

## Aid Buzz (March 13): Bob Carr | TB treatment in PNG | UN IFAD | World Vision 'terror link' | and more

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### **Bob Carr: The new face of Australian Aid**

With the [announcement](#) of Bob Carr as the new Foreign Minister (and subsequent head of Australia's burgeoning aid program), questions are beginning to spread about what this will mean for the future of AusAID and the aid budget. Directors from both Oxfam and World Vision Australia have sounded off their [support](#) for Senator Carr, with World Vision Director Tim Costello [stating](#) he was particularly pleased to hear Senator Carr identify the Asia-Pacific region as an immediate priority once he assumes the role of Foreign Minister. ACFID has also [welcomed](#) the news. Annmaree O'Keefe outlines some of the challenges for the new Minister [here](#), and Stephen Howes does the same on our blog [here](#). It is likely that Australia's continued bipartisan commitment to increasing aid to 0.5 per cent of gross national income will be heavily reliant on Senator Carr's engagement with and interest in the aid program.

### **AusAID strengthens TB detection and treatment in PNG**

The temporary clinics in the Torres Strait to combat TB, sponsored by AusAID, [closed down last month](#). It has been revealed, however, in the Senate Estimates questioning that the TB clinics will actually continue in the Torres Strait but simply under a different name month (see [here from page 81](#) [pdf] for the extensive questioning on the situation during the Estimates). AusAID Director General Peter Baxter also [opened a temporary tuberculosis](#) (TB) isolation ward on 22 February, which forms part of a wide range of initiatives being funded by AusAID to support Papua New Guinea's (PNG) health authorities to reduce the threat of TB infection in PNG and the Torres Strait. The temporary ward at Western Province's Daru Hospital will be used until a permanent ward upgrade and extension, part of an \$8 million AusAID package, is completed later in the year. AusAID's TB program was also brought up in the AusAID Senate estimates mid last month (available [here from page 81](#) [pdf]). Devpolicy will also be hosting a forum on May 23<sup>rd</sup> at the ANU to discuss TB control in the Torres Strait region (registration information to come).

### **Australia considers re-joining UN IFAD to strengthen global food security**

AusAID recently [announced](#) that it will look to expand its efforts to help the world's most vulnerable fight hunger as it seeks to re-join the [United Nations' International Fund for Agricultural Development](#) (IFAD). Calls for public submissions on the proposal for Australia to re-join IFAD were advertised nationally on 4 and 25 February with submissions to form part of a National Interest Assessment. Submissions are now officially closed. Further details of AusAID's proposal can be found [here](#).

### **AusAID and World Vision accused of aiding terrorist-linked NGO**

Last month, Shurat HaDin (the Israeli Law Centre) [wrote](#) to both World Vision Australia and AusAID alleging the Gaza-based [Union of Agricultural Work committees](#) (UAWC), whom AusAID channels support to through World Vision, is a subsidiary of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP). World Vision was quick to announce that it had frozen dealings with the UAWC, as the link was investigated. World Vision was involved in a five year \$5 million dollar deal with UAWC to improve food security. It has since been announced earlier this month that World Vision will continue working with the UAWC as AusAID [dismissed](#) the terrorist link. Shurat HaDin has since [threatened legal action](#), through both Australian and American criminal and civil courts, and sternly criticized AusAID and World Vision for their continuing support of the UAWC.

### **In brief**

Former Minister Kevin Rudd provided this [farewell address](#) to AusAID staff on March 2<sup>nd</sup>.

AusAID [announced](#) on Tuesday 28 February the release of the 'Aid Advisory Services Standing offer Request for Tender'. The request includes 17 categories in a range of areas, with applications closing May 1<sup>st</sup>.

[Make Poverty History](#) will be will be [hosting a number of public forums and exhibitions](#) across Australia in March and April to bring further awareness to the aid program and its activities.

On March 8 (International Women's Day) CARE Australia released a [new report](#) on the successes of a program that has empowered women and reduced child stunting in Pakistan. The report is summarised on our blog [here](#).

The [Australian Council for International Development](#) (ACFID) recently released its [submission](#) [pdf] to the 2012-2013 Federal budget containing 26 recommendations for the Government.

The Australian has [criticized](#) AusAID's new 'Australian Civilian Corps', saying it needs to be refocused after attracting too many older men who are either unable, or unwilling, to deploy.

The [Humanitarian Leadership Program](#), funded by AusAID and developed by Save the Children and Deakin University (where it is based), has been [launched](#) to give aid workers the opportunity to develop skills in the management of natural disasters.

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