



MEDIA RELEASE

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AID SALARY REVIEW WELCOMED

The Australian Council for International Development (ACFID), the peak council for not for profit aid and development organisations, has today welcomed the announcement that the Federal Government will review the pay and conditions of Australian employees engaged as overseas aid advisors.

“The Australian taxpayer and people in developing countries rightly question excessive salaries and whether they contribute to poverty alleviation,” said Marc Purcell, Executive Director of ACFID.

“Nearly 30 per cent of the Australian aid program is managed by government departments and agencies other than AusAID. The need for greater transparency and accountability for these departments is vital if Australian aid is to be more effective - and this includes salaries and conditions,” he said.

“The Australian public service has a lot of experience which can be used to benefit governments and people in developing countries. However, it is important that a whole of government approach is taken towards aid effectiveness and a standard approach to payments for government staff is adopted, rather than the ad hoc system we currently have.

“For a long time, ACFID has been concerned that Australian advisors have been overused when citizens of developing countries could have stepped into capacity building roles. We welcomed the Government’s recent announcement that it would reduce the use of advisors.

“Fly-in fly-out experts aren’t always the best option, either for creating lasting change or for being value for money. The evidence shows that when citizens of developing countries take the lead, outcomes are more likely to last. Australian volunteer programs are another cost effective way for professional people to share their skills,” he said.

“If we really want to reach the poor and create lasting change, then options such as working with community organisations need to be taken up more often in the Australian aid program.”

“ACFID has argued in our submission to the current Independent Review of Aid Effectiveness that working through community-based organisations, such as NGOs and church groups, is an extremely effective and cost-efficient way of delivering assistance to those who need it most.

“Community organisations have strong links to groups and individuals. They are part of the community and know how to involve citizens in decision-making processes. Australian NGOs also have experience and a long history in practising capacity building activities overseas,” he concluded.

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To view a copy of ACFID’s submission to the Independent Review of Aid Effectiveness, go to:

www.acfid.asn.au/what-we-do/independent-aid-review/