Devpolicy's work on aid
Update 3 July 2020

This is the July 2020 update on Devpolicy's work on aid-related matters.

Australian aid stakeholder survey

The 2019 survey was completed and presented to the February Australasian Aid Conference. We have drawn upon stakeholder survey findings in our recent blog post on lessons from Australia for the DFID merger and in insights provided to the Gates Foundation.

High-level drivers of aid policy including public opinion

A Devpolicy staff article about whether appealing to the national interest increases support for aid has been accepted at the journal *Economic Development and Social Change*. It will be published in coming months. A Devpolicy staff article from the experimental study of what happens to support for aid when Australians are informed of China's rise as a donor in the Pacific was submitted to a journal and is currently being revised following peer review.

In the wake of the COVID-19 epidemic, Devpolicy staff conducted an experiment to test whether priming Australians with information on coronavirus's potential impact in developing countries changes attitudes to aid. Results from the control group of this experiment were also used to update our timeseries of Australian views on aid volume. The key finding from control group comparison, that support for aid has not fallen, was published in the blog on 2 July. Findings from the experiment treatments will be published in coming weeks.

NGO analysis

Recent NGO work has included analysis from late last year on declining donations to development NGOs, more recent work comparing donations to development NGOs with donations to domestic NGOs and a post in June focused on Oxfam Australia's financial challenges. We are currently assisting ACFID with their compilation of data from this year's survey of their members. More generally we are continuing to build and refine our various NGO datasets.

Aid quality

A Devpolicy staff article on the effectiveness of Australian aid projects has now been published in the open access journal *Asia and the Pacific Policy Studies*. The publication was accompanied by two blog posts. Findings from this study were presented at the Australasian aid conference and have been the basis of discussions with DFAT.

We have used an international multi-donor version of the same dataset to produce a discussion paper explaining why aid projects are often less effective in the Pacific. The publication of this paper was accompanied by a Devpolicy blog post.

Articles based on this aid quality research have been published in the Fiji Times and Solomon Star newspapers in the Pacific.

Australian aid spending

The first component of this work is our study of aid fragmentation in the Pacific. A dataset has been built on fragmentation. The paper from the dataset is currently under peer review for a journal.

Aid Tracker and commentary

Aid commentary is also ongoing, primarily via the Devpolicy Blog. In addition to aid analysis, the blog's development analysis has had a heavy focus on COVID-19 in recent months. Blog posts of potential interest include:

COVID-related blog articles
'Women's economic empowerment at a time of crisis' by Cecilia Reategui & Andrew Rowell on 23 June
'COVID and disability' by Alexandra Bingham and Lucy Daniel on 25 June 2020
'International cooperation in a post-COVID-19 world' by Artemy Izmestiev & S. Klingebiel on 01 May
'Fixing the WHO' by Joel Negin on 17 April 2020
'Responding to COVID-19 in PNG' by Klara Henderson & Aisha Kakinuma Hassan
'What will COVID-19 mean for the Pacific: a problem in four parts' by Terence Wood on 30 March 2020
'PNG and the next pandemic' by Joseph Pundu and Patrick Kaiku on 29 June 2020
'Poverty and the pandemic in the Pacific' by Chris Hoy on 15 June 2020

Aid-related blog articles
'Australia's new COVID-19 development response strategy' by Stephen Howes on June 4 2020.
'Australian aid in five years' time' by Graham Teskey on 03 July 2020
'Can the UK avoid Australia's integration errors?' by Richard Moore on 30 June 2020
'Australia back to Rudd levels with Gavi' by Stephen Howes on 12 June 2020
'COVID-19, and Australian and New Zealand aid to the Pacific' by Terence Wood on 14 April 2020
'Uninvited guests: the evolving practice of international humanitarian response to cyclones in the Pacific' by Tom Bamforth on 15 May 2020

The Aid Tracker

The Aid Tracker continues to be updated with relevant data. Recent updates have included Australian commitments to Gavi, the Global Fund and World Bank IDA.

Outreach

Terence Wood was quoted in reporting by Loop TV in PNG on COVID-19. Terence has also been interviewed by ABC radio in Australia on NGO funding problems, and interviewed for the New Zealand Herald on the aid response to COVID-19.

Devpolicy has entered into a partnership with Good Will Hunters, Australia's leading aid and development podcast. The Good Will Hunters website contains the podcasts released so far. Recent episodes have covered topics such as the future of aid to the Pacific, gender based violence in the Pacific, how Chinese aid works and Papua New Guinea's vulnerability to COVID-19.

In the first half of this year Devpolicy staff produced a written submission to the Parliamentary Review of Australia's Development Policy and a written submission to the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade (the submission was focused on COVID-19 and the Pacific).

Stephen Howes briefed DFAT on Papua New Guinea's COVID-19-related economic crisis in late June. Stephen briefed the CEOs of ACFID member NGOs on the economic impacts of COVID-19, and potential aid responses, in early June.