

New Zealand needs an aid campaign—here's how to get it

By Terence Wood
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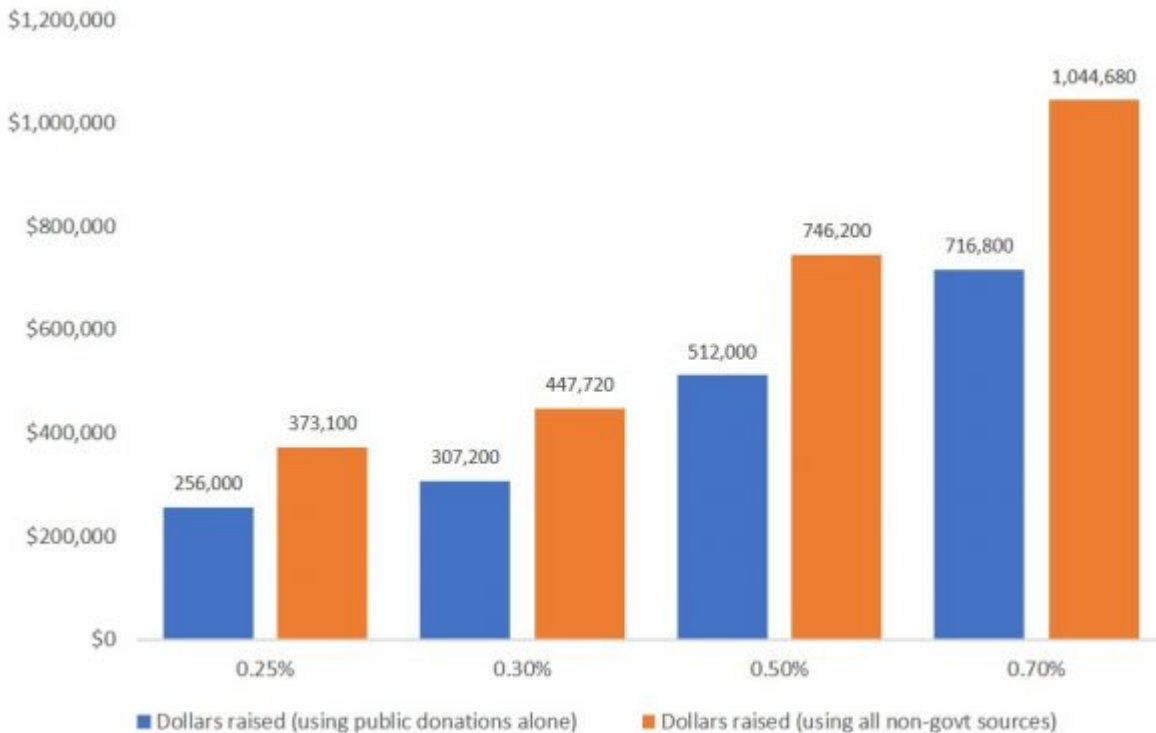
As the years since 2008 have shown, New Zealand needs a sustained, coordinated civil society voice that campaigns for better aid. In its absence, when the going has been tough, [as it has in recent years](#), it is hard to effectively oppose changes for the worse. And even when the going isn't so tough, a campaigning voice would help press for improvements.

New Zealand's NGOs care about good aid, but it's hard for any one NGO to speak in a concerted, ongoing way without risking its government funding. A peak body could do what individual NGO's can't. New Zealand's peak body for aid NGOs is the [Council for International Development](#), but it has always been heavily dependent on government funding too—funding which was slashed in 2010, leaving it capacity constrained (and still dependent on the government for over half of its income).

New Zealand needs a sustained, coordinated civil society voice that campaigns for better aid. And it could have one—if New Zealand's aid NGOs were willing to devote a fraction of their revenue to the task. Last year I [demonstrated how much money](#) Australian NGOs could raise if they were willing to sacrifice 0.7% of donation revenue to the cause of collective campaigning. In Australia this sacrifice would raise over AU\$7 million dollars a year.

Of course New Zealand is smaller and poorer, but a similar sacrifice would still generate enough to bring a collective campaigning voice to New Zealand. The numbers are below (in New Zealand dollars). I've provided them for 0.7% as well as more modest targets. The data on NGO revenue are from the 2016 [Financial Summary](#) [pdf] in the CID Member Survey. I've provided calculations based on public donations alone and also for all non-government revenue. There are only 39 CID members. Other NGOs exist in New Zealand. It's possible funding could be higher if they could be induced to join in.

Revenue that could be raised (NZD)



Sources and calculations can be downloaded [here](#).

Are these amounts useful? I think so. CID's 2016 [Annual Report](#) [pdf] provides information on its current funding. The lowest number in the chart above would be enough to free CID of all government funding and add an additional \$69,500 to its revenue. The highest amount on the chart would be enough to free CID of government funding and more than double its current budget. (Funding needn't be provided to CID, although I think CID would be fit for purpose. Regardless, the numbers give you a sense of what could be done.)

As I said in my original Australian blog, I am not suggesting NGOs aren't undertaking advocacy work. But the years since 2008 have shown New Zealand needs a collective voice on aid. It always will if we want to be a good international citizen. The question is how to fund it. I've provided an answer. It wouldn't be a wholly painless one for New Zealand's NGOs. But it wouldn't be hard either.

About the author/s

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