



Australian Government

AusAID

## AusAID / NGO Committee for Development Cooperation

A Joint Committee of the Australian Agency for International Development and Australian Non Government Organisations

### Notes from the CDC

### Highlights of the 105<sup>th</sup> CDC meeting held on 25 March 2004.

#### Attendance:

##### NGO Representatives

Ms Wendy Rose  
Mr John Deane  
Ms Margaret Winn  
Mr Sheldon Rankin  
Mr David Syme

##### AusAID Representatives

Mr Peter Ellis  
Ms Judith Robinson  
Mr Keith Joyce  
Mr Paul Lehmann

##### CPS Representatives

Ms Cilla Ballard  
Ms Melinda Johnston  
Ms Rosemary Cassidy  
Ms Dianne Matters (Secretary)

##### Observers

Ms Rhonda Chapman,  
ACFID  
Trish Mc Ewan, ACFID

##### Apologies

Mr Charles Tapp  
Ms Jo Thomson

##### Chair

Mr Dereck Rooker-Smith,  
ADG/APB

The Director General AusAID, Mr Bruce Davis, participated during the discussion of AusAID and NGO Priorities/Issues.

Mr Mike Crooke, member of the Review Team for the Review of Accreditation Systems and Processes, attended the meeting for the discussion of the review and recommendations.

#### Welcome and Introductory Remarks

Mr Dereck Rooker-Smith ADG/APB and Chair welcomed members to the meeting and

- Introduced new AusAID representatives to CDC: Mr Keith Joyce, Mr Paul Lehmann;
- Discussed NGO concerns re CPS' move into Australian Partners Branch (APB) and his view of the benefits and logic of having all partnerships administered within the same branch; and
- Acknowledged NGO communication difficulties in dealing with recent staff turnovers.

#### POLICY AND STRATEGIC ISSUES

##### AusAID Priorities and NGO Priorities/Issues

AusAID Director General Mr Bruce Davis apologised for the absence of Mr Charles Tapp and gave a brief overview of AusAID policy and program challenges in 2004.

NGO priorities were addressed within the discussion with the DG, in particular, Cooperation Agreements; the impact/implications of the Security agenda and the Whole of Government strategy on AusAID's Strategic Plan; NGO involvement in the DAC review; AusAID's commitment to long-term support in the Solomon Islands.

Whole of Government agenda – Australian Government efforts in neighbouring states with unstable governments is to improve law and order to enable essential economic development to take place.

The WOG approach and central level engagement is embedded in AusAID's Strategic Plan. AusAID has recognised for many years the need for a more comprehensive effort to address 'failure of aid' in the Pacific and the current joint interventions provide this broader approach.

PNG – The Australian Government approach in PNG is working towards the reform agenda. Issues of stability and good governance rather than security are the driving agenda. AusAID has a central role in the WOG agenda.

In-line positions in PNG are concerned with capacity building and establishing long-term institutional links. Development of links with civil society is also being discussed.

Executive and senior staffing changes within AusAID are to enhance implementation of the Strategic Plan within the changed environment.

Ms Ellen Shipley has been appointed the new Director of CPS.

Phasing out aid to Thailand - The Australian Government has been reducing aid funding to Thailand over the past few years in line with Thailand's own strategic objective to shift from being an aid recipient to an aid donor in the region. Accordingly, funding through the ANCP for Thailand is also to be phased out. China and India also will be phased out in the future, for similar reasons. Funding for NGO activities with Burmese refugees on Thai- Burma border will not be affected.

AusAID will advise NGOs of this after CDC and inform them that Government funding for new activities in Thailand will no longer be available. Agencies with long-term commitments will be required to phase out ANCP support over the next two years.

Cooperation Agreements - The Director General confirmed AusAID's commitment to cooperation agreements, but in recognition of a number of issues raised by NGOs, saw value in slowing down the process to reflect on progress to date. As part of this process, the original Cooperation Agreement Working Group will meet the day prior to the ACFID Ex Com meeting in June. The development of new CA rounds will be delayed until this process is completed.

NGOs, which were unsuccessful in gaining cooperation agreements for particular countries, continue to have opportunities for broader policy dialogue with AusAID in regard to those countries.

NGO involvement in the DAC review – AusAID will facilitate discussion between NGOs and the DAC team and arrange a meeting between ACFID and the review team in Australia. AusAID will send out relevant information to NGOs regarding the DAC review.

### **Review of Accreditation Systems and Processes**

CDC broadly supported many of the report's recommendations, but due to the number of issues to be resolved/clarified, the Accreditation Review Working Group will reconvene to develop a draft proposal for implementation of recommendations for CDC consideration.

### **CDC Review**

It was agreed that the role of CDC would be determined subject to further consultation and subsequent to the final outcomes of the Review of Accreditation Systems and Processes.

### **Interim Arsenic Guidelines**

The CDC was presented with AusAID's new *Interim Arsenic Guidelines*, which will comprise part of a larger AusAID Water Strategy. Key points arising were:

- These guidelines are retrospective and therefore affect current and new projects;
- Additional funds for arsenic activities were announced, for full accredited NGOs, which must be spent by June 30 2004. Reporting to be submitted with ADPlan reports in October; and
- CPS will advise Base agencies that the Guidelines are in place before the next round in May and will place the Guidelines on the NGOPI.

### **Counter-terrorism Provisions**

Most NGO and ACFID concerns were addressed in the *Guidelines for Strengthening Counter-terrorism Measures in the Australian Aid Program*. The issue of providing/accessing updates was also discussed and is to be investigated further.

In consideration of the new Guidelines:

- All NGOs will be provided with the Guidelines;
- AusAID will amend all Umbrella contracts and forward to NGOs for signature;
- ANCP Guidelines will be amended to incorporate the changes; and
- Indicators in Accreditation Criterion B3 will be strengthened to include risk management strategies related to terrorism and child sex tourism.

### **Volunteer Policy and Tender Update**

The draft policy and tender document are to be presented to a peer review panel Friday 26 March 2004. CPS noted that, increasingly, other sections in AusAID are considering options to incorporate volunteers in their programs.

### **ACCREDITATION REVIEW REPORTS**

ACF was reaccredited at Base level.

CBMI was reaccredited at Full level.

AngliCORD was accredited at Full level (from Base)

### **Agencies delaying Accreditation Reviews**

CDC agreed to the recommendation proposed in the Agenda Papers:

“Agencies immediately notify AusAID in response to AusAID’s initial letter advising of the timing of the review (sent six months before the profile due) of any major current or proposed issues that may impact on their ability to meet the proposed timing. Any subsequent delay will only be considered if the issue is unanticipated and of enough significance to impact on the review”.

### **ACFID MIFs**

Responding to a request from ACFID, an AusAID representative will, if required, attend the MIFs 10 and 12 May to present information on the arsenic guidelines.

**Next Meetings**

**CDC 106      Thursday 10 June 2004**  
**CDC 107      Thursday 7 October 2004**