



Centre for Political
& Diplomatic Studies

Australia's New International Development Policy

Submission by the Centre for Political and Diplomatic Studies

Introduction

1. The description of Australia as 'a nation affected by the tyranny of distance' is now more suited to a previous century. The national strengths of Australia make a highly visible contribution to regional and global partnership for a sustainable, peaceful future in an inter-connected world. Effective diplomacy, skilled negotiation and influencing, are central to achieving shared outcomes.
2. The Centre for Political and Diplomatic Studies (CPDS) welcomes Australia's new International Development Policy and, through this submission, the opportunity to participate in Australia's vision for the future.
3. In this document we address in particular the following Terms of Reference:
 - How can Australia best utilise its national strengths to enhance the impact of our development program and address multidimensional vulnerabilities?
 - How should the performance and delivery systems be designed to promote transparency and accountability, as well as effectiveness and learning in Australia's development assistance?

How can Australia best utilise its national strengths to enhance the impact of our development program and address multidimensional vulnerabilities?

4. Australia is a respected middle power, with stable institutions of government and a global network of alliances and partnerships. It has established a well-earned reputation for the quality of its diplomacy and leadership in multilateral institutions. Following the 2013 merger of DFAT and AusAid, Australia can demonstrate to development partners coherence of integrated policy across foreign affairs, trade and development assistance.

5. The experience and expertise of the state and territory governments, with their strong links to local business and civil society organisations, offer a working model for developing countries, especially those with federal or devolved governments, of the complementary roles of national and sub-national actors for mutual benefit. (The DFAT offices in state and territory capitals illustrate the value of *inreach* as well as outreach in maximising Australia's influence in international affairs.)
6. Cities and regional governments everywhere grow in importance, most with quasi-independent roles in foreign investment, trade and tourism. They vary markedly, however, in professional competence. DFAT could take a leading role in mobilising Australia's sub-national bodies to assist their counterparts in development partner countries, while at the same time generating potential further opportunities for trade and investment at home.
7. In the field of CPDS's particular strengths, we would welcome opportunities of contributing to Australian programs of capacity-building for development in:
 - international and inter-cultural relations;
 - diplomatic tradecraft (including the rapidly-emerging digital diplomacy);
 - 'adjective' diplomacies (for example, health, climate, cyber and human rights);
 - parliamentary practice (for both elected members and officials);
 - political work, policy planning and implementation;
 - strategic foresight;
 - bilateral and multilateral negotiation (including preparation for working in specific institutions such as the United Nations and Conferences of Parties - COP);
 - influencing, networking-building and -management;
 - public diplomacy;
 - media, social media and language skills; and
 - institution- and country-specific protocol and etiquette.

8. All these can be offered to national governments, regional governments and organisations, private sector and non-government entities, and civil society organisations, both in Australia (for those engaged in some way with partners for development) and in development partner countries.

How should the performance and delivery systems be designed to promote transparency and accountability, as well as effectiveness and learning in Australia's development assistance?

9. CPDS proposes that the Australian government establish a clearing house or register of public sector, private sector and independent organisations which have the capacity to deliver capacity-building in one or more of the areas listed above.
10. The purpose of the clearing house or register would be to showcase Australia's expertise in these fields, and to provide readily accessible information on a comprehensive range of potential service providers.
11. The clearing house could be an online and/or Cloud-based resource which could be made publicly available to the Australian public, regional governments and other stakeholders. It would contribute to enhanced transparency and accountability, especially with respect to smaller-scale procurements, and potentially enable the direct engagement of appropriately-qualified organisations by the Australian government, regional governments and organisations, private sector and non-government entities, and civil society organisations.
12. The clearing house or register could also contribute to Australia's 'second-track' diplomacy initiatives, by providing access to information on organisations that could be potential contributors to, or participants in, regional dialogues, consultations and related processes.

CPDS experience in Australia, the Asia-Pacific Region and in developing countries in Africa

13. CPDS began its partnership with Australian Government Departments in 2008, in the context of the United Nations Global Forum on Migration and Development.

Dr John Hemery, founder and director of CPDS, and Dr Lesi Korovavala, Fijian former senior civil servant, conducted a course on *Diplomacy, Negotiation and (cross-cultural) Communication* for the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC).

Sample feedback: 'Great presenters, great knowledge and relevant discussions and examples of their previous experience. Very good subjects to cover and group exercises. Appreciated practical experience. Dr Lesi's presentations re South Pacific expectations and norms extremely useful.'

14. In every year since, from 2009 to 2022, CPDS has been contracted to deliver practical interactive programs of training in political analysis and the core soft skills of diplomatic tradecraft for the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, other Australian Government Departments, and for the Government of Victoria.
15. CPDS has delivered programs for professional development in international policy and diplomatic tradecraft, face-to-face and online, in twelve other countries of the Asia-Pacific region, including Afghanistan, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Mongolia, New Zealand, Philippines, PR China (Hong Kong), Singapore, Thailand, Vanuatu, and Vietnam. A number of these programs have been supported by the Australian missions and Australia Awards in-country.
16. CPDS has conducted training courses also in fourteen developing countries in Africa (Eritrea, Ghana, Kenya, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Zimbabwe and for the Permanent Missions to the United Nations in New York of Angola, Côte d'Ivoire, Rwanda and Togo), attuned to the particular development challenges of each.
17. CPDS courses have developed a high reputation for quality and professional relevance, in a wide range of diplomatic skills, at all levels of seniority from new entrant to minister.

Sample feedback:

- *Great course materials, knowledgeable and experienced presenters, the practical exercises were the highlight.*
- *Excellent. Really enjoyed the hands-on experience and individual feedback.*
- *Exceptional course and combination of theory and practice, also very well organised.*
- *Absolutely fantastic. The most effective course I have ever had.*

18. All CPDS programs are designed in consultation with the commissioning authority to meet specific objectives. CPDS courses have four distinguishing characteristics:

- delivered by senior practitioners bringing years of relevant experience to the task;
- interactive exercises providing opportunities for practising personal skills;
- current issues, providing for substantive learning on key topics of the day; and
- small groups, each with a mentor providing individual advice and feedback.

19. People learn in different ways: some by listening and watching, others more by doing.

All CPDS courses offer a blended combination of (a little) theory and (a lot of) practice in a series of iterations – introductory explanation, followed by active practice, followed by thorough debrief to draw out lessons learned, with practical advice given before, during and after each exercise by experienced practitioners.

20. CPDS draws on a global network of expert leaders who understand the conventions that guide the international system, and have led the institutions that shape it, managing crises and building trust. CPDS offers teams of mentors with a range of knowledge and experience, cutting across traditional or departmental lines, delivering the best of what is needed on a specific project.

21. CPDS works to affirm the rights of all people to live in a better world. We do this through the provision of cultural and diplomatic skills training for governments and industry. We understand it's not about doing what we've always done; it's about doing what the world needs now – and now is always changing.

The Centre for Political and Diplomatic Studies (CPDS)

The CPDS Group

Website: <https://cpds.training/>

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