

Elizabeth Reid: transforming adversity into impact

by Ashlee Betteridge

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Elizabeth Reid, 1983

When Elizabeth Reid had finished her first term studying statistics at The Australian National University, she was involved in a serious train collision in which her head was pinned between an internal train door and its frame. Her treating neurologist at the time said that the strain of returning to study after the injury might send her insane, and that she should learn to knit instead.

Luckily, Elizabeth never took to knitting, instead becoming a leading advocate on issues such as gender equality and HIV/AIDS.

The first ever Advisor on Women's Affairs to any head of state during the tumultuous Whitlam era, Elizabeth later turned her attention to the issues facing women globally. A personal tragedy shifted her to focus to HIV/AIDS, working on the issue first in Australia, and then internationally through the UN system, with a particular focus on PNG.

In our latest Devpolicy [Aid Profile](#), Cleo Fleming [documents](#) Elizabeth's extraordinary contributions both in Australia and overseas.

[Read the profile here.](#)

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Ashlee Betteridge was the Manager of the Development Policy Centre until April 2021. She was previously a Research Officer at the centre from 2013-2017. A former journalist, she holds a Master of Public Policy (Development Policy) from ANU and has development experience in Indonesia and Timor-Leste. She now has her own consultancy, Better Things Consulting, and works across several large projects with managing contractors.

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