



DFAT / NGO COMMITTEE FOR DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

A Joint Committee of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Australian Non-Government Organisations

163rd COMMITTEE FOR DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION MEETING

17 November 2021 – 9:30am – 11:30am

Meeting held online via Webex

Participants

- Ms Caitlin Wilson (Chair, DFAT)
- Ms Selvi Vikan (DFAT)
- Mr Tim Church (DFAT)
- Ms Christina Munzer (DFAT)
- Mr John Morley (Plan International Australia)
- Mr Andrew Hartwich (The Fred Hollows Foundation)
- Ms Jessica Waite (International Women’s Development Agency, left meeting at 10:50am following discussion on OR report)
- Ms Gina De Pretto (DFAT, in part for agenda item 4)

CDC Secretariat and Observers

- Ms Emily Moreton (ACFID)
- Dr Jane Alver (ACFID)
- Ms Marilyn Yue (DFAT)
- Ms Tina Angel (DFAT)

Agenda

1. Welcome, Introduction, Apologies and conflict check- Chair

Welcome to Country

- The Chair opened the meeting with the Welcome to Country as follows “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 163rd CDC meeting.
 - Noted the changes to the CDC Secretariat since the previous meeting. The Chair acknowledged and thanked Rebecca Lysaght, who has taken up a new role as ANCP Operations Manager, for her long-standing contribution to the CDC. The Chair welcomed Marilyn Yue, the new Accreditation Manager, to her first CDC meeting since beginning in August 2021.
 - Noted that John Morley and Ellen Shipley have been reappointed to the CDC by the ACFID Board and will serve another two-year term finishing in July 2023.



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Note the observers, and Secretariat:

- Ms Moreton (ACFID), minute taker.
- Dr Alver (ACFID)
- Ms Yue (DFAT)
- Ms Angel (DFAT)

Conflict Check

- The Chair asked all meeting participants to declare any conflicts of interest. No conflicts of interest were declared.

2. Endorsement of the 162nd CDC Minutes - Chair

The minutes of 162nd CDC have been circulated.

- Mr Morley and Ms Alver identified that the spelling of their names needed correcting.
- The Chair moved that the CDC accept the 162nd Minutes.
 - The 162nd Minutes were accepted by the CDC.
- Out of session minutes from 21 July 2021.
 - Ms Shipley endorsed, seconded by Mr Morley.

3. Update on Action Items

- The Chair noted the issues raised via email by Ms Shipley on behalf of the CDC NGO representatives prior to the meeting with regards to the action log.
- Ms Shipley acknowledged that there have been significant challenges over the past two years and commended DFAT staff on work done to communicate with NGOs during COVID-19 disruptions. Ms Shipley noted that there are many issues which have been on the action log for a long period of time and it would be beneficial to set deadlines for addressing these.
- Mr Morley suggested that some items could be scheduled for review annually, for example the conflict of interest paper, rather than being kept in the action log on an on-going basis.
- Ms Vikan outlined the approach taken by the ANCP team to prioritise one or two areas each year, based on the staff and resources available. Ms Vikan suggested that the format of the action log and how actions are prioritised over the short, medium and long term could be discussed at the CDC meeting in March 2022. The purpose of this discussion would be to establish clear timeframes for actions already in the log, identify priorities and ensure the action log is practical and realistic.
- CDC members offered to assist with the review of the action log, noting that it would be helpful to have a transparent process around how priorities are determined from the action items.



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Action: The CDC to review and prioritise items in the Action Log at the CDC meeting in March 2022.

Action: DFAT to circulate a plan for how the Committee will be consulted on the review and prioritisation of the action log prior to the meeting in March 2022.

4. Update from DFAT

ANCP Evaluation – Ms De Pretto

- Ms De Pretto noted that:
 - The evaluation is being managed by a team of four staff from Tetra Tech who are currently developing the evaluation plan and holding inception meetings with DFAT staff.
 - Evaluation aims to be formative and to assess the efficiency and implementation of the ANCP modality in the context of a changing operating environment for international development, and the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - Evaluation will also focus on the impact and effectiveness of the ANCP modality to assist ANGOs and local partners to contribute to development outcomes.
 - ACFID's Development Practice Committee (DPC) will act as a reference group to facilitate NGO consultation. Tetra Tech will attend the DPC meeting on 9 December.
 - Evaluation planned for November 2021 – July 2022.
 - Deliverables: Evaluation plan and key issues paper (end January); aide memoire summary of key findings from initial data collection (end May 2022); Key findings workshop with internal and external stakeholders to review first draft of report (end June 2022); Final evaluation report (end July 2022).
 - ANCP NGOs will have the opportunity to provide feedback on milestones through the DPC.
 - The CDC will receive updates on the progress of the evaluation.

- Mr Morley asked if the scope of the evaluation includes any comparison with what other donors are doing globally. Ms De Pretto confirmed there was space to consider the approaches of other donors, as well as other NGO programs within DFAT, including AHP and Water for Women. Identifying lessons from other models is included in the evaluation scope.

ANCP Annual reflections and performance reporting – Ms De Pretto

- Ms De Pretto advised that all ANCP agencies completed their performance reporting in September and feedback has since been provided to agencies.
- This year the ANCP Annual reflections will occur over three half days from 30 November – 2 December. DFAT will provide updates on policy and process, and NGOs will be given the opportunity to share their reflections and lessons learnt each day. The final agenda will be sent to all NGOs by 19 November.
- Ms Shipley asked if there was space in the Annual Reflections agenda to discuss:
 - The accreditation process and consistency in approach and feedback between assessors



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- The best contact points for NGOs who wish to discuss or provide feedback on the terms and conditions of different grants. For example, the responsible branch, Post or NPQ.
- Ms Vikan noted that accreditation will be considered broadly as part of the ANCP evaluation, however a specific review of accreditation process is scheduled for the second half of 2022. This will be a stand-alone process and will consider issues specific to accreditation including the accreditation process, alignment of assessors, accreditation criteria and comparison of due diligence with other donors.
- CDC members agreed that NGOs should be notified at the Annual Reflections that there will be an accreditation review in 2022. This will help clarify and manage expectations about how accreditation issues will be considered in the current ANCP evaluation.

Action: NGOs to be notified at the Annual Reflection days that a stand-alone accreditation review is planned for late 2022.

ANCP Spot Checks – Ms Vikan

- DFAT will complete four spot checks in 2021-22.
 - The spot checks do not aim to replicate accreditation but will look closely at specific issues around NGO financial acquittals, compliance with the grant agreement and reviewing downstream partners' policies, particularly around PSEAH and fraud.
 - The spot check process is still in its pilot phase and will be reviewed after these four to determine whether there is value continuing beyond the pilot.

Counter terrorism webinar – Ms Vikan

- The counter-terrorism webinar is scheduled for 15 December 2021.
 - A survey has been sent to ANCP agencies and the results will be used to inform the agenda.
 - Presenters at the webinar will include the DFAT Aid Risk Section, accreditation financial assessor and Oliver May, a consultant from Deloitte with experience in the not-for-profit sector.

Assessors Workshop – Ms Vikan

- The assessors' workshop is scheduled for 7 December 2021. The workshop will be held virtually and will include discussions on the remote OR process, the accreditation policy review and reflections on the subject-to process to date.
- Ms Vikan invited participation from a CDC representative, including a possible presentation reflecting on the CDC's observations on ORs and subject-to reports.

Action: Ms Yue to contact CDC members to seek a representative to present at the assessors' workshop on 7 December 2021.

DFAT Safeguards policy review – Ms Vikan

- The final report from the Safeguards policy review was submitted to DFAT on 15 June 2021.



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- The review identified that the policies are broadly in-line with international good practice, but that there is some scope for simplifying and streamlining to reduce duplication.
- DFAT is considering the report and will engage with external stakeholders early next year. Ms Vikan confirmed DFAT will keep ACFID informed about timing for this engagement.

Action: DFAT to notify ACFID about the timing of engagement in early 2022 on the DFAT Safeguards Policy review.

- Mr Hartwich asked if there was an opportunity for accreditation assessors to share their observations on common issues arising through ORs at the Annual Reflection days.
- Ms Vikan suggested that if this could not be incorporated into the agenda then another option could be to hold a webinar with NGOs following the Assessors Workshop in December.
- Mr Morley confirmed that he would cover some of the common issues in his presentation from the CDC at the Annual Reflection.
- Ms Shipley and Mr Morley also suggested that it would be beneficial for DFAT to provide a short update on the Safeguards policy review at the Annual Reflection days. Having visibility of the potential timing of policy and guidance updates will greatly assist NGOs with their planning.

5. Organisation Review Reports

6. Other issues for NGO Representatives to table – Chair

- The Chair asked CDC members if there are any other issues/business to table.
- Ms Shipley and Mr Morley raised a query about how NGOs can provide feedback on the impact of variations in grant management across DFAT, including different terms and conditions. Is there a centralized point through which feedback from NGOs can be provided?
- Ms Yue advised that the Aid Contracts area would welcome any feedback on terms and conditions and admin costs from the NGO sector through ACFID. Questions about individual grant programs should be addressed to the relevant Branch or Post, however DFAT is happy to receive feedback more generally on the overall approach.
- Mr Morley stated that ACFID and the NGO reps will consider developing a position paper in the future which outlines some of the issues further.

7. Next CDC Dates and Meeting close - Chair

- The Chair advised CDC members that the next CDC is planned for mid-February 2022. Given the high number of ORs expected, CDC members agreed that holding two shorter meetings rather than one longer one would be preferable.
- It is expected that some in-person ORs will recommence in the next round beginning in February 2022.

Action: DFAT to contact CDC members before the end of 2021 with proposed dates for the next two CDC meetings in February/March.



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11:30am Meeting Close.