

# AusAID Management Response

## MID-TERM REVIEW OF AUSAID NGO COOPERATION PROGRAM (ANCP) PARTNERSHIPS

In 2009, as part of substantial reforms to the AusAID NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP), AusAID established a program of partnership agreements with key Australian international development NGOs. The Mid-Term Review of ANCP Partnerships provided an opportunity to assess the value and effectiveness of the partnership arrangements, with the intention of informing the second stage of partnerships.

The Review concluded that the Partnership program has considerable potential, but there are areas that need to be improved for this potential to be realised, including better communication and sharing of outcomes and learning, more systematic and dedicated resourcing and better understanding of the purpose, scope and responsibilities of the partnership. The Review also noted that the partnership program needs to include consideration of the remaining ANCP NGOs and the Civil Society Engagement Framework, particularly how the actions arising from the Framework interact with the Partnership arrangement.

AusAID welcomes the findings of the Mid-Term Review and agrees to all of the recommendations. AusAID also agrees with the Review's conclusion on the value and potential of the Partnerships and intends to continue to pursue this model.

In December 2012, AusAID signed a new MOU with all eight existing partners (World Vision Australia, Oxfam Australia, Plan International Australia, Caritas Australia, ChildFund Australia, CARE Australia, CBM Australia and TEAR Australia). The new MOU reflects the findings and recommendations of the Review, particularly the emphasis on drawing on the relative strengths of each NGO and AusAID and using the Partnership arrangements to maximise efficiency and effectiveness in the delivery of aid. This is a clear demonstration of Australia's very practical commitment to working with civil society to improve the aid program.

## RECOMMENDATIONS AND RESPONSE

RECOMMENDATION	AUSAID RESPONSE
1. The partner NGOs formally explore their collective strengths and how to maximise and undertake a partnership approach between themselves, as well as with AusAID, for the purpose of maximising impact and outcomes under the program.	<b>Agreed.</b> The new Partner MOU has been signed as a single agreement between AusAID and all of the existing ANCP Partner NGOs.
2. The focus for the remaining twelve months is on sharing of learning, through activities or reports which promote the effective development practice and learning on the Partner NGOs.	<b>Agreed.</b> The focus on learning and sharing experiences is emphasised in the new agreement. AusAID will continue to work with ANCP Partner NGOs to maximise effective development practice and shared learning for the whole Sector.

<p>3. AusAID and NGOs consider undertaking impact assessment of the program in the coming year, with attention to countries where considerable ANCP resources have been focused.</p>	<p><b>Agreed.</b> AusAID's Office of Development Effectiveness plans to include ANCP as part of their rolling evaluation work plan for 2013-14 and annual cycle. The Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Framework (MELF) roll out will be completed in 2013.</p>
<p>4. Any partnership program beyond 2013 should focus in particular on the objectives which are important to AusAID and which reflect the strengths and expertise of the partner NGOs. These should include poverty reduction, engagement and capacity building with civil society and contribution to learning for AusAID policies and programs.</p>	<p><b>Agreed.</b> Through the implementation of the new MOU, Partner NGOs will focus on agreed objectives, drawing on the strengths of the individual NGO and on AusAID's strategic priorities. The new ANCP Partnership MOU also reflects the structure of the Civil Society Framework and its associated actions.</p>
<p>5. AusAID should appropriately resource the program to meet these objectives. It is strongly recommended that this include a secretariat or support facility for the program.</p>	<p><b>Agreed.</b> In consultation with Partner NGOs AusAID will explore options for a Resource Facility to support research and evaluation, innovation, shared learning, training and outreach.</p>
<p>6. AusAID utilise the partner NGOs to assist with relevant areas and actions under the Civil Society Engagement Framework.</p>	<p><b>Agreed.</b> The new ANCP Partnership MOU encourages all Partners to collaborate with each other on areas of priority to the Australian Government, and increase their engagement in policy and programming discussions, such as actions under the Civil Society Engagement Framework.</p>