

Australia's humanitarian shortfall

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As reported [here](#), the 2014 Humanitarian Assistance Report puts a disturbing spotlight on Australia's paltry and diminishing humanitarian effort. We are ranked 19th out of 20 for humanitarian generosity and we are ranked first for the country that cut humanitarian aid the most. That's not surprising given that we cut half a billion dollars from our aid program last year, but it's disappointing. And Jo Spratt shows that both Australia and New Zealand are contributing [less than half](#) of their fair share of humanitarian support to Syria.

The Government's commitment not to increase aid beyond the rate of inflation means that any increase in humanitarian aid would have to come at the expense of other aid programs, but there is nevertheless a strong case for an increase. The recently released [ODE](#) report on humanitarian assistance to the Horn of Africa confirms the life-saving role of this form of aid. And the recently released ANU Poll public opinion survey [underlines](#) the overwhelming public support for the humanitarian function of aid.

The [2011 Independent Review of Aid Effectiveness](#) argued that humanitarian aid should increase from 7 to 11 per cent on the basis that: "this is an area of growing importance, which is globally underfunded and where Australian performs well." That would take us from about \$350 million at present to \$550 million, and put us in the top ten humanitarian donors, which is where we should be.