

## Newsletter: Aid conference filling up | PNG drought map | 2016 Pacific & PNG predictions | Afghanistan event | Kiribati land purchase

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### 2016 Australasian Aid Conference: register before you miss out

If you haven't seen it yet, the program for the 2016 Australasian Aid Conference is huge! 75 papers, 25 panels, two plenaries and three keynotes. Check it out [here](#) [pdf].

We've already had really strong numbers of registrations, so if you haven't registered yet, you should do it very soon – like previous years, this conference looks set to sell out. [Register here](#).

If you can't make it to the whole conference, you can also join us just for the conference dinner, to hear from former Parliamentary Secretary on aid Bob McMullan. Tickets for dinner only are \$60. [Register here](#).

There are also a series of plenaries you can register for separately: Kitty van der Heijden's keynote "[Forging a new development future](#)"; [the SDGs in Asia](#); the [launch](#) of the 2015 Australian aid stakeholder survey; and [perspectives](#) on the Paris climate change agreement.

### PNG drought map

Do you want to know who is most affected by PNG's drought, and where they are? Check out research by Mike Bourke, Bryant Allan and Michael Lowe: their [policy brief](#) [pdf], [blog](#), and map. The authors find that food from all sources is reported to be very or extremely short in 27 of PNG's 271 rural local-level government areas. People suffering the greatest food deficit are located in four ecological zones: very high altitude (over 2200 m) in parts of four highland provinces; a number of locations in the central highlands or fringe of the highlands; interior lowland locations in Western Province; and many small and remote islands in Milne Bay Province.

### What might 2016 hold for the Pacific and PNG?

As we kick off a new year of content on the blog, it's a good time to ponder what the year ahead might bring for the region.

Tess Newton Cain has provided her annual predictions for the Pacific [here](#), looking at the upcoming elections in the region (Vanuatu, Samoa and Nauru head to the polls this year) and the big issues of Pacific

diplomacy, such as PACER Plus. (She also discussed her predictions with Radio Australia [here](#) and [here](#)).

Bal Kama points to the range of issues PNG is facing – economic, political, legal and bilateral – but ends with [a positive perspective](#) on the year ahead for PNG, writing that 2016 could be the year many are hoping for: “the year PNG finds solutions to many of its unresolved issues before the elections in 2017”.

### **Afghanistan in 2015: a survey of the Afghan people**

Join us on February 12 (3.30pm-5pm, Barton Theatre) to hear the results of The Asia Foundation’s latest annual survey in Afghanistan. Conducted across the country’s 34 provinces, the surveys provide an unmatched barometer of Afghan public opinion over time. The 2015 survey reveals views on a range of issues including security, the economy, essential services, governance and political participation, corruption, justice, and gender equality.

This event features experts from The Asia Foundation, as well as a commentary from Professor William Maley of ANU. [Register here](#).

### **Kiribati land purchase: a critique**

James Ellsmore and Zachary Rosen [visited](#) the land that Kiribati has purchased in Fiji in response to climate change threats, and provide a critical review. It’s a fascinating read. One problem with the land purchased: it’s already occupied. [And there's other issues too](#).

### **Head of Global Fund to deliver 2016 Harold Mitchell Lecture**

Mark Dybul, Executive Director of the Global Fund, will deliver the 2016 Harold Mitchell Development Policy Annual Lecture.

A leading voice on global health, Mark has been in the top job at the Global Fund since 2012, and previously served as the US Global AIDS Coordinator.

He will be speaking on the topic “Exciting, challenging, frightening times – global health, development and the stuff of innovation”. The lecture will be held at 5:30pm in the Molonglo Theatre, Monday 29 February 2016. [Register here](#).

### **Upcoming events**

#### *2016 Australasian Aid Conference*

10-11 February 2016. Registrations open. [Details here](#).

#### *Forging a new development future*

With Kitty van der Heijden. Wednesday 10 February, 10am-11am. [Register here](#).

#### *What will the SDGs mean for Asia?*

Wednesday 10 February, 1.30pm – 3.20pm. [Register here](#).

#### *Launch of the 2015 Australian aid stakeholder survey*

Thursday 11 February, 9.40am – 10.30am. [Register here](#).

#### *International climate change: perspectives on Paris*

Thursday 11 February, 1.30pm – 2.50pm. [Register here](#).

*Afghanistan in 2015: a survey of the Afghan people*

Friday 12 February, 3.30pm – 5pm, Barton Theatre. [Register here](#).

*2016 Harold Mitchell Development Policy Annual Lecture*

With Mark Dybul. Monday 29 February, 5.30pm, Molonglo Theatre. [Register here](#).

### **Blog highlights**

Feminism and PNG: read [Rascal Rain](#)

PNG's [poor financial management](#)

Contested aid [to Myanmar](#)

### **On the blog**

[The ongoing impact of the El Niño drought and frosts in Papua New Guinea](#) by Michael Bourke, Bryant Allen and Michael Lowe

[PNG in 2016: the year of finding solutions?](#) By Bal Kama

[Aid in contested areas — program approach and adaptation](#) by Simon Richards

[Poor financial management in PNG: can it be turned around?](#) By David Fellows and John Leonardo

[Kiribati's land purchase in Fiji: does it make sense?](#) By James Ellsmoor and Zachary Rosen

[Aid in contested areas — setting the scene](#) by Simon Richards

[Interested in feminism and development in Papua New Guinea? Be prepared for a bumpy ride, but read on](#) by Cleo Fleming

[Pacific predictions — 2016](#) by Tess Newton Cain

[From economic boom to crisis management in PNG](#) by Paul Flanagan

### **In brief**

[Fortnightly links: smart thinking about aid, global inequality, inequality and unhappiness, and more](#)

*This is the fortnightly newsletter of the [Development Policy Centre](#) at Crawford School of Public Policy, The Australian National University, published every second Friday.*