of poverty and thrive. We save lives and help rebuild livelihoods when crisis strikes. And we campaign so that the voices of poor people influence the local and global

decisions that affect them. In all we do, Oxfam works with partner organisations and alongside vulnerable women and men to end the injustices that cause poverty.

Oxfam Australia, a partner of the Australian Government, is an independent, not-for-profit, international development organisation. We have more than 550,000 supporters in Australia who contribute skills, time and financial support to advance our work in Australia and around the world.

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