Budget wrap

With whispers of a diversion of aid funds to intelligence agencies on the eve of the 2017 federal budget, the sector was primed for further cuts. And although those cuts fell in the outer years of forward estimates, they weren’t wrong. Stephen Howes analyses the fallout here.

Robin Davies looks at the composition of the 2017 aid budget and compares this year’s allocations to those five years ago. He argues that there is growing dominance of broadly political considerations in aid allocations.

Matt Dornan explores the possible reasons for the cuts, while Jacqui De Lacy questions whether our aid is being delivered more effectively, and if we should be concerned about the growing ‘national interest’ emphasis for aid.

Finally, is there still a budget emergency? Tony Swan says not in a blog summary of his presentation at last week’s aid budget breakfast. If you missed the event and are keen to know more, watch the livestream here or listen to the podcast here.

Blog redesign

The Devpolicy Blog has had a makeover. If you’ve not yet visited the new site, we encourage you to do so here. One key change we’ve made is to divide the content into two streams: one on PNG and the Pacific, and the other on aid and global development. This means you can focus on reading content that interests you. We’ve applied the same change to the blog email options, with a distribution list for each stream. You can change your subscription preferences through the link in the footer of our emails, or on the blog. For more information, see here. Feedback always welcome – email us here.

PNG history and drought

On Wednesday 24 May at 12.30pm, the Development Policy Centre will host a public
seminar by Dr Bruce Hunt of the ANU School of History, based on his recent book Australia’s Northern Shield? Papua New Guinea and the Defence of Australia since 1880. Dr Hunt will discuss the history of the Australia-PNG bilateral relationship from 1970 to Independence, and his use of cabinet notebooks to develop an understanding of historical government policy. You can read more about the event here, and register here.

In 2015, much of PNG was hit by a major drought and a series of destructive frosts. On Wednesday 7 June at 3.15pm, Devpolicy will host a public forum entitled Drought and famine relief in Papua New Guinea, 2015-2016, to discuss the implications and the response. More detail here, and register your interest here.

Blog highlights

A good news story on grassroots governance in PNG
Cleaning up illegal labour practice
Culling corruption by hurting the poor?

Upcoming events

The Absence of Trust: Australian strategic thinking and PNG 1950-1975 – Dr Bruce Hunt
12.30 – 1.30pm, Wednesday 24 May, Barton Theatre, Crawford School, ANU. Details here.

Drought and famine relief in Papua New Guinea, 2015-2016
3.15 – 5.15pm, Wednesday 7 June at Lecture Theatre 1, Hedley Bull Centre, Building 130, Garran Road, ANU. Details here.

2017 Pacific Update
20 – 21 June, The University of the South Pacific (USP), Suva, Fiji. Details here.

2017 PNG Update
10 – 11 August, The University of Papua New Guinea, Waigani Campus, Port Moresby. Details here.

Latest podcasts

Why forests? Why now? The science, economics, and politics of tropical forests and climate change – Jonah Busch

2017 Aid budget breakfast

Coping with high risk and uncertainty in aid policy design and practice – Adam Fforde

On the blog
Fortnightly links: universal basic income, REDD+, IDAHOBIT, lights out, and more

The future starts today by Lucas Kiak

Has the budget emergency gone away? Implications for future funding of Australian aid by Anthony Swan

Aid, deep thinking, and national security by Jacqui de Lacy

Opening Australia’s extractive data for development by Jessie Cato

As election looms, PNG political parties should consider supporting informal economy by Busa Jeremiah Wenogo

Five lean years: how Australia’s aid program has tightened its belt by Robin Davies

Rising to the challenge of the Asia Pacific Century: proposals for the Pacific region by David Morris

Cleaning up the horticultural labour market: two breakthroughs by Henry Sherrell

Why has the Coalition cut foreign aid (again)? By Matthew Dornan

Rubi Miranka and the Bougainville Healthy Community Programme by Lhawang Ugyel

A small target budget with a sting in the tail by Stephen Howes

A hot aid budget tip from 2014? By Stephen Howes

Aid for migration: second time lucky with the Australia-Pacific Technical College? By Stephen Howes and Henry Sherrell

2017 Aid Budget Breakfast - livestream by Ashlee Betteridge

New look and new email options for Devpolicy Blog by Camilla Burkot, Stephen Howes and Ashlee Betteridge

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About the author/s

Development Policy Centre
The Devpolicy Blog is based at the Development Policy Centre, Crawford School of Public Policy, College of Asia and the Pacific, Australian National University.