

## 2015 Australian aid stakeholder survey questions

### Introductory message

This survey of stakeholders in the Australian Government's overseas aid program is designed to solicit views regarding the effectiveness, management and volume of Australia's official aid.

Your response to this survey is strictly anonymous and will remain secure.

The survey, drawn largely from questions ran in the 2013 baseline survey in order to maximise comparability, should take roughly fifteen minutes and is split into four sections:

Section 1: Information about the respondent

Section 2: General views about the effectiveness of the Australian aid program

Section 3: *(If applicable.)* Views on the effectiveness of Australian aid based on your direct engagement with the aid program

Section 4: Views on the volume of Australian aid

Most of the questions are multiple-choice. Comment boxes are provided at the end most sub-sections in case you would like to say more.

If you have questions at any time about the survey or the procedures, you may contact Camilla Burkot at +61 2 6125 1844 or by email at [camilla.burkot@anu.edu.au](mailto:camilla.burkot@anu.edu.au).

Results of the survey will be released in February 2016.

Please start with the survey now by clicking on the *continue* button below.

### Privacy statement

*(Listed in the introduction and at the bottom of each page of the survey)*

Your response to this survey is strictly anonymous and will remain secure.

### **Section 1. About the respondent**

#### 1. Sex

- Male
- Female
- Other
- Don't want to answer

#### 2. Age

[text box]

3. How would you rate your level of knowledge of the aid program as a whole?

- Very strong
- Strong
- Average
- Weak
- Very Weak

4. From the list below, which best describes where you work?

- Academia (university or think tank)
- Australian development NGO
- Other NGO (local or international)
- Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
- Other Australian government (national, state or local)
- Developing country government (national, provincial or local)
- Multilateral or regional intergovernmental organisation
- Aid contracting company
- Independent consultant
- Other (list)

5. How long have you worked in the field of international development?

- Less than 6 months
- 6 months to a year
- 1-2 years
- 2-5 years
- 5-10 years
- 10-15 years
- 15-20 years
- 20+ years

6. Where do you mainly live?

- Australia
- Other

If other, which country?

*If you work or volunteer for an organisation, please answer the next two questions.*

7. How would you describe your seniority in that organisation?

- Highest level (e.g. Director, CEO, etc)
- Senior management level
- Middle management level
- Entry or early-career level

8. How long have you been at your current organisation?

- Less than 6 months
- 6 months to a year
- 1-2 years
- 2-5 years
- 5-10 years
- 10-15 years
- 15-20 years
- 20+ years

## **Section 2. Questions about the Australian aid program**

These questions refer to your broader perceptions of the Australian aid program (i.e. flows from Australia to developing countries that are reported to the OECD as Official Development Assistance), which in 2015-16 will total \$4.05 billion.

Answers should be given on the basis of your overall views about the aid program. The questions in Section 3 are intended to elicit more specific views derived from your personal engagements with the aid program, if any.

### **2A. Objectives**

9. Adding to 100, what weight do you think the following objectives *actually* have in guiding the work of the Australian aid program? (If you do not want to answer please skip this question.)

[Note: Please ensure that your responses add to 100]

- Reducing poverty
- Promoting Australia's strategic interests
- Promoting Australia's commercial interests
- Don't know
- Don't want to answer

10. Adding to 100, what weight do you think the following objectives *should* have in guiding the work of the Australian aid program? (If you do not want to answer please skip this question.)

- Reducing poverty
- Promoting Australia's strategic interests
- Promoting Australia's commercial interests
- Don't know
- Don't want to answer

11. The Australian aid program has a clearly defined purpose.

- Strongly agree

Agree  
Neither agree nor disagree  
Disagree  
Strongly disagree  
Don't know  
Don't want to answer

12. The Coalition Government now formulates the objective of the aid program in the following way:

“The Australian Government’s aid program will promote prosperity, reduce poverty and enhance stability with a strengthened focus on our region, the Indo-Pacific. The purpose of the aid program is to promote Australia’s national interests by contributing to sustainable economic growth and poverty reduction.”

Are you satisfied with this as the objective of the aid program?

Very satisfied  
Satisfied  
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied  
Dissatisfied  
Very dissatisfied  
Don't know  
Don't want to answer

13. [Comment box]: If you would like to expand on any of your answers in this subsection, please do so here. (Please indicate which question you are referring to in your response.)

## **2B. Aid effectiveness**

Note: These questions refer to the effectiveness per dollar of aid spending. Questions regarding the ideal volume of aid spending are in section 4.

14. How would you rate the effectiveness of the Australian aid program?

Very effective  
Effective  
Neither effective nor ineffective  
Ineffective  
Very ineffective  
Don't know  
Don't want to answer

15. Over the last two years (since the last stakeholder survey was ran in 2013), has the effectiveness of the Australian aid program improved or declined?

Improved significantly

Improved moderately  
Stayed the same  
Declined moderately  
Declined significantly  
Don't know  
Don't want to answer

16. The Australian aid program budget will fall from \$5.032 billion in 2014-15 to \$4.05 billion in 2015-16. In 2016-17, aid will be one third less than it was in 2012-13 (after inflation). What impact will this decline have on the effectiveness of Australian aid?

Very positive  
Positive  
No effect  
Negative  
Very negative  
Don't know  
Don't want to answer

17. How would you rate the effectiveness of the Australian aid program by comparison with the aid programs of other OECD bilateral donors?

A lot better  
Better  
Same  
Worse  
A lot worse  
Don't know  
Don't want to answer

18. The 2013 Australian aid stakeholder survey drew on a list of attributes identified by the 2011 [Independent Review of Aid Effectiveness](#) as being particularly important for the Australian aid program. Please indicate the extent to which you believe the Australian aid program as it currently stands possesses each attribute in the list.

[Matrix response]

Great strength  
Moderate strength  
Neither strength nor weakness  
Moderate weakness  
Great weakness  
Don't know  
Don't want to answer

Strategic clarity  
Predictability of funding  
Selectivity and avoidance of fragmentation  
Strong monitoring

Rigorous evaluation  
Effective use of partnerships  
Transparency  
Effective communication and community engagement  
Political leadership  
Realism of expectations

19. [Comment box]: If you would like to expand on any of your answers in this subsection, please do so here. (Please indicate which question you are referring to in your response.)

## **2C. Scope of the aid program**

20. The six priority areas for Australia's aid program, as identified by the present Government, are listed below. Please indicate the extent to which you believe the right emphasis is being placed upon each area.

[Matrix response]

Too much weight  
The right weight  
Too little weight  
Don't know

Infrastructure, trade facilitation and international competitiveness  
Agriculture, fisheries and water  
Effective governance: policies, institutions and functioning economies  
Education and health  
Building resilience: humanitarian assistance, disaster risk reduction and social protection  
Gender equality and empowering women and girls

21. What proportion of the Australian aid program budget should be spent in the following regions?

[Slider allowing people to select between 0 and 100%]

Pacific [45% of country allocable ODA in 2015-16]  
East and Southeast Asia [36% of country allocable ODA in 2015-16]  
South and West Asia [12% of country allocable ODA in 2015-16]  
Middle East and North Africa [2% of country allocable ODA in 2015-16]  
Sub-Saharan Africa [4% of country allocable ODA in 2015-16]  
The Americas [1% of country allocable ODA in 2015-16]

22. [Comment box]: If you would like to expand on any of your answers in this subsection, please do so here. (Please indicate which question you are referring to in your response.)

## **2D. Aid delivery**

23. The aid program uses a variety of implementing agencies to channel or deliver aid, as listed below. Please indicate the extent to which you think that the aid program should rely on each type of implementing agency.

[Matrix response]

More than at present  
The same  
Less than at present  
Don't know

Australian NGOs  
Other NGOs (local or international)  
Private contractors (companies or individuals)  
Multilateral and regional organisations (e.g. World Bank, UN agencies, Pacific regional organisations)  
Universities and other research institutes  
Australian Government agencies (e.g. Treasury, AFP, Australian Civilian Corps)  
Partner government agencies

(Note: In general, DFAT is a funding rather than an implementing agency. Therefore, with the exception of the Australian Civilian Corps which is an arm of DFAT, it is not included in this question under Australian Government agencies.)

24. A significant use of aid program funding is for the provision of specialist advisers to assist partner governments in policy planning and execution, and for building the capacity of local counterparts. Please indicate whether you consider the use of Australian aid to fund advisers to be:

Excessive  
At about the right level  
Insufficient  
Don't know  
Don't want to answer

25. [Comment box]: If you would like to expand on any of your answers in this subsection, please do so here. (Please indicate which question you are referring to in your response.)

## **2E. Response to the 'new aid paradigm'**

26. How would you rate the appropriateness of the Government's 'new aid paradigm' (released in 2014 as [\*Australian aid: promoting prosperity, reducing poverty, enhancing stability\*](#)) as a strategy for improving the Australian aid program's effectiveness?

Very appropriate  
Appropriate  
Neither appropriate nor inappropriate.

Inappropriate  
Very inappropriate  
Don't know  
Don't want to answer

27. How would you rate the effectiveness of the Australian government's implementation of this strategy?

Very effective  
Effective  
Neither effective nor ineffective  
Ineffective  
Very ineffective  
Don't know  
Don't want to answer

28. From your interaction with DFAT how much has this new strategy changed operations within the Australian aid program?

A lot  
Slightly  
Not at all  
Don't know  
Don't want to answer

29. [Comment box]: If you would like to expand on any of your answers in this subsection, please do so here. (Please indicate which question you are referring to in your response.)

## **2F. DFAT**

About 80-90% of Australian aid is managed by the Department of Foreign Affairs and trade, which also plays a central role in the oversight and evaluation of Australia's whole overseas aid effort.

30. Describe in one sentence the biggest strength of DFAT in managing Australian aid.

[text box]

31. Describe in one sentence the biggest weakness of DFAT in managing Australian aid.

[text box]

32. The following attributes are among those used in the 2013 baseline survey and noted by the 2011 [Independent Review of Aid Effectiveness](#) as being particularly important for the quality of the Australian aid program. With the reintegration of AusAID the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) is now responsible for managing Australia's government aid program. Answers to this question should be given on the basis of your overall views about DFAT's performance in managing

Australian aid. An opportunity to answer more specific questions on the basis of your personal engagement with DFAT, if any, is provided in Section 3.

Please indicate the extent to which you believe Australia's aid program possesses each of the attributes listed, using the following scale:

[Matrix response]

Great strength  
Moderate strength  
Neither strength nor weakness  
Moderate weakness  
Great weakness  
Don't know  
Don't want to answer

Appropriate attitude to risk  
Quick decision making  
Staff continuity  
Staff expertise  
Avoidance of micromanagement  
Focus on results  
Strong aid program performance management and reporting

33. Please indicate your perception of the rate of turnover in DFAT staff working on aid-related matters:

Very high  
High  
Neither high nor low  
Low  
Very low  
Don't know  
Don't want to answer

34. How has the rate of aid related staff turnover changed at DFAT in the past two years in comparison to the preceding two years (2011-2013)?

Greatly improved (i.e. turnover has declined)  
Improved  
Stayed the same  
Worse  
Much worse (i.e. turnover has increased)  
Don't know  
Don't want to answer

35. How would you rate DFAT's tolerance of risk with respect to the use of aid program funds?

- Too high (i.e. should take fewer risks)
- Moderately too high
- Right level
- Moderately too low
- Too low (i.e. should take more risks)
- Don't know
- Don't want to answer

36. What has been the impact of the merger of AusAID and DFAT on the effectiveness of staff primarily engaged in the Australian aid program?

- Greatly improved
- Improved
- Stayed the same
- Worse
- Much worse
- Don't know
- Don't want to answer

37. [Comment box]: If you would like to expand on any of your answers in this subsection, please do so here. (Please indicate which question you are referring to in your response.)

## **2G. Overall changes in the Australian aid program**

Please answer the following questions based on your personal, active engagement with the Australian aid program.

If you don't know, or were not actively engaged with the Australian aid program over the specified time period, please leave blank.

38. What is the most notable improvement in the Australian aid program over the last two years?

[Text box]

39. What is the area where the Australian aid program has made least progress or gone in the wrong direction over the last two years?

[Text box]

40. What has been the most notable improvement for the Australian aid program as a result of the merger between AusAID and DFAT?

[Text box]

41. What has been the most notable negative consequence for the Australian aid program as a result of the merger between AusAID and DFAT?

[Text box]

## **2H. Political management**

42. How effective do you think Australia's current Foreign Minister is in managing Australia's aid program?

- Very effective
- Effective
- Neither effective nor ineffective
- Ineffective
- Very ineffective
- Don't know
- Don't want to answer

43. Do you think there should be a minister with specific responsibility for the aid program and with no other ministerial responsibilities?

- Yes
- Yes, but only if that minister is of Cabinet rank
- No
- Don't know
- Don't want to answer

44. [Comment box]: If you would like to expand on any of your answers in this subsection, please do so here. (Please indicate which question you are referring to in your response.)

### **Section 3. Questions arising from your direct engagement with the aid program**

45. I am involved in the management or implementation of an activity or activities which are at least in part funded by the Australian aid program, either as an individual or through the organisation for which I work.

- Yes (you will be asked follow-up questions in section 3)
- No (you will skip this section and continue to section 4)

The questions which follow should be answered ONLY in relation to that specific part of your work that involves an activity or activities funded at least in part by the Australian aid program. If you are a senior manager or CEO, or your effort is spread across a range of activities, please focus on the relevant set of Australian Government-aid funded activities taken as a whole.

### **3A. General questions**

46. How would you describe the activity or activities? (Even if there is more than one activity or way to describe it, please choose just one option which in your opinion provides the best fit.)

Provision of advisory services to a partner country government or other organisation  
Volunteer placement  
Implementation of Australian Government funded aid project(s) (e.g. infrastructure, service delivery, community development, etc.) not covered by the two prior options  
Aid management  
Provision of specialist advice to Australian aid agency or agencies  
Research activity  
Aid coordination (partner government)  
Other (list)

47. How much of the funding for the activity or activities comes from the Australian aid program?

All  
A majority  
A minority  
Don't know  
Don't want to answer

48. Does your activity or activities receive core or earmarked funding or both? (Core funding is not tied to specific purposes, earmarked funding is. If you are a contractor funded to execute a project, consider that earmarked funding.)

Core funding only  
Earmarked only  
Both  
Don't know  
Don't want to answer

49. [Comment box]: If you would like to expand on any of your answers in this subsection, please do so here. (Please indicate which question you are referring to in your response.)

### **3B. Effectiveness questions**

The following questions relate to the activity or activities you have identified at the start of this section, which must be at least partly funded by the Australian aid program.

50. How would you rate the effectiveness of your activity or activities?

Very effective  
Effective  
Neither effective nor ineffective  
Ineffective  
Very ineffective  
Don't know  
Don't want to answer

51. The following criteria have been selected from the two lists presented earlier (in Sections 2B and 2F). Rate each of the following as a strength or weakness of the specific aid activity or activities you are reflecting on in this section.

[Matrix response]

Great strength  
Moderate strength  
Neither strength nor weakness  
Moderate weakness  
Great weakness  
Don't know  
Don't want to answer/Not applicable

Adequate and predictable funding  
Quick decision making by DFAT management  
Avoidance of micromanagement by DFAT management  
Strong monitoring  
Rigorous evaluation  
Transparency  
Realism of expectations

52. [Comment box]: If you would like to expand on any of your answers in this subsection, please do so here. (Please indicate which question you are referring to in your response.)

### **3C. Engagement with DFAT**

The following questions relate to the activity or activities you have identified at the start of this section, which must be an activity or activities that are at least partly funded by the Australian aid program.

53. Is there a DFAT employee designated as manager/facilitator/contact point ('manager' for short)?

Yes  
No  
Don't know  
Don't want to answer

*If you have answered yes please fill out the next two questions. If not please continue to question 54.*

*In the next two questions, 'manager' is defined as per question 53, that is, as the AusAID employee designated as manager/facilitator/contact point.*

54. How long has the current 'manager' been in their current position?

Less than 6 months  
6 months to a year  
1-2 years  
2-5 years  
5+ years  
Don't know  
Don't want to answer

55. To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "The 'manager' appointed to my project has been in place long enough to be effective."

Strongly agree  
Agree  
Neither agree nor disagree  
Disagree  
Strongly disagree  
Don't know  
Don't want to answer

56. How would you identify the transaction costs of dealing with DFAT?

High  
Medium  
Low  
Don't know  
Don't want to answer/Not applicable

57. To what extent have transaction costs changed in the last two years?

Increased  
Stayed the same  
Decreased  
Don't know  
Don't want to answer/Not applicable

58. [Comment box]: If you would like to expand on any of your answers in this subsection, please do so here. (Please indicate which question you are referring to in your response.)

#### **Section 4. Questions about the volume of aid**

The 2015-16 Australian aid budget is \$4.05 billion, or 0.25% of Australia's Gross National Income (GNI). Labor and the Coalition have both committed to the aid budget reaching 0.5% of GNI, but both under no timeframe.

59. If the Coalition is re-elected in the next election, what do you believe will happen to the aid budget by 2019-20?

Increase to 0.5% of GNI

- Increase as a percentage of GNI, but not to 0.5%
- Approximately stay the same as a percentage of GNI
- Approximately stay the same in real terms (that is, roughly increase at the rate of inflation)
- Approximately stay the same in nominal terms (no increase from current level of \$4 billion)
- Fall in nominal terms
- Don't know
- Don't want to answer

60. If Labor is elected in the next election, what do you believe will happen to the aid budget by 2019-20?

- Increase to 0.5% of GNI
- Increase as a percentage of GNI, but not to 0.5%
- Approximately stay the same as a percentage of GNI
- Approximately stay the same in real terms (that is, roughly increase at the rate of inflation)
- Approximately stay the same in nominal terms (no increase from current level of \$4 billion)
- Fall in nominal terms
- Don't know
- Don't want to answer

61. What do you believe should happen to the aid budget by 2019-20?

- Increase to 0.5% of GNI
- Increase as a percentage of GNI, but not to 0.5%
- Approximately stay the same as a percentage of GNI
- Approximately stay the same in real terms (that is, roughly increase at the rate of inflation)
- Approximately stay the same in nominal terms (no increase from current level of \$4 billion)
- Fall in nominal terms
- Don't know
- Don't want to answer

62. [Comment box]: If you would like to expand on any of your answers in this subsection, please do so here. (Please indicate which question you are referring to in your response.)