



**161st COMMITTEE 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.
- 2. Endorsement of the 160<sup>th</sup> CDC Minutes-Chair (5 Minutes)**
- The minutes of 160<sup>th</sup> CDC have been circulated.
    - The Chair moved that the CDC accept the 160<sup>th</sup> Minutes.
    - The 160<sup>th</sup> 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.

### **3. 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.

#### 4. 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 161<sup>st</sup> 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.



## 5. 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.



## 6. 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.

## 7. 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.**