

Australian aid stakeholder survey questions

Introductory message

This survey of stakeholders in the Australian Government's overseas aid program is designed to solicit views regarding the effectiveness, management and volume of Australia's official aid.

Your response to this survey is strictly anonymous and will remain secure.

The survey should take roughly fifteen minutes and is split into four sections:

Section 1: Information about the respondent

Section 2: General views about the effectiveness of the Australian aid program

Section 3: (*If applicable.*) Views on the effectiveness of Australian aid based on your direct engagement with the aid program

Section 4: Views on the volume of Australian aid

Most of the questions are multiple-choice. Comment boxes are provided at the end most sub-sections in case you would like to say more.

If you have questions at any time about the survey or the procedures, you may contact Jonathan Pryke at +61 2 6125 2611 or by email at jonathan.pryke@anu.edu.au.

Results of the survey will be released in October 2013.

Please start with the survey now by clicking on the *continue* button below.

Privacy statement

(Listed in the introduction and at the bottom of each page of the survey)

Your response to this survey is strictly anonymous and will remain secure.

Section 1. About the respondent

1. Sex

Male

Female

Don't want to answer

2. Age

[text box]

3. How would you rate your level of knowledge of the aid program as a whole?

Very strong
Strong
Average
Weak
Very Weak

4. From the list below, which best describes where you work?

Academia (university or think tank)
Australian aid or development NGO
Other NGO (local or international)
Australian government (national, state or local)
Developing country government (national, provincial or local)
Multilateral or regional intergovernmental organisation
Aid contractor
Independent consultant
Other (list)

5. How long have you worked in the field of international development?

Less than 6 months
6 months to a year
1-2 years
2-5 years
5-10 years
10-15 years
15-20 years
20+ years

6. Where do you mainly work/live?

Australia
Other

If other, which country?

If you work for an organisation, please answer the next two questions.

7. How would you describe your seniority in that organisation?

Highest level (e.g. Director, CEO, etc)
Senior management level
Middle management level
Entry or early-career level

8. How long have you been at your current organisation?

Less than 6 months
6 months to a year
1-2 years

- 2-5 years
- 5-10 years
- 10-15 years
- 15-20 years
- 20+ years

Section 2. Questions about the Australian aid program

These questions refer to your broader perceptions of the Australian aid program (i.e. flows from Australia to developing countries that are reported to the OECD as Official Development Assistance), which in 2013-14 will total \$5.7 billion.

Answers should be given on the basis of your overall views about the aid program. The questions in Section 3 are intended to elicit more specific views derived from your personal engagements with the aid program, if any.

2A. Objectives

1. Adding to 100, what weight do you think the following objectives *actually* have in the Australian aid program? (If you do not want to answer please skip this question.)

- Reducing poverty
- Promoting Australia's strategic interests
- Promoting Australia's commercial interests
- Don't want to answer

2. Adding to 100, what weight do you think the following objectives *should* have in the Australian aid program? (If you do not want to answer please skip this question.)

- Reducing poverty
- Promoting Australia's strategic interests
- Promoting Australia's commercial interests
- Don't want to answer

3. The Australian aid program has a clearly defined purpose.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know
- Don't want to answer

4. The Australian Government now formulates the objective of the aid program in the following way:

"The fundamental purpose of Australian aid is to help people overcome poverty. This also serves Australia's national interests by promoting stability and

prosperity both in our region and beyond. We focus our effort in areas where Australia can make a difference and where our resources can most effectively and efficiently be deployed.”

Are you satisfied with this as the objective of the aid program?

- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied
- Don't know
- Don't want to answer

[Comment box]: If you would like to expand on any of your answers in this subsection, please do so here. (Please indicate which question you are referring to in your response.)

2B. Aid effectiveness

1. How would you rate the effectiveness of the Australian aid program?

- Very effective
- Effective
- Neither effective nor ineffective
- Ineffective
- Very ineffective
- Don't know
- Don't want to answer

2. Over the last decade, has the effectiveness of the Australian aid program declined or improved?

- Improved significantly
- Improved moderately
- Stayed the same
- Declined moderately
- Declined significantly
- Don't know
- Don't want to answer

3. Adjusting for inflation, the Australian aid program has increased in volume from \$2.7 billion in 2003-04 to \$5.5 billion in 2013-14 (in 2011-12 prices). What impact has the increase in Australian aid over the last ten years had on aid effectiveness?

- Very positive
- Positive
- No effect
- Negative

Very negative
Don't know
Don't want to answer

4. How would you rate the effectiveness of the Australian aid program by comparison with the aid programs of other OECD bilateral donors?

A lot better
Better
Same
Worse
A lot worse
Don't know
Don't want to answer

5. The attributes listed below are among those noted by the 2011 [Independent Review of Aid Effectiveness](#) as being particularly important for the Australian aid program. Please indicate the extent to which you believe the Australian aid program possesses each attribute in the list.

[Matrix response]

Great strength
Moderate strength
Neither strength nor weakness
Moderate weakness
Great weakness
Don't know
Don't want to answer

Strategic clarity
Predictability of funding
Selectivity and avoidance of fragmentation
Strong monitoring
Rigorous evaluation
Effective use of partnerships
Transparency
Effective communication and community engagement
Political leadership
Realism of expectations

6. Do you think there should be a minister with specific responsibility for the aid program and with no other ministerial responsibilities?

Yes
Yes, but only if that minister is of Cabinet rank
No
Don't want to answer

[Comment box]: If you would like to expand on any of your answers in this subsection, please do so here. (Please indicate which question you are referring to in your response.)

2C. Scope of the aid program

1. The five strategic goals of Australia's aid program, as identified by the present Government, are listed below. Please indicate the extent to which you believe the right emphasis is being placed upon each goal.

[Matrix response]

Too much weight
The right weight
Too little weight
Don't know

Saving lives ("Improving public health by increasing access to safe water and sanitation; saving the lives of poor women and children through greater access to quality maternal and child health services; and supporting large scale disease prevention, vaccination and treatment")

Promoting opportunities for all ("Giving more children access to school; empowering women to participate in the economy, leadership and education; and enhancing the lives of people with disabilities")

Sustainable economic development ("Improving food security; improving incomes, employment and enterprise opportunities; and reducing the negative impacts of climate change and other environmental factors")

Effective governance ("Improving governance to deliver better services, improve security, and enhance justice and human rights")

Humanitarian and disaster response ("More effective preparedness and responses to disasters and crises")

2. The major geographical focus of the Australian aid program is the Asia-Pacific. Please indicate whether you think the focus on the Asia-Pacific should be:

Increased
Is about right
Decreased
Don't know
Don't want to answer

3. The Australian aid program in sub-Saharan Africa (\$355.1 million in 2013-14) is

Too big
The right size
Too small
Don't know
Don't want to answer

4. OECD rules on the reporting of Official Development Assistance (foreign aid) allow that it can be used to finance certain costs for finite periods associated with the presence of refugees and asylum seekers within donor countries. In your view, should Australian aid be used to finance costs associated with the presence of asylum seekers in Australia?

- Yes
- No
- It depends on the details
- Don't know
- Don't want to answer

[Comment box]: If you would like to expand on any of your answers in this subsection, please do so here. (Please indicate which question you are referring to in your response.)

2D. Aid delivery

1. The aid program uses a variety of implementing agencies to channel or deliver aid, as listed below. Please indicate the extent to which you think that the aid program should rely on each type of implementing agency.

[Matrix response]

- More than at present
- The same
- Less
- Don't know

- Australian NGOs
- Other NGOs (local or international)
- Private contractors (companies or individuals)
- Multilateral and regional organisations (e.g. World Bank, UN agencies, Pacific regional organisations)
- Universities
- Australian Government agencies (e.g. Treasury, AFP, Australian Civilian Corps)
- Partner government agencies

(Note: In general, AusAID is a funding rather than an implementing agency. Therefore, with the exception of the Australian Civilian Corps which is an arm of AusAID, it is not included in this question under Australian Government agencies.)

2. A significant use of aid program funding is for the provision of specialist advisers to assist partner governments in policy planning and execution, and for building the capacity of local counterparts. Please indicate whether you consider the use of Australian aid to fund advisers to be:

- Excessive
- At about the right level

Insufficient
Don't know
Don't want to answer

[Comment box]: If you would like to expand on any of your answers in this subsection, please do so here. (Please indicate which question you are referring to in your response.)

2E. Response to the Independent Review of Aid Effectiveness

1. How would you rate the appropriateness of the Government's response to the Independent Review of Aid Effectiveness (released in 2011 as [An Effective Aid Program for Australia: Making a real difference – Delivering real results](#)) as a strategy for improving the Australian aid program's effectiveness?

Very appropriate
Appropriate
Neither appropriate nor inappropriate.
Inappropriate
Very inappropriate
Don't know
Don't want to answer

2. How would you rate the effectiveness of the Australian government's implementation of this strategy?

Very effective
Effective
Neither effective nor ineffective
Ineffective
Very ineffective
Don't know
Don't want to answer

[Comment box]: If you would like to expand on any of your answers in this subsection, please do so here. (Please indicate which question you are referring to in your response.)

2F. AusAID

About 80-90% of Australian aid is managed by AusAID, which also plays a central role in the oversight and evaluation of Australia's whole overseas aid effort.

The following attributes are among those noted by the 2011 [Independent Review of Aid Effectiveness](#) as being particularly important for the quality of AusAID's performance. Answers to this question should be given on the basis of your overall views about AusAID. An opportunity to answer more specific questions on the basis of your personal engagement with AusAID, if any, is provided in Section 3.

1. Please indicate the extent to which you believe AusAID possesses each of the attributes listed, using the following scale:

[Matrix response]

Great strength
Moderate strength
Neither strength nor weakness
Moderate weakness
Great weakness
Don't know
Don't want to answer

Appropriate attitude to risk
Quick decision making
Staff continuity
Staff expertise
Avoidance of micromanagement
Focus on results
Strong aid program performance management and reporting

2. Please indicate your perception of the rate of staff turnover at AusAID:

Very high
High
Neither high nor low
Low
Very low
Don't know
Don't want to answer

3. How would you rate AusAID's tolerance of risk with respect to the use of aid program funds?

Too high (should take fewer risks)
Moderately too high
Right level
Moderately too low
Too low (should take more risks)
Don't know
Don't want to answer

4. Describe in one sentence the biggest strength of AusAID.

[text box]

5. Describe in one sentence the biggest weakness of AusAID.

[text box]

[Comment box]: If you would like to expand on any of your answers in this subsection, please do so here. (Please indicate which question you are referring to in your response.)

2G. Overall changes in the Australian aid program

1. What is the most notable improvement in the Australian aid program over the last ten years (or less if your knowledge doesn't stretch back that far)?

[Text box]

2. What is the area where the Australian aid program has made least progress or gone in the wrong direction over the last ten years (or less if your knowledge doesn't stretch back that far)?

[Text box]

Section 3. Questions arising from your direct engagement with the aid program

I am involved in the management or implementation of an activity or activities which are at least in part funded by the Australian aid program, either as an individual or through the organisation for which I work.

Yes (you will be asked follow-up questions in section 3)

No (you will skip this section and continue to section 4)

The questions which follow should be answered ONLY in relation to that specific part of your work that involves an activity or activities funded at least in part by the Australian aid program. If you are a senior manager or CEO, or your effort is spread across a range of activities, please focus on the relevant set of Australian Government-aid funded activities taken as a whole.

3A. General questions

1. How would you describe the activity or activities? (Even if there is more than one activity or way to describe it, please choose just one option which in your opinion provides the best fit.)

Provision of advisory services to a partner country government or other organization

Volunteer placement

Implementation of Australian Government funded aid project(s) (e.g. infrastructure, service delivery, community development, etc.) not covered by the two prior options

Aid management

Provision of specialist advice to Australian aid agency or agencies

Research activity

Aid coordination (partner government)
Other (list)

2. How would you describe the objective of your aid activity or activities in relation to the Australian aid program's strategic objectives: (If there is more than one objective, select which you think to be the most important one.)

Saving lives
Promoting opportunities for all
Sustainable economic development
Effective governance
Humanitarian and disaster response
All of the above

3. How much of the funding for the activity or activities comes from the Australian aid program?

All
A majority
Some
Don't know
Don't want to answer

4. Does your activity or activities receive core or earmarked funding or both? (Core funding is not tied to specific purposes, earmarked funding is. If you are a contractor funded to execute a project, consider that earmarked funding.)

Core funding only
Earmarked only
Both
Don't know
Don't want to answer

[Comment box]: If you would like to expand on any of your answers in this subsection, please do so here. (Please indicate which question you are referring to in your response.)

3B. Effectiveness questions

The following questions relate to the activity or activities you have identified at the start of this section, which must be at least partly funded by the Australian aid program.

1. How would you rate the effectiveness of your activity or activities?

Very effective
Effective
Neither effective nor ineffective
Ineffective
Very ineffective

Don't know
Don't want to answer

2. The following criteria have been selected from the two lists presented earlier (in Sections 2B and 2F). Rate each of the following as a strength or weakness of the specific aid activity or activities you are reflecting on in this section. These ratings may relate to the activities themselves or to their management by AusAID (if applicable).

[Matrix response]

Great strength
Moderate strength
Neither strength nor weakness
Moderate weakness
Great weakness
Don't know
Don't want to answer/Not applicable

Adequate and predictable funding
Quick decision making by AusAID
Avoidance of micromanagement by AusAID
Strong monitoring
Rigorous evaluation
Transparency
Realism of expectations

[Comment box]: If you would like to expand on any of your answers in this subsection, please do so here. (Please indicate which question you are referring to in your response.)

3C. Engagement with AusAID

The following questions relate to the activity or activities you have identified at the start of this section, which must be an activity or activities that are at least partly funded by the Australian aid program.

1. Is there an AusAID employee designated as manager/facilitator/contact point ('manager' for short)?

Yes
No
Don't know
Don't want to answer

If you have answered yes please fill out the next two questions. If not please continue to question 4.

In the next two questions, 'manager' is defined as per question 1, that is, as the AusAID employee designated as manager/facilitator/contact point.

2. How long has the current 'manager' been in place?

- Less than 6 months
- 6 months to a year
- 1-2 years
- 2-5 years
- 5+ years
- Don't know
- Don't want to answer

3. To what extent do you agree with the following statement: "The 'manager' appointed to my project has been in place long enough to be effective."

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know
- Don't want to answer

4. How would you identify the transaction costs of dealing with AusAID?

- High
- Medium
- Low
- Don't know
- Don't want to answer/Not applicable

5. Would you say these transaction costs are changing?

- Increasing
- Staying the same
- Decreasing
- Don't know
- Don't want to answer/Not applicable

[Comment box]: If you would like to expand on any of your answers in this subsection, please do so here. (Please indicate which question you are referring to in your response.)

Section 4. Questions about the volume of aid

The 2013-14 Australian aid budget is \$5.7 billion, or 0.37% of Australia's Gross National Income (GNI). In 2012, which is the latest year for which official data are available, Australia was the 8th largest out of 24 OECD DAC donors and the 13th highest in terms of aid to GNI. The Labor Government has a target of the aid budget reaching 0.5% of GNI by 2017-18. This would imply an aid budget of approximately \$9 billion in 2017-18. The

Coalition has also committed to increasing the aid budget to 0.5% of GNI, but under no timeframe.

1. If *Labor* is re-elected in September, what do you believe will happen to the aid budget by 2017-18?

Increase to 0.5% of GNI

Increase as a percentage of GNI, but not to 0.5%

Approximately stay the same as a percentage of GNI

Approximately stay the same in real terms (that is, roughly increase at the rate of inflation)

Approximately stay the same in nominal terms (no increase from current level of \$5.7 billion)

Fall in nominal terms

Don't know

Don't want to answer

2. If the *Coalition* is elected in September, what will happen to the Australian aid budget by 2017-18?

Increase to 0.5% of GNI

Increase as a percentage of GNI, but not to 0.5%

Approximately stay the same as a percentage of GNI

Approximately stay the same in real terms (that is, roughly increase at the rate of inflation)

Approximately stay the same in nominal terms (no increase from current level of \$5.7 billion)

Fall in nominal terms

Don't know

Don't want to answer

3. What do you believe *should* happen to the aid budget by 2017-18?

Increase to 0.5% of GNI (or higher)

Increase as a percentage of GNI, but not to 0.5%

Approximately stay the same as a percentage of GNI

Approximately stay the same in real terms (that is, roughly increase at the rate of inflation)

Approximately stay the same in nominal terms (no increase from current level of \$5.7 billion)

Fall in nominal terms

Don't know

Don't want to answer

[Comment box]: If you would like to expand on any of your answers in this subsection, please do so here. (Please indicate which question you are referring to in your response.)