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| **161st COMMITTEEE FOR DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION MEETING** **17 March 2021 – 9:30am- 1:30pm****DFAT, Atlee Hunt Room, RG Casey Building, Barton** |

**Participants**

* Ms Rachael Moore (Chair)
* Ms Selvi Vikan (DFAT)
* Mr Tim Church (DFAT)
* Ms Christina Munzer (DFAT)
* Mr John Morley (Plan International Australia)
* Ms Ellen Shipley (UnitingWorld)
* Mr Andrew Hartwich (The Fred Hollows Foundation)
* Ms Jessica Waite (International Women’s Development Agency)

**CDC Secretariat and Observers**

* Ms Emily Moreton (ACFID)
* Ms Jocelyn Condon (ACFID)
* Ms Rebecca Lysaght (DFAT)
* Ms Tina Angel (DFAT)

**Agenda**

1. **Welcome, Introduction, Apologies and conflict check- Chair**
* **Welcome to Country**
	+ **The Chair stated: I would like to pay my respect and acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which this meeting takes place, and also pay respect to Elders both past and present. I extend this respect to any Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people here today.**
* **Welcome**
	+ **The Chair welcomed everyone to 161st CDC meeting.**
	+ **Acknowledged the longer than normal time between meetings and that there had been a number of changes to the CDC membership.**
	+ **Noted this was the Chair’s first meeting, as well as Ms Vikan and Ms Munzer.**
	+ **Thanked former members of the CDC and CDC Secretariat who have left since the last meeting, Mr Jon Burrough, Mr Simon Cann-Evans, Ms Tanya Pridannikoff, Ms Rachelle Woods for their valuable contributions to the CDC and CDC Secretariat.**
	+ **Welcomed new and returned members of the CDC Secretariat, Ms Moreton (ACFID), Ms Lysaght and Ms Angel.**
* **Note the observers, and Secretariat:**
	+ **Ms Moreton (ACFID)**
	+ **Ms Condon (ACFID)**
	+ **Ms Lysaght (DFAT)**
	+ **Ms Angel (DFAT)**
* **Conflict Check**
* **The Chair asked all meeting participants to declare any conflicts of interest.**
	+ **Noted by CDC**
* **The Chair invited Mr Morely and Mr Hartwich to step out of the meeting where necessary.**
1. **Endorsement of the 160th CDC Minutes-Chair (5 Minutes)**
* **The minutes of 160th CDC have been circulated.**
	+ **The Chair moved that the CDC accept the 160th Minutes.**
	+ **The 160th Minutes were accepted by the CDC, seconded by Ms Shipley.**

**Update on Action Items - Chair**

* + The Action Log has been circulated ahead of this meeting. CDC members accepted the Action Log as correct with no amendments needed. No further action required.
1. **Update from DFAT-Ms Selvi Vikan**

**ANCP Programming Update**

* Ms Vikan expressed her thanks to ANCP NGOs for working with DFAT during 2020 and to support implementation of *Partnerships for Recovery*.
	+ When COVID-19 hit in March 2020, the ANCP was able to quickly adapt with NGOs adjusting 60% of all projects, working directly with local actors across the Indo-Pacific region to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and implement programs to respond to the social and economic impact of the pandemic.

**ANCP Evaluation**

* Ms Vikan advised the CDC that DFAT is currently drafting terms of reference for an independent evaluation of the Program, in line with DFAT’s Development Evaluation Policy.
	+ The last review conducted by the former Office of Development Effectiveness (ODE) was published in August 2015.
	+ DFAT expects to consult with ANCP NGOs/the sector through ACFID’s Development Practices Committee and with the CDC to finalise the TORs.
	+ Anticipate the TORs will be ready in the second half of the year for a completed evaluation by the third quarter of 2022.
* Mr Morely asked whether the ANCP review will include accreditation too?
	+ Ms Vikan responded – it was unlikely.
	+ Mr Morely noted he was supportive of that approach.

**ANCP Spot Checks**

* Ms Vikan advised the NGO Programs and Partnerships Section (NPQ) are in the process of finalising the reports of the first two ANCP spot checks. These were delayed due to Covid.
* **ACTION**: a team member from NPQ to provide a Spot Check update at the next CDC

**DFAT Safeguarding policy review**

* Ms Vikan advised the CDC that the safeguard policy review team (Strategic Development Group) have conducted consultations with a wide range of stakeholders over the last couple of months.
	+ DFAT is grateful to NGO partners that have contributed to the consultation process.
	+ The review team will commence writing the draft final report in the coming week.
	+ DFAT expects to receive the draft final report in March 2021 with a final report to be delivered following a brief comment period.
	+ DFAT’s Aid Risk Management and Fraud Control Branch will commence the process of updating the safeguard policies following presentation of the final report and formulation of management response.
* Ms Shipley asked whether there will be additional consultation with the NGO community prior to final report being released?
* **ACTION**: Ms Lysaght to follow up with the Safeguards Policy Review team to confirm the timing sequence for the policy review and consultation.

**Accreditation Remote Organisation Review (OR) Process -Ms Rebecca Lysaght**

* + Ms Lysaght acknowledged the large number of OR reports sent to members. Noted that the delay in convening a CDC was due to COVID-19 & budget delays.
	+ Ms Lysaght provided an update on the remote OR process.
		- NGOs were contacted ahead of their accreditation reviews and all agreed to the remote process
		- Application and Desk Assessment phases of accreditation remained unchanged
		- Agencies were asked to prepare and upload to Smarty Grants documentation 10 days prior to the OR commencing.
		- The number of days for the OR were increased to 5 half days as opposed to 3 full days in person. Different platforms were used (zoom, MS teams).
	+ Ms Lysaght advised that the initial assessment of the remote OR process is that it had gone smoothly.
		- DFAT still prefers face to face ORs but noted there were added benefits of the remote OR, for example assessment teams could speak to country program officers.
		- Documentation being provided to review teams in advanced allowed for a more structured discussion.
	+ Mr Morely and Mr Hartwich – thought it was great that in-country staff could join the OR remotely and remote ORs provided a more structured preparation which enabled the organisation to plan ahead.
	+ The Chair noted for the record some of the benefits to remote ORs:
		- Greater in-country engagement
		- documents provided to assessors 10 days prior to OR
		- enabled more key people to be engaged with the review
		- half days instead of full days.
1. **Code of Conduct/Accreditation Mapping Tool – ACFID Ms Jocelyn Condon**
* Ms Condon requested the CDC note that the mapping process had been completed.
	+ ACFID engaged a development consultant (Ms Lisa Partridge) to undertake the mapping exercise.
	+ The brief was to compare the requirements for the two processes and develop an in-depth tool that NGOs can use to map out where there are gaps, and if the codes exceed requirements or overlap.
	+ ACFID had received a lot of feedback from members on the mapping tool.
* Going forward, Ms Condon asked the CDC to endorse the mapping tool. It could be shared online on the ACFID website & DFAT’s website.
	+ ACFID secretariat would manage and review annually and would refer NGOs to mapping tool as public documents.
	+ ACFID had also mapped their Code of Conduct against ACNCs governance standards. It is likely there is some overlap, however it does not remit disclaimer.
* The Chair sought clarification – was ACFID seeking endorsement at the 161st CDC?
	+ Ms Condon stated the CDC’s endorsement would be ideal.
	+ The Chair stated they would like more time to review the tool.
* The Chair proposed to hold an out of session CDC to discuss the purpose of the tool and its usability.
	+ CDC will need to come to view whether it supports the mapping tool for ongoing use.
	+ May be used to inform future terms of reference for future accreditation reviews.
* CDC members broadly discussed the purpose and implementation of the mapping tool
	+ Streamline processes
	+ Alignment against safeguard risks
	+ Using the mapping tool to inform future ANCP accreditation reviews (next due in 2022)
	+ Noted the tool may assist NGOs to prepare for submitting an ANCP accreditation application.
	+ The Chair passed on thanks to ACFID and noted it was appeared to be a useful tool.
* **ACTION: -** ACFID to host an out of session CDC meeting
	+ ACFID to draft an agenda and circulate to the CDC
	+ Purpose of meeting is to seek DFAT & CDC endorsement on accuracy & usability.
	+ Extend invitation to Ms Partridge to present on mapping tool.
1. **Organisation Review Reports**

CDC broadly discussed policy alignment and risk.

* Mr Church – stated there were several subject to’s and noted “subject to’s” are usually recommended in exceptional circumstances.
* The Chair noted:
	+ the OR process is important when assessing risk and the implications of not providing funding to NGOs.
	+ There is significant Government interest to support beneficiaries.
	+ Reviewers use subject to’s as mitigations for those risks.
* Mr Morely stated a number of subject to’s recommended for organisations that haven’t yet fully implemented the PSEAH policy.
* Ms Shipley – raised concerns about DFAT’s Counter Terrorism (CT) policy as a difficult policy for organisations to implement.
	+ It is easier for larger agencies to engage consultants and smaller NGOs face a larger burden to comply.
	+ There is a need for clear guidance about how far checking goes, particularly for downstream partners.
	+ Stated there was room for DFAT to improve on CT guidance.
* The Chair agreed and noted:
	+ Clear guidelines are important and DFAT is not seeking to pass on risk.
	+ DFAT has a set of expectations that need to be clearly understood.
	+ Localisation – work with partners by improving guidance and reiterated the importance of the Partnership model and the need for DFAT and its Partners to work side-by-side.
	+ Links to local communities lead to benefits.
	+ DFAT is aware of “unmanaged risk” space.
* Ms Lysaght – advised the CDC that a webinar on accreditation and CT requirements is planned.
* **ACTION**: DFAT to host a CT webinar for ANCP NGOs as soon as possible.
1. **Other issues for NGO Representatives to Table – Chair (10 Minutes)**
* The Chair asked CDC members if there are any other issues/business to table.
	+ Mr Morely stated he had received feedback from an NGO selected for an ANCP Spot Check
		- Concerned the agency had to go through a second round of work following feedback and DFAT wanting additional comments.
	+ Ms Shipley suggested there be a limit on DFAT seeking additional comments.
		- Auditors undertaking the Spot Checks did not fully understand the ANCP accreditation process.
	+ Ms Vikan reminded CDC members that it was a pilot program and NPQ will reflect on the activity outcomes.
* Ms Shipley passed on a vote of thanks from the CDC and ANCP NGOs to the ANCP Team, including departing team member Majdie Hordern, for their flexibility, responsiveness and professionalism during 2020’s COVID crisis.
* Ms Condon advised CDC members that there is an ACFID Safeguarding Community of Practice Webex on 20 April 2021.
	+ Purpose is to engage with NGOs ACFID’s safeguarding policy.
* The Chair reiterated that DFAT will:
	+ Circulate an agenda for the future Counter Terrorism information session as soon as possible.
	+ Work with ACFID on the Code of Conduct mapping tool with the aim of obtaining endorsement from the CDC.
1. **Next CDC Dates and Meeting close-Chair (5 minutes)**
	* The Chair advised CDC members that the next CDC will need to be held in early to mid-June to review the new accreditation applications.
		+ DFAT proposed to come back to the CDC at a later date with possible times.

**1 :30pm Meeting Close.**