Happy new year to all!

Aid conference just around the corner

Our 2015 Australasian Aid Conference is now just weeks away. Make sure you register soon—last year we had to close registration a couple of weeks out, and space constraints mean we may well have to do the same again this year.

The full program is now available [pdf]. The conference features the Shadow Foreign Minster Tanya Plibersek and three keynote speakers, 15 international speakers, and some 63 papers in 20 parallel sessions. From why China is setting up the Asia Infrastructure Investment Bank to a new survey of developing country officials on aid, and from why aid has a future to the future beyond aid, the conference has something for everyone. Topics include: aid to the Pacific; aid from Asia; aid policy; aid and health/governance/justice/security/public opinion/the private sector; disasters and climate change; migration; and more.

If you’re still not convinced, read this blog: 10 reasons not to miss this year’s aid conference.

Ten years on from the Boxing Day tsunami

With the 10-year anniversary of the 2004 Boxing Day tsunami just passed, Robin Davies looks back at how the world and Australia responded to the disaster in Aceh. Robin was head of AusAID in Jakarta at the time of the tsunami and, in a two-part post, he reflects on the legacy of the “tropical revolving storm of international aid” that flooded into Aceh and the island of Nias in the neighbouring province of North Sumatra. He paints a moving picture of a competitive and chaotic aid environment in the immediate aftermath of the disaster, and of the best and worst of aid, at the worst of times.

Read his reflections here and here.

Aid cuts and PNG risks

Last year ended with bad news. For aid, there were the biggest cuts to Australian aid ever, analysed by a series of articles collected here. And for PNG there was the oil price collapse, which is likely to greatly
diminish the revenue and foreign exchange PNG was expecting from the LNG project. An end-of-year policy brief by Paul Flanagan analysed the problem and set out possible solutions. Read the blog here, the policy brief here, and the extensive media coverage here.

PNG Update call for papers

Our annual PNG Update in conjunction with UPNG School of Business Administration will be held in Port Moresby on 18-19 June.

The Update, which recommenced at UPNG last year after a gap of some years, is the premier forum for the discussion of research and analysis relating to contemporary economic and public policy issues in PNG.

The conference is multi-disciplinary in nature, and we are currently calling for papers under the general theme of “Development Challenges in the LNG Era.” More details on how to submit an abstract are available here.

Upcoming events

2015 Australasian Aid Conference

12-13 February 2015. Registrations are open. For details, visit the website.

2015 PNG Update

18-19 June, University of Papua New Guinea. Details here.

Blog highlights

What will 2015 hold for the Pacific?

Insight on Germany’s approach to private sector engagement

An overlooked report on corruption in PNG

Sir Richard Feachem on malaria eradication

On the blog

Ten reasons not to miss this year’s aid conference by Stephen Howes, Anthea Mulakala, Joel Negin and Jonathan Pryke

Invisible children, bad pop and making people care by Terence Wood

Aceh’s tsunami remembered, part 1: ‘just get them in’ by Robin Davies

Aceh’s tsunami remembered, part 2: ‘three months are enough’ by Robin Davies

Engaging with the private sector – perspectives from the German development program by Jonas Naguib, Kim Nguyen Van and Jonathan Pryke

On the rate of development progress by Scott Wisor

Should development be kinky? A response to Pritchett and Kenny by Scott Wisor

Pacific predictions: 2015 by Tess Newton Cain
Research, policy and the private sector: Sir Richard Feachem on malaria by Richard Feachem and Gabriele Bammer

Is the Pacific really falling behind in the ease of doing business? By Paul Holden

Best of the blog 2014 by Jonathan Pryke and Stephen Howes

Papua New Guinea’s vanishing LNG export boom by Paul Flanagan

The perilous state of Taskforce Sweep: an interview with Sam Koim by Sam Koim, Grant Walton and Ashlee Betteridge

Never dive alone: Australia’s aid cut in a global context by Robin Davies and Adeline Clarke

Beyond the pale? Australia’s aid cuts in international comparison by Terence Wood

Slashing aid spending also cuts Bishop’s credibility by Benjamin Day

Global health at the Brisbane G20 by Sam Byfield

A G20 for the people? Not yet by Susan Harris Rimmer

Biggest aid cuts ever produce our least generous aid budget ever by Stephen Howes and Jonathan Pryke

A view to Antalya: can the G20’s development agenda be salvaged? By Robin Davies

In brief

Australia set to take a tumble in international aid rankings

No dream job: Steven Ciobo appointed as Julie Bishop’s parliamentary secretary

Christmas development goodies

A forgotten report: Taskforce Sweep’s recommendations for reducing corruption in PNG

This is the fortnightly newsletter of the Development Policy Centre at Crawford School of Public Policy, Australian National University, published every second Friday.