

New reports and a new look website for DFAT

By Ashlee Betteridge
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The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) has rung in the new year with a [new look website](#), a new report on Australia's aid performance and two new reports from the Office of Development Effectiveness (ODE).

The [Performance of Australian Aid 2013-14 report](#) [pdf] summarises the performance of the Australian aid program over the past year and reviews early progress in implementing the government's 'new aid paradigm' and performance benchmarking.

From ODE, we have two new publications, the first an evaluation of how the aid program funds research ([Research for better aid: an evaluation of DFAT's investments](#)), the second an examination of Australia's support for health, education and infrastructure sectors in decentralised contexts ([Working in decentralised service systems: challenges and choices for the Australian aid program](#)).

Meanwhile, the [new website](#) certainly looks fresher and cleaner, but is it more user-friendly? While it does still take quite a few clicks to find something, the project information pages certainly look more methodical and up-to-date. We hope this marks an end to the transparency and organisational problems with the website we [had highlighted](#).

Something that is noticeably absent though are the more layperson-friendly stories about aid projects that used to adorn the front page of AusAID's website. There's also a lot of text and not a lot of photos of aid in action, which marks a departure from the more proactive public communications approach that was being taken by AusAID pre-integration. With the apparent end of communications more oriented towards informing members of the general public about aid, it seems to be increasingly left to the NGOs to get jargon-free messages across on what aid actually does. This site seems heavily geared towards policy types and those involved in the sector, rather than your average Australian with questions about aid.

What are your thoughts on the new-look DFAT website? Is it easier to find what you need? Anything missing? Let us know in the comments.

About the author/s

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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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