

AUSAID NGO  
COOPERATION  
PROGRAM  
PARTNERSHIP  
AGREEMENTS

*Mid Term  
Review  
Report*

## Executive Summary

In 2009 the then Minister (Smith) approved a suite of reforms to the AusAID-NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP) to embed a partnership approach in AusAID's engagement with Australian NGOs (ANGO). A key aspect of the approved reforms was greater funding flexibility, (including multi-year funding) and establishing opportunities for ANCP Partnership Agreements with NGOs that have a large Australian community support base.

On the basis of these criteria, AusAID negotiated four-year partnership agreements in 2009 with World Vision Australia, Oxfam Australia, Plan International Australia, Caritas Australia and ChildFund Australia. Three other organisations CARE Australia, CBM Australia and TEAR Australia have since negotiated multi-year partnership agreements. All current partnership agreements end in June 2013.

A mid term review of the partnerships was undertaken between September 2011 and May 2012. this report outlines the finding of that review.

The findings indicate that the ANCP partnerships represent a large scale AusAID program utilising a wide range of approaches and methodologies to directly target the needs of very poor people. The partnerships currently utilise AusAID funding across **53 countries** and regions in the world functioning through **289 different projects and programs** to reach more than **6,586,000 direct beneficiaries**.

The program has considerable potential but fully realising this potential will require attention to a number of areas. These include better assessment of impact, better communication and sharing of outcomes and learning, more systematic and dedicated resourcing and better understanding of the purpose, scope and responsibilities of partnership.

In addition the current context for this partnership program has to include consideration of the remaining ANCP NGOs and the nature of their relationship to AusAID. It also has to include consideration of the Civil Society Engagement Framework and the many issues and actions within the Framework that directly overlap with areas emerging from this review.

### *Partnerships till 2013*

The partnerships have approximately twelve months remaining. In that time attention should be given to identification and consolidation of learning, as well as positioning for the future. It is therefore recommended that:

- 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.*
- 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.*
- 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.*

### ***Beyond 2013***

As noted above, AusAID needs to consider how to build on the effective development practice undertaken to date beyond 2013. Notwithstanding any decision about additional partnerships, given the positive outcomes of the partnerships to date, AusAID should seek to extend the opportunity for flexible and increased funding to all ANCP NGOs.

If AusAID decide to also maintain a partnership program then it is recommended that:

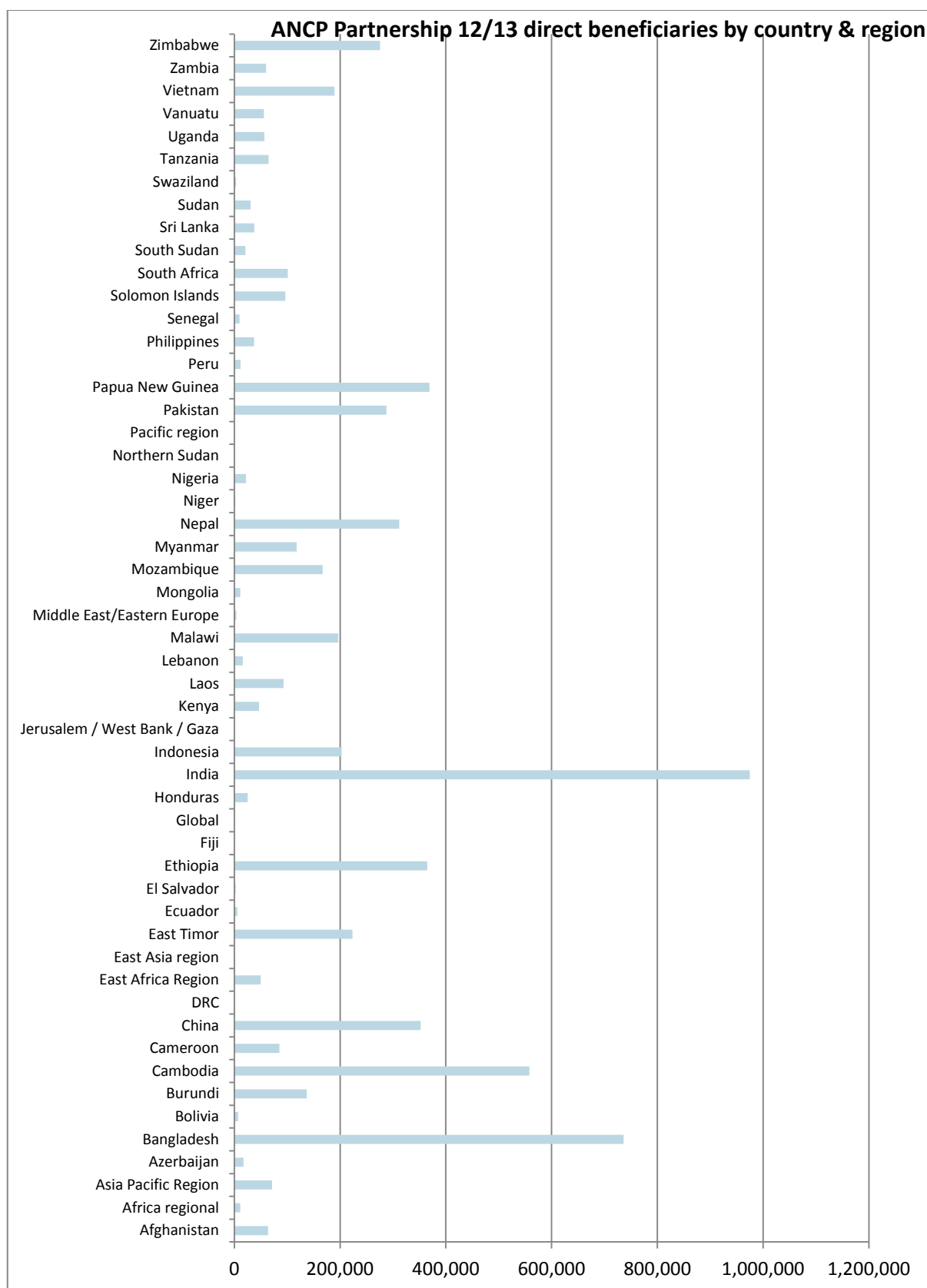
- 4. Any partnership program beyond 2013 should focus in particular on the objectives which are important to AusAID and which reflect the strengths and expertise of the partner NGOs. These should include poverty reduction, engagement and capacity building with civil society and contribution to learning for AusAID policies and programs.***
- 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.***

In light of the experience of the partner agencies to date they are well positioned to assist AusAID to address the actions and processes to work through aspects of the AusAID Civil Society Engagement Framework. It is therefore recommended that:

- 6. AusAID utilise the partner NGOs to assist with relevant areas and actions under the Civil Society Engagement Framework.***

## Contents

Executive Summary.....	1
Acronyms .....	6
Introduction .....	7
Background .....	7
Overview of the ANCP partnerships .....	7
Context for the MTR .....	10
The Mid Term Review .....	11
Purpose .....	11
Methodology.....	12
Findings .....	13
The Partnerships .....	13
Partnership Objective One: Reduce Poverty .....	14
Partnership Objective Two: Build partnerships .....	22
Partnership Objective Three: Be Accountable.....	27
Partnership Objective Four: Build Community Support .....	29
Partnership Objective Five: Demonstrate Results and Sharing Experiences .....	30
Unexpected outcomes .....	33
Discussion.....	33
Conclusions and recommendations.....	36
Annex One.....	38
Annex Two .....	40



.....	41
Annex Three .....	43



## Acronyms

ACFID	Australian Council for International Development
ACRP	Australian Communities Rehabilitation Program
ANCP	AusAID NGO Cooperation Program
ANGO	Australian Non-Government Organisations
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CEWG	Community Engagement Working Group
CDC	Committee for Development Cooperation
DPO	Disabled Persons Organisation
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
FMNR	Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration
GBV	Gender Based Violence
MTR	Mid Term Review
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
RDE	Recognised Development Expenditure

## Introduction

### Background

In 2009 the then Minister (Smith) approved a suite of reforms to the AusAID-NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP) to embed a partnership approach in AusAID's engagement with Australian NGOs (ANGO). A key aspect of the approved reforms was greater funding flexibility, (including multi-year funding) and establishing opportunities for ANCP Partnership Agreements with NGOs that have a large Australian community support base<sup>1</sup>.

On the basis of these criteria, AusAID negotiated four-year partnership agreements in 2009 with World Vision Australia, Oxfam Australia, Plan International Australia, Caritas Australia and ChildFund Australia. Three other organisations CARE Australia, CBM Australia and TEAR Australia have since negotiated multi-year partnership agreements. All current partnership agreements end in June 2013.

A mid-term review (MTR) was undertaken of the original five partnership agreements. The MTR was designed as light review to provide information for further improvement and development of partnerships with ANGOS. The more recent Partner NGOs were also involved in this process in order to establish a base line for their agencies and AusAID is included as the ninth partner.

This document reports on the MTR.

### Overview of the ANCP partnerships

In line with the broader ANCP program, funding provided to Partner NGOs has an overall goal:

*To help alleviate poverty by accelerating progress towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).*

Under the partnership agreement both AusAID and Partner NGOs agree to work on five shared objectives:

1. **Reduce Poverty** – *expand and enhance community development programs that address the causes and effect of poverty, recognising the importance of gender equality and disability inclusive development.*
2. **Build Partnerships** – *between each other, local communities, business, the private sector, institutions, universities, governments and NGOs to enhance the impact of Australian aid and development efforts. This also links to reducing the coordination and administration burden on poor communities.*
3. **Be Accountable** – *to each other and transparent about the partnership with aid recipients, the Australian public and other donors.*
4. **Build Community Support** – *work to increase the understanding and knowledge in communities in Australia, and overseas, about Australia's efforts to reduce poverty.*

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<sup>1</sup> Criteria for selecting NGO partners can be found [here](#).



5. **Demonstrate Results and sharing Experiences** – *share lessons learned from program and partnership activities and respect each other's comparative knowledge on policy and programming decisions.*

For AusAID, the intent of the partnerships is to provide opportunities to extend its reach in sectors and geographic areas of interest, increase its international profile, and more effectively engage the Australian public on long-term development objectives (particularly those reflected in the MDGs).

For the NGOs, the partnerships provide an expanded funding base; predictable funding over multiple years (from 2009-10 to 2012-13); and a platform for regular policy dialogue with AusAID. Partner NGOs were selected by AusAID based on broad criteria<sup>2</sup>.

Each bilateral partnership has its own set of priorities to support shared goals and objectives of the agreement. They are very specific and work to the strengths and experience of each NGO as outlined below:

**World Vision Australia:** Climate Change; Livelihoods; Education; Maternal and Child Health and Human Rights.

**Oxfam Australia:** Economic Justice; Essential Services; Gender Justice; Accountability and Active Citizenship.

**Caritas Australia:** Food Security; Human Rights; Water and Sanitation; Environmental Sustainability; Skills Training and Technical Education; Health and Nutrition.

**Plan International Australia:** Early Childhood Care and Development; Education; Water, Sanitation and Hygiene; Food Security and Sustainable Livelihoods; Protection and Promotion of Rights and Community Resilience.

**ChildFund Australia:** Child Wellbeing; Mobilising Support for Development and Child Rights; Building Program Effectiveness; Building the Capacity of Communities and Governments to Advance Child Rights.

**CBM Australia:** Strategic Disability Inclusive Development Programs; Development Effectiveness; Partner Capacity Development; and Evidence, Education and Advocacy.

**TEAR Australia:** Partner capacity building, strengthening work of smaller civil society partners; working in complex operating environments; development education in Australia.

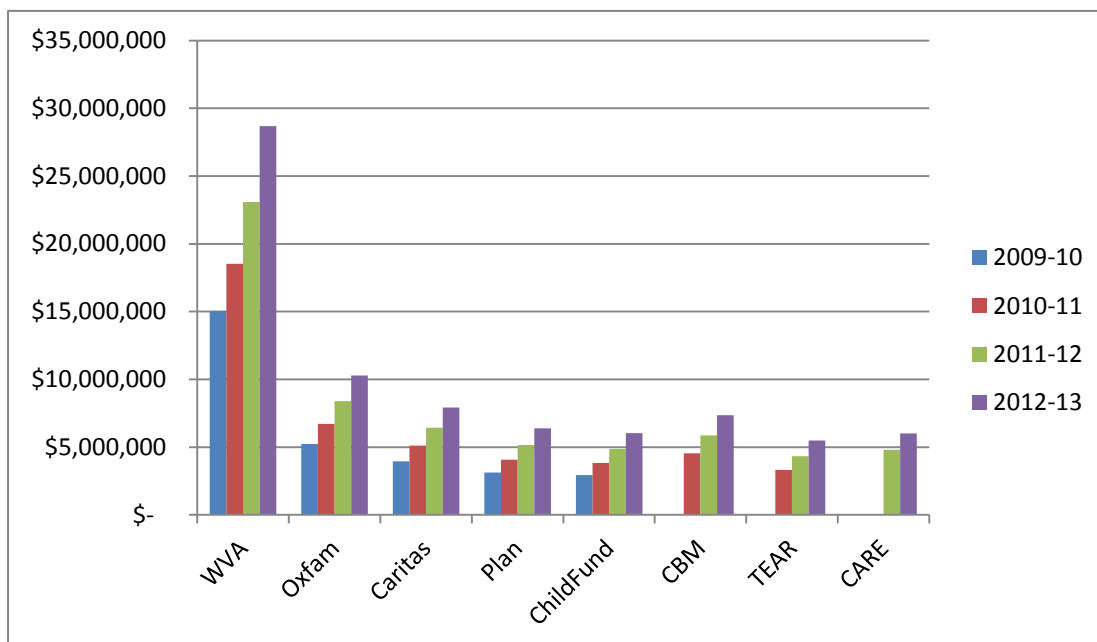
**CARE Australia:** Promoting gender equality; sustainably poverty reduction; integrate and promote priority cross-cutting themes and approaches.

In 2011-12, Partner NGOs received 66% of all funds available under the ANCP program (which is open to 43 NGOs)<sup>3</sup>. The following table shows the distribution of the funds between the Partner NGOs over the four year period<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> These included agencies that had at least \$8million Recognised Development Expenditure (RDE) and where Australian government funding was less than 50% of the overall funding base.

<sup>3</sup> The remaining funds were split - 24% to the ANCP Pool and 10% to new ANCP initiatives.



The partnerships are underpinned by a set of common principles outlined in each partnership agreement between the Partner NGO and AusAID:

- They will both invest time, money and technical and policy skills into achieving the objectives outlined in this Partnership.
- The relationship between NGOs and AusAID will be equal, valuing the contribution each agency can make to reaching common goals and recognising that each partner has different skills, attributes and strengths.
- The Partnership will be underpinned by mutual respect, professionalism, honesty, cooperation, the sharing of ideas and open, two-way communication at all levels.
- They will consult closely to ensure activities and programs supported through this Partnership Agreement are managed and coordinated to maximise the positive impact on the poor.
- They will engage on issues of performance, accountability and risk (including from the perspective of beneficiaries) by drawing each other's attention to matters likely to impact on the delivery of programs relevant to the partnership.

The principles were designed to provide a common understanding of the program and support a multi-lateral partnership approach among all NGOs and AusAID.

<sup>4</sup> As noted in the table World Vision has received considerably greater funding than other agencies. The second largest amount of money has been directed to Oxfam. It is reasonable to expect then that the most significant change and impact should be demonstrated by World Vision and Oxfam.

## Context for the MTR

The recent independent review of the Aid program<sup>5</sup> introduced several considerations for the MTR. The review highlighted the need for AusAID to consider effective utilisation of partnership as an aid mechanism.

*AusAID is not just growing; it is changing its modus operandi. It is shifting from being a predominately contracting organisation to one more focused on partnership with other development actors. A partnership approach means Australia working through or with others to deliver aid. Partnership is not a delivery mechanism in itself; rather, it is an effective way to use all delivery mechanism (Page 13).*

The Government's response<sup>6</sup> to the review supported increased funding to Australian NGOs in particular through a partnership modality.

*In addition to significantly increased funding, recent reforms to our NGO program include high-level strategic partnerships between AusAID and some of Australia's largest NGOs, including World Vision Australia, Oxfam Australia, Caritas Australia, Plan International Australia, and ChildFund Australia.*

*These partnerships enhance the reach of Australian aid, and enable the Australian Government and Australian NGOs to share lessons and experiences, jointly identifying the most effective ways to help people overcome poverty and make progress towards the MDGs.*

*Expansion of the ANCP enables more Australian NGOs to receive financial support, and to work in a direct partnership with the Australian Government. Increased funding to a more diverse range of Australian NGOs will provide even greater opportunities to extend the reach and effectiveness of Australian aid to benefit the most vulnerable people in the poorest communities in the world. (Page 25)*

The Government's response proposed that increased funding to ANCP NGOs should be made on a case by case basis, based on assessment of their *effectiveness, capacity and relevance*.

ANCP NGOs, including the Partner NGOs, have all undergone accreditation by AusAID. Accreditation ensures that organisations have appropriate systems and capability to deliver effective aid. In addition, the Partner NGOs, together with all other ANCP NGOs have signed the ACFID Code of Conduct, which among other areas requires Australian NGOs to ensure their development work meets high-quality standards.

Partner NGOs therefore bring established standards and systems for development. AusAID have already assessed their capacity to deliver and the ACFID Code requires them to ensure the effectiveness of their work. The mid-term review therefore provided an opportunity to assess what can be achieved when effective and capable Australian NGOs are supported by AusAID through a partnership approach.

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<sup>5</sup> For details see Independent Review of Aid Effectiveness at <http://www.aidreview.gov.au/report/index.html>

<sup>6</sup> For details on the Governments response An Effective Aid Program for Australia *Making a real difference – Delivering real results* see <http://www.ausaid.gov.au/publications/aidreview-response/effective-aid-program-for-australia.pdf>

More recently AusAID has released its Civil Society Engagement Framework<sup>7</sup> that points to five objectives for AusAID engagement with civil society:

- *Improved effectiveness and impact*
- *Sustainability*
- *Reduced risks and shared accountability*
- *Efficiency and value for money*
- *Diversity and innovation*

The Framework outlines a series of tasks and actions that will be undertaken to contribute to outcomes under each of these objectives. Details of the Framework were not available at the commencement of the partnerships, however the MTR process provides an opportunity to make recommendations and offer lessons learnt to contribute to implementation of these actions.

## The Mid Term Review

### Purpose

The MTR was designed to provide AusAID with a deeper and more accurate understanding of the costs and benefits associated with partnerships and demonstrate what has been achieved towards more effective development outcomes for poor people to date (noting the partnerships finish at the end of 2012-13). This information will feed into AusAID's approach to managing future relationships, which may include partnerships that are not linked specifically to funding, that are focused on enhanced policy dialogue and/or those which explore joint outcomes between AusAID and NGOs.

The purpose of the MTR was:

***To assess how the Partnership approach has increased agencies ability to reduce poverty, compared with the previous method of engagement under ANCP.***

This included assessment of:

- *What has been achieved due to the partnership approach, both between NGOs and between NGOs and AusAID? Why?*
- *What has been achieved through the increase in funding and funding certainty?*
- *What other unexpected outcomes have occurred? Why?*
- *The costs and benefits of partnerships?*
- *What has not been possible? Why?*

The MTR was also intended to provide a basis to explore the future of the Partnerships.

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<sup>7</sup> AusAID (2012) "AusAID Civil Society Engagement Framework. Working with civil society organisations to help people overcome poverty." Canberra, June.

## Methodology

Given the several different intentions attached to the partnerships as well as the broad statements and expectations around the nature of partnership itself, a traditional evaluation process, assessing progress against objectives, was not appropriate<sup>8</sup>. The terms of reference also indicated considerable interest in lessons learnt to contribute to future development of the partnerships. The focus therefore was on understanding what had been achieved and establishing a process whereby the value of this could be assessed by stakeholders. In terms of DAC evaluation criteria the emphasis was therefore on relevance, effectiveness and efficiency<sup>9</sup> through an exploratory methodology.

The MTR was undertaken through three stages. For the first stage the partner NGOs, together with AusAID, were asked to submit a proposition about how the partnership had increased their development effectiveness to date (see Annex One for details). They were also required to submit supporting evidence for their positions. While the MTR focused in particular on the six original partners (AusAID, World Vision, Oxfam, Caritas, Plan and ChildFund), the three more recent partners (TEAR, CARE and CBM) were also invited to submit propositions and respond to questions as far as possible.

The second stage of the review saw a synthesis of those findings which were then examined from the perspective of various stakeholders including AusAID and the NGOs. A final summary document was prepared based upon the commentary from stakeholders. In the third stage of the review AusAID and the NGOs came together to explore the implications of the findings and to jointly analyse the implications and identify possible recommendations arising from the review.

It should be noted that there are several limitations with this type of light review. No additional or new research was undertaken to either verify information provided by the NGOs and AusAID, or test the implications of the information in the field. While some comparisons were made with other NGO programs in AusAID and with other experiences of AusAID supported civil society work, this was not undertaken in a systematic or comprehensive way. Some validity was established by triangulating information from different sources within organisations and between organisations. The supporting and verifying evidence was also reviewed against the outcome is summarised by the NGO submissions. Overall however, the review largely rests upon synthesis and interrogation of existing information. The findings and recommendations of the MTR should be read with these limitations in mind.

This document presents the final report of the MTR. The following section outlines the overall findings together with a range of examples to illustrate each of the points. The final section discusses the implications of the findings against the partnership objectives. Recommendations are provided based upon the analysis undertaken by AusAID and the NGOs.

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<sup>8</sup> For the purpose of a review it is important to establish the 'lens' for the examination of the partnership. This was not simple, given the partnerships had several collective objectives alongside objectives specific to each partnership. The partnerships are also embedded within the ANCP program which itself has specific goals and objectives. The partnerships are underpinned by significant statements of principle. Finally they are being undertaken in a dynamic policy environment where Australian Government policy for NGO engagement is still emerging. The approach to assessment therefore had to be more than trying to check against specified and measurable objectives.

<sup>9</sup> A end of term evaluation would also be expected to focus on impact and sustainability

## Findings

### The Partnerships

The eight partner NGOs represent a diverse slice of the Australian NGO community. The agencies vary in size from the very large, World Vision Australia, to the relatively smaller agencies of Caritas Australia and TEAR Australia. All of the agencies have long term experience in international development work with particular emphasis upon serving poor and marginalised people. Some of the agencies have a strong focus on development for children, in particular World Vision, Plan International Australia and ChildFund. Other notable strengths include expertise in disability inclusive development (CBM), experience in promotion of gender equality (CARE), policy and advocacy expertise (Oxfam) and community development experience (Caritas and TEAR). As noted AusAID negotiated the focus of each partnership agreement with attention to these various strengths and specialisations of the NGOs.

All of the agencies work to educate and inform the Australia public about international aid and development issues. Agencies such as Caritas and TEAR have particularly well-developed networks into schools and other public systems. Larger agencies such as World Vision and Oxfam have a high public profile. All of the organisations enjoy high-quality reputations with the Australia public.

All of the NGOs are engaged across the development sector in Australia and internationally in several ways. This includes considerable contribution to the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) committees and leadership, as well as academic and other partnerships within Australia. (These myriad connections and contributions will be discussed in more detail later in the findings.)

The ANCP partnerships represent a large scale AusAID program utilising a wide range of approaches and methodologies to directly target the needs of very poor people. The indicative planning figures provided by NGOs for 2012/13 suggest that the partnerships will utilise AusAID funding across **53 countries** and regions in the world through **289 different projects and programs** to reach more than **6,586,000 direct beneficiaries**<sup>10</sup>. Details about the range of countries and estimated beneficiaries are provided in Annex Two. They show that partnership funding is concentrated in many of the countries which are identified as priorities for the Australian aid program, including Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Afghanistan, Cambodia, Vietnam, East Timor and the Asia Pacific region in general. The figure also show the wide spread of estimated beneficiaries.

AusAID has clearly established partnerships with a diverse range of NGOs providing them with a valuable opportunity to explore how this additional flexible, funding can be utilised by different types of civil society organisations.

This was a sensible strategy to take to this new approach to using ANCP funding however it presents some challenges in trying to present a synthesised or aggregated summary of achievements. Most of the MTR results can only be fully understood through the experiences of each individual agency. The following discussion of findings draws together common themes with a range of examples to illustrate this diversity of response to the partnership objectives.

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<sup>10</sup> Estimated for FY 2012/13.

### **Partnership Objective One: Reduce Poverty**

All of the agencies report that they have been able to utilise the partnerships funding to increase their work in poverty reduction. As noted above more than 6.5 million people will be directly assisted through ANCP partnership funded projects and programs in 2012-13. Each of the agencies can point to the individual increase in the number of people benefiting from expansions of projects and increased quality of projects.

However as noted above, agencies have taken different approaches or different combinations of approaches to better target and reduce poverty. These have included increasing the size and scale of programs, changing program approaches to include more complex and sophisticated approaches, leveraging additional funding and using ANCP funds to catalyse and change their agency more widely which in turn improves outcomes for people across other programs.

#### ***Increased size and scale***

A significant approach undertaken by many of the NGOs has been to expand their programs. Driven by the increased funding and increased certainty of funding, the Partner NGOs have developed bigger programs, reaching more people and extended over a number of years. For many agencies this has meant movement away from individual projects funded on an annual basis to a programmatic approach looking for synergies and increased impact over the longer term.

For example, World Vision has utilised the four years of funding to considerably increase the size of existing programs, with increasing concentration in particular countries and regions. World Vision has scaled up its programs in countries of significance to Australia such as East Timor, Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands and other Pacific countries. (See Annex Three for details)

According to World Vision, larger scale engagement in areas has provided opportunity for funding of technical support and better analysis of previous work leading to better designs and more integrated implementation. World Vision reports that this programmatic approach has increased space for participation by local partners and community members. Together these features increase the quality of the service for people.

***Increased scale of projects mentioned above allows greater capacity building opportunities with Government and CBOs. It also allows projects to access greater technical expertise. The Early Child Care and Development projects in East Timor are able to support a technical person to support implementation due to the scale of the ANCP funded ECCD projects in 3 districts- Bacau, Bobonaro and Ailieu. This allows the ECCD programs to be contextualized to suit the needs of the 3 districts and languages as well as having a country/national strategy. (World Vision submission)***

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Collectively NGOs report that increasing the size of their programs has a direct impact on poor people. For example CBM describe how with increasing partnership funding, they have moved to larger programmatic and more comprehensive projects. For example increased funding in 2011 enabled them to commence three new projects, benefitting an additional 19,870 people, and in 2012 nine new projects with 377,705 beneficiaries.

TEAR report that because of the certainty of the partnership funding over the long-term, they have undertaken 40 new activities with established partners in South Sudan, Afghanistan and India. In Afghanistan the proposals include innovative approaches which aim to further build the skills and capacity of local Afghan managers.

CARE is a more recent inclusion in the ANCP partnerships program (October 2011), but the agency can already identify increased reach through the partnership funding. From 15,000 beneficiaries in 2010 program now proposes to reach at least 90,000 people in 2012/13.

The case study below illustrates in more detail the poverty reduction outcomes that are associated with these types of thoughtful program expansions.

#### **Case Study One: Caritas program in Uganda**

Caritas Australia utilise ANCP funding for the program in Africa. In the last two years they have used the partnership funding to expand those programs. The Uganda program has expanded in terms of budgets by 41% since 2009 enabling local partners to reach greater numbers of people as well as improve their impact on livelihoods and human capacity. The resulting outcomes include the following:

- In Lugazi Diocese Uganda, as a result of increased production capacity, more land has been put to use for the selected farm enterprises especially bananas, pineapples, maize, vegetables and coffee. Thus, there is increasing availability of food for home consumption and for sale at household level. In addition, farmers have embarked on value-add enterprises. These enterprises have been reported to earn better income for the farmers.
- In Kiyinda Diocese Uganda, food security has improved among target households. Over 70% can now afford 2 or 3 meals a day. More than 46% of the farmers in the 12 villages earn an average of Ugandan Shillings 65,000 (\$ 28) per month from the sale of bananas. Over 52% of the farmers in the 12 villages can meet their basic needs. The project has also contributed to increased incomes among participating households due to the sale of surplus food crops. Approximately 85% of the participating farmers are growing different varieties of food crops.
- There has been an increasing availability of food for home consumption and for sale at household level in Kasese Diocese as a result of improved agriculture practices among beneficiaries and community members. For example, four seed centres have been established at parishes where there are seeds of banana corms, maize, beans, yams, cassava, groundnuts, fruits and vegetable. In addition, twenty groups in Kangulumira took up management and maintenance of the Good Samaritan gardens. The program has also convinced a local FM radio – Guide Radio –“ to offer free air time for promoting good sustainable agricultural practices. This has led to an increased the number of trees planted by the community during the reporting period.

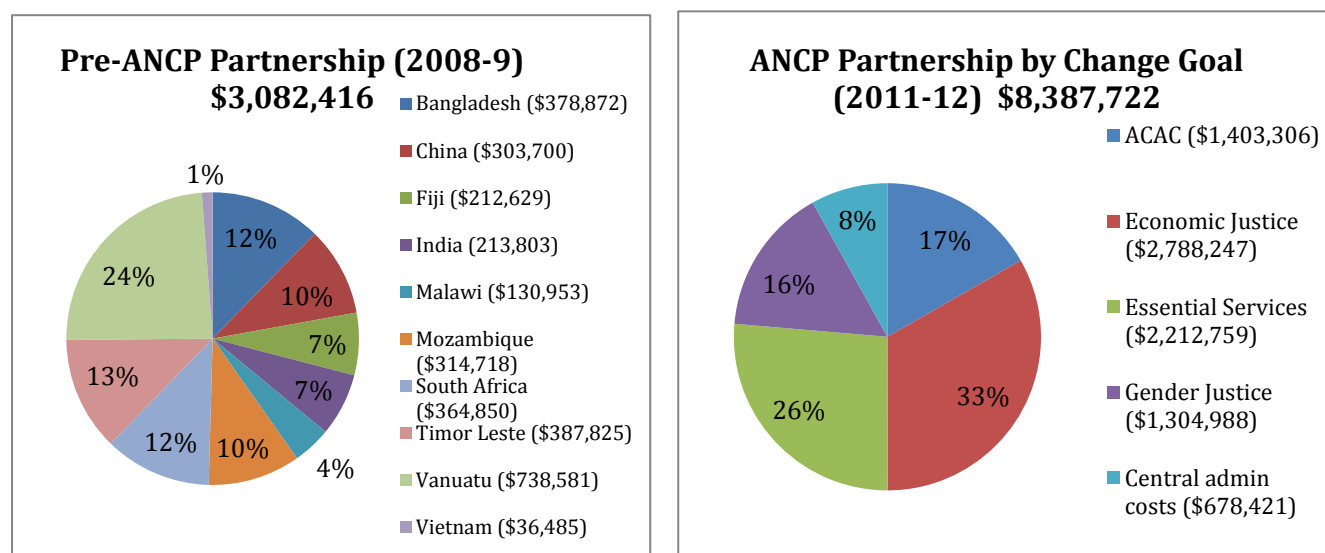
From the perspective of gender equality in the Uganda program, women are taking up leadership positions at government, parish and community levels. In 2011 elections, in all parishes there are male and female program participants who are standing for various positions at Local, Sub County and District councils.



### *Increased quality of programming*

Typically because of the annual nature of ANCP funding and the requirement to report outcomes within 12 months, NGOs have chosen in the past to direct this sort of funding towards more conventional and more tangible projects which do not necessarily exemplify the specialisation and expertise of the particular NGO. The Partner NGOs report that with the long-term flexible funding made available under the partnerships, and the recognition of their particular areas of expertise in the partnership agreements, they have been able to use the funding for more complex and more challenging development areas and programs, using and extending the best of their expertise.

For example as indicated in the following charts, Oxfam has focused its ANCP program from eleven annual country projects with a budget of \$3.7m, to four main change goals with budget of over \$8.3 million. These four goals of active citizenship, economic and gender justice and essential services, apply across the whole program and provide opportunities for cross learning, sharing of technical expertise and joint research which in turn build the quality of the programs. They build upon the expertise of Oxfam in advocacy with partners and communities to enable them to address the causes of poverty and marginalisation.



Other Partner NGOs have also managed ANCP funding in ways that have increased the opportunity to utilise agency expertise and specialisation. World Vision Australia has extended support to programs in sensitive sectors where progress to sustainable outcomes takes time and requires flexibility. These include community based adaption projects to address the impacts of climate change (one of their priorities agreed under the partnership) . Activities include programs to address deforestation, diversification and food income sources, health implications of the community using wood as fuel and assistance to communities to enter and benefit from carbon markets. They note that such projects, while highly relevant and significant for poor rural communities, would normally be difficult to fund through traditional donor funding sources which require more certain outcomes in limited timeframes.

ChildFund has utilised partnership funding for research on the government decentralisation and de-concentration process in Cambodia. The research, and associated support for community participation in planning, has led to five-year district development plans which are supported by

district officials and reflect the views of community people, including children and young people. This type of project requires time to build relationships and trust of community people as well as engagement with local government. Short-term change is minimal however the longer-term outcomes are likely to provide more sustainable and relevant develop options for people. ANCP partnership funding provides for this type of approach.

## **Case Study Two: Oxfam ANCP Programming in Sri Lanka 2010-11 to 2012-13**

Oxfam Australia has been operating in Sri Lanka since the 1970s. The majority of the country strategy is implemented through one national program, “Empowerment of Vulnerable Communities for Livelihood Improvement, Sustainable Resettlement, Gender Equality and Inter-Ethnic Understanding” (2010-13). This is supported by AusAID jointly through two sources: ANCP partnerships funding and the Australian Communities Rehabilitation Program (ACRP).

### **1. Long-term funding of core country program**

A programmatic and long-term approach in Sri Lanka is essential to achieving the desired changes in formal and informal structures (including attitudes, norms and practices) that marginalise women and other groups from benefiting from Sri Lanka’s post-war boom. The Partnership funding has enabled the Sri Lanka program to take this more strategic approach to implementation of the country plan, with greater emphasis on the strengthening of CBO partners to foster more sustainable pro-poor and women-led local institutions.

### **2. Improving effectiveness and increasing impact through learning and sharing of experiences**

The ANCP partnership prioritises good practice systems and approaches for analysis and learning. In line with this Oxfam is using ANCP funding to support inter and intra country learning with direct benefit to the Sri Lanka program, as well as future Oxfam programs in Sri Lanka and elsewhere. This includes the following studies:

#### Sri Lanka Gender and Protection Study

The long-term nature of ANCP funding has enabled Oxfam to commission in-depth, robust research on gender issues and strategies in conflict and disaster responses in Sri Lanka. The research will provoke more effective and innovative approaches to promoting gender justice, active citizenship and partnership in long-term community development, DRR and humanitarian programs in Sri Lanka and elsewhere. As a result of the study, Oxfam is already revising its approach to gender justice in Sri Lanka to more deliberately incorporate programming and advocacy on issues such as sexual violence, women’s livelihood issues, stigmatising norms towards women in temporary relationships and those affected by sexual violence, building and strengthening government-civil society gender based violence (GBV) networks, and GBV case management.

#### Study on Accountability to Communities through the Active Citizenship and Accountability Hub

The accountability study has explored the meaning of accountability in the Sri Lankan context and looks at how Oxfam’s work strengthens or constrains accountability to communities and partners. The study found that the defining features determining whether formal structures that support accountability to communities and partners translate into downward accountability, are organisational values and culture. The study reveals alignments in the accountability needs of different stakeholders, for example regarding impact and financial accountability, and points to a need for innovation in and simplification of accountability processes to meet these fundamental requirements.

#### Women’s Transformative Leadership Learning Project

The Women’s Transformative Leadership Learning Project is currently underway. Through it, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Bangladesh and Indigenous Australia programs are engaging with theories of change for women’s transformative leadership in their different contexts.

A significant feature of this focus on increased effectiveness has been the way agencies have sought to utilise the ANCP funding to extend their existing areas of expertise gender (CARE) disability (CBM) and climate change (World Vision).

TEAR specialise in working with very poor and hard to reach communities, particularly in complex operating environments. This year they are using AusAID funds in Afghanistan to expand their work with rural communities focusing on improving livelihoods and development opportunities especially for people with disabilities. The work is also extending to include health education and access to renewable energy in rural villages. TEAR has been also been able to utilise increased ANCP funding in Burma. Using their participatory community empowerment and development approaches that have increased their work in the Aeyawaddy Delta to enable 15,000 people from 35 villages to further their livelihood and continue to rebuild their communities following Cyclone Nargis.

A further example is given in the boxes below showing how both Plan International Australia and World Vision have focused on expertise in development with children using ANCP funds to expand and improve the quality of their work.

**Case Study Three: Plan International Australia - Program for Early Childhood Care and Development**

Plan International Australia has been supporting the roll-out of an approach to Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) known as 'Community Led Action for Children' (CLAC) in 4 countries during the first 3 years of the ANCP partnership. Through CLAC, Plan International Australia seeks to prove that 100% of disadvantaged children in targeted high poverty communities can achieve child wellbeing indicators and school success through effective, cost-efficient and quality early childhood supports.

The CLAC Uganda project has been implemented since January 2009 and now works in 38 communities, benefitting an estimated 12,000 girls and 12,000 boys in FY12/13. As a result of the ANCP partnership, the Uganda CLAC program is being used as a model for scale-up of ECCD in the East Africa region by Plan International, with replication of the model occurring in Zambia and Ethiopia in FY13.

The partnership has enabled the appointment of a Regional CLAC coordinator with the express purpose of scaling-up the model at a regional level. The ANCP has also enabled the development of ECCD training resources by Plan International Australia (initially in English and Bahasa). These resources are intended to benefit Plan International Australia's CLAC programs, as well as Plan International ECCD programs and those of other agencies working in the sector more broadly. They are the first resources of this kind to be produced by any organization:

- ECCD Toolkit, including parenting and early learning centres curriculum
- A transitions to primary school guide
- Child Protection and ECCD Asia regional workshop and manual
- Disability Inclusion and ECCD Factsheet

The partnership has also enabled the commissioning of a longitudinal study on the impact of the CLAC program in Uganda on children and parents. It is being undertaken by Dr. Frances Aboud from McGill University in Canada with Elias Kumbakumba from Mbarara University of Science and Technology, Uganda. The study will be undertaken over the course of an initial 3 years, with potential extension for a further 2 years.

#### **Case Study Four: World Vision Project - Legal identity and citizens rights for indigenous women, children and adolescents of Bolivia**

The United Nations has drawn attention to the links between child protection and legal identity, especially for indigenous children. Children who do not have their birth registration or identity documentation are more vulnerable to trafficking and other exploitation including child labour. Their ability to access government services like education, health and policing are limited. Later in life, they will struggle to get married, to vote or stand for election, to receive an inheritance, to own property, to access credit, and to obtain formal employment and the higher wages and social benefits this brings.

World Vision in Bolivia has supported the right to legal identity through its advocacy efforts to establish a legislative framework to support the free issuance of identity cards. The ANCP funded project - **‘Legal Identity and Citizen Rights for Indigenous Women, Children and Adolescents of Bolivia’** facilitated issuance and correction of birth certificates and legal identity documentation; training in citizen rights; and participatory governance and advocacy through community networks.

The Project focused on serving the 20% of the population, who were largely without the material resources, knowledge and capability to obtain their documentation, typically Indigenous households. Almost all beneficiaries were under 18 years of age (94%) and of Indigenous descent (98%).

The use of mobile brigades in the project proved to be a highly successful strategy, whereby documentation was processed on site, often in remote locations. This required a high level of inter-agency coordination between the PCG (Free Identification Program), DDRCC (Departmental Civil Registry Authority), the Police and project staff. Radio broadcasts were very effective in promoting the brigades.

The project worked to strengthen existing community networks by mobilising their support, training them in citizen rights, and then significantly, in supporting their advocacy for an improved policy and legislative framework for legal identity. The project was formally recognised by key partners awarded the following:

- Receipt of the medal ‘Mcal Antonio Jose de Sucre’ from the CDE (Departmental Electoral Court) Oruru for the work towards exercising rights of Youth and women in citizen participation and democracy; and
- Honorary recognition by the Municipal Council of Yacapani for support of poor groups with birth certificates in the ADP Santa Cruz.

#### ***Extending agency effectiveness***

The impact of ANCP funding is not only felt in the projects directly covered through that funding. All of the agencies reported examples where ANCP funding had had influence on their wider organisation, in many cases leading to more effective poverty reduction in other program areas.

For example CARE reported that some modest but strategically targeted ANCP funding was used to help guide CARE country programs. This included funding for long-term program designs which provided a strategic framework for CARE programming at the country level. ANCP has supported development and/or finalisation of such designs in Vietnam (3), Laos (2), Cambodia (3), Myanmar (3) and PNG (1). ANCP funds have also been used to support the development of partnership strategies in Vietnam and Laos, providing a framework for more effective engagement with CARE partners.

*ANCP impacts positively on program quality across the whole country, it offers a multiplier effect which includes not only AusAID funding but also the projects funded by other donors. For example in ANCP contribution of \$148,000 in 2011-12 for gender work in Vietnam impacts positively on the overall country portfolio of \$7.3 million(CARE Australia )*

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A similar example of ANCP funds contributing to wider agency development is provided in the ChildFund case study below:

**Case Study Five: Agency wide Monitoring and Evaluation in ChildFund**

The need for ChildFund to design, pilot and put in place a system to assess and enhance development effectiveness had been identified in the agency's 2006-2011 Strategic Plan. Partnership funding enabled staff to be appointed in Sydney and in the four country offices to create an overall design and then pilot three key components of the new development effectiveness framework:

- a set of 16 organisational Outcome Indicators and a process for measurement by random survey and follow up community engagement in setting broad directions and priorities for programs and which, over time, would measure developmental impact.
- a set of 40 standardised, organisational outputs which could be used for planning, budgeting and monitoring purposes and which could also be aggregated across program areas and countries to provide quantitative data on ChildFund's concrete achievements and reach .
- A process for identifying and preparing case studies to document the direct impact of ChildFund's programs on children, youth and their families in a qualitative way, capturing in this manner some of the complex realities of the lived human experience of change taking place in communities. The critical feedback contained in these case studies also provides ChildFund staff with an opportunity for reflection and learning

The effectiveness framework will see the quality of all ChildFund programs monitored and improved.

Plan International Australia report that as a result of the partnership support for their transition from project to program approaches, they have been able to influence the quality of the Plan International programming, for example in the area of climate change where the Plan International Australia led Child-Centred Climate Change Adaptation model has been adopted by Plan Asia more broadly. In addition, in the area of Early Childhood Care and Development, Plan International Australia's 'Community-Led Action for Children' model is being scaled-up in both Africa and Asia.

***Leveraging of other funds and support***

The NGOs report that they have been able to make use of the predictable long-term partnership funding to leverage and improve other support in order to increase the impact they are able to have on poverty reduction.

This starts with the nature of ANCP itself which sees AusAID funds utilised alongside NGO funding in programs. For example \$26 million (approx.) of AusAID funds was matched with other funding from World Vision for 2012/13 to contribute to more than \$40 million directed to programs and projects.

In addition agencies point to several opportunities they have had to leverage funds from other sources in AusAID and externally. For example Plan International Australia has been able to attract New Zealand aid funding of US\$1.5 million to scale up its early childhood program in Vietnam. CARE has been able to attract additional donor funding for its ANCP funded work in maternal health in PNG, Cambodia and Laos.

Several agencies have made reference to funds received from AusAID under the Water, Sanitation and Health (WASH) initiative and the way the partnership funds have been used to improve the quality of the work developed for that initiative. For example Oxfam report that initial ANCP funding of \$20,000 for a WASH framework and policy positioned them to apply for and receive funding from the AusAID WASH program. As a result the Oxfam WASH program in Mozambique, Cambodia, PNG, Zambia, Timor and Bangladesh expanded in 2011-12 with total funds of \$4,380,664.

### **Partnership Objective Two: Build partnerships**

This partnership objective refers to several types of relationships including partnerships between the NGOs and with AusAID as well as partnerships with civil society organisations, governments and other stakeholders in country and partnerships within Australia.

Overall agencies painted a picture of multiple partnerships with particular attention to fostering the partnerships within countries where they work. There was considerable attention given in responses to capacity development of partners in country as well as partnerships within the international consortiums to which the NGOs belong.

There has been less success in development of partnerships between the partner NGOs and some limitations in the expanded relationship with AusAID.

### **Partner capacity development**

NGOs reported that with additional flexibility and long-term funding they have been able to increase their focus on capacity development of in country partners.

For example TEAR report that they have been able to work more closely with a number of smaller civil society organisations. They have appointed an Emerging Partners Development Officer whose entire focus is on strengthening the skills of smaller agencies and ensuring a respectful and accountable relationship is developed with local implementing agencies. This Officer is working with seven existing partners across the three regions of Africa, South Asia and south-east Asia and the Pacific. Emerging evidence suggests that this is changing the way these partners relate to local communities, as well as enhancing the influence the civil society organisations can have in broader policy and decision-making.

CBM have utilised partnership funding for a capacity development initiative to build partner understanding about the rights of persons with a disability and strengthen partner skills in advocacy and program approaches. Emerging outcomes show that 92% of partners trained have now endorsed plans to develop capacity in disability inclusive development in their organisations; and 90% of new multi-year plans submitted by trained partners include at least one advocacy activity. Of these, 22 partners have already held advocacy meetings with government and community bodies to enable people with disabilities to access basic services.

Caritas is focused upon building capacity of partner agencies in order to enhance impact. For example the agency has provided training in child protection for partners in Cambodia, Philippines, Mozambique and Zimbabwe. A recent survey by Caritas showed a significant increase in the number of partners with a formal child protection policy in place as a result of the training. A further observation from that survey was that due to the associated capacity building in design, monitoring and evaluation through the training, partner designs are also improving, which can be expected to contribute to more effective outcomes.

CARE enters into partnerships with local non-government organisations, civil society organisations and government authorities to support development of their capacity to implement projects and programs. This has included, for example, strengthening capacity of government health staff in PNG and East Timor to deliver health services. This approach supports sustainability of service delivery. For example, in Ethiopia while CARE facilitates the overall program process, the decision making and implementation of all water sanitation and hygiene activities are undertaken by local government officials, community leaders and community groups.

#### **Case Study Six: World Vision Mango Production Project**

Where World Vision works through local community-based organisations and local government, they have provided training and systems strengthening for these in-country partners. The flexibility of the ANCP funding has allowed for greater technical support for capacity building of partners in gender, disability and environmental issues.

One example of this type of approach is World Vision work with government and local communities to support market linkages for mango crops in Ethiopia. Under the project 22 mango cooperatives have been organised and strengthened into a fruit and vegetable union. The government has appointed a manager for these cooperatives until they become established and are able to be self managed. Government departments have assisted with policy and implementation issues for the cooperatives by providing technical assistance and assigning sector professionals. The local government also organises community mobilisation and organises training through the development agents to cooperative members.

World Vision uses ANCP funds to provides targeted support and technical assistance such as value chain analysis and specific areas of capacity building.

The collaboration with local partners has been key to the success of this project. In addition, as government systems improve and become more responsive there is increased impact and outcomes for other farmers and producers in the same locations.



### *Partnerships within other organisations*

One of the common features of the partner NGOs is their high-quality reputations and legitimacy which supports partnerships with various other Australian and international organisations.

For example, Plan International Australia have current partnerships with Deakin University (relating to disability in development), with Monash University (focused on universal birth registration) with Yale University and McGill University (for early childhood care and development). ChildFund has undertaken research in collaboration with the University of Technology in Sydney in early childhood education. CARE is working with the Finance sector in Australia around a micro-finance program for women in Africa. There have also started to collaborate with the new Australian National University Development Policy Centre. Caritas works with other Australia Catholic agencies involved in development and aid (such as Catholic Health) to ensure good cooperation and increased outcomes in programs.

### *Partnership with AusAID*

Compared to other partnership processes entered into by AusAID<sup>11</sup>, which tend to be characterised by a strong emphasis upon process, principles and associated different ways of working together, the ANCP partnerships program gave limited attention to the partnership ‘process’ initially.

Nevertheless the partnership program has led to some changes in the way AusAID and the NGOs relate. This is mainly around increased contact and some increased opportunity for policy dialogue.

### *Increased contact between AusAID and NGOs*

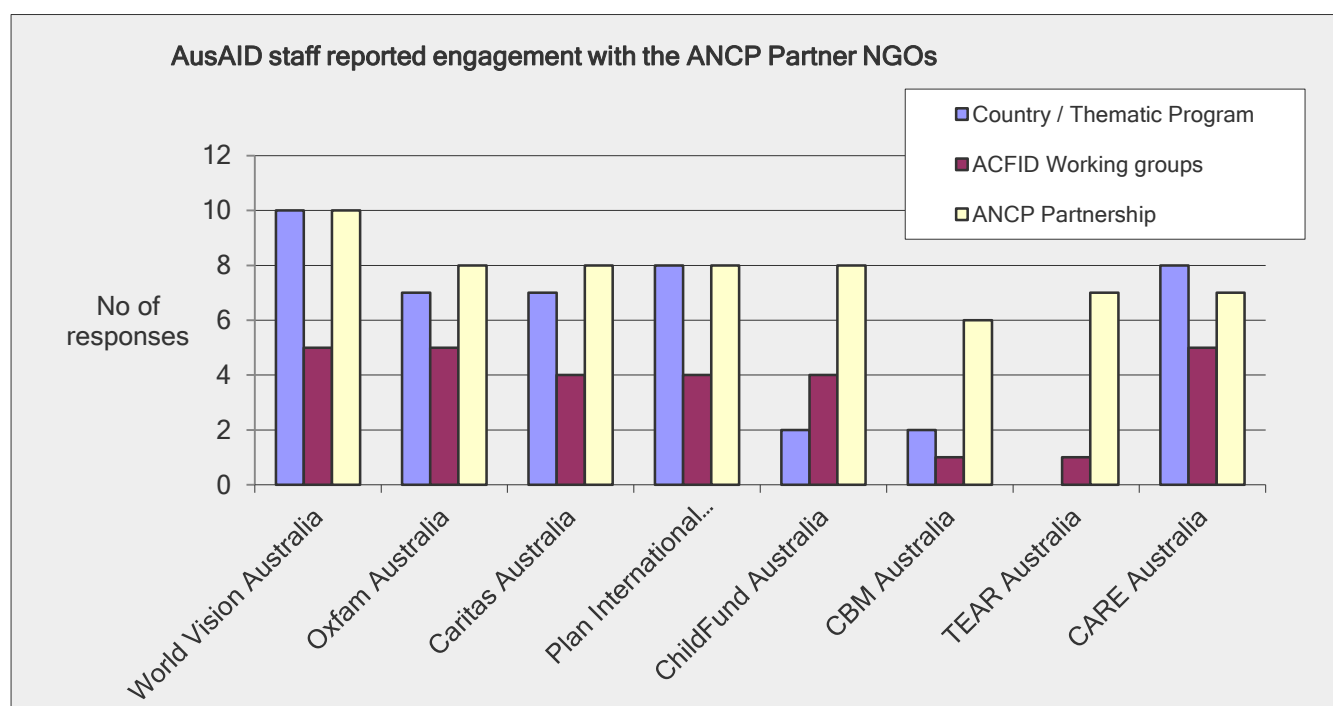
The NGOs and AusAID suggest that contact between the two has increased following the partnership agreements. The increased contact has contributed to improve the quality in several ways:

- All agencies noted that their CEOs have had the opportunity to meet with the AusAID Director General as part of the partnership process, increasing the opportunity for high-level strategic exchange.
- Agencies report that the partnership funding has provided them with greater opportunity to engage with AusAID’s NGO Section team. There have been benefits to this. For example, World Vision report that through this increased contact they have been able to achieve greater alignment with AusAID strategy and objectives.
- Other agencies point to engagement around specific areas of expertise. For example TEAR has facilitated meetings between partners and AusAID in relation to work in Afghanistan. CARE program staff have delivered training around gender equality for AusAID staff. ChildFund has contributed to the AusAID child protection online learning program.
- Organisations have facilitated contact between their partners and AusAID. For example Caritas has taken the initiative to bring leaders from their partner organisations to talk to AusAID in Canberra as well as to engage with the country Posts.
- AusAID NGO section report that as a result of the relationship established through the partnerships, it has been able to undertake direct and open dialogue with NGOs around particular program issues, something that in the past may have required much more senior level AusAID engagement.

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<sup>11</sup> Such as the Australian African Community Engagement Scheme (AACES)

AusAID staff responses suggest that the partnerships have provided a platform for collaboration between AusAID and the eight partner NGOs. The following table, taken from the AusAID submission to the review, indicates that there has been increased engagement between AusAID and the partnership NGOs overall, although this has been more significant for some agencies and others.



### Learning exchange

Part of the intention of the partnerships was to provide an opportunity for shared learning between AusAID and the NGOs. While there are examples where information and research has certainly been shared by the NGOs with AusAID, overall this seems to have been an area of unrealised potential.

There have been some specific opportunities for shared learning. The NGOs have made presentations to AusAID staff around their particular country or thematic programs. These have included presentations by TEAR Afghanistan partners, Oxfam's food security program, Plan International Australia's Early Childhood Care and Development program (presented to both AusAID and the Minister for Employment, Participation in Childcare), and ChildFund's Child Connect Project and their new monitoring and evaluation system.

CBM has utilised the opportunity of the partnership to share expertise around disability in development. Caritas has also brought in key leaders from their partner organisations for discussion with AusAID on country specific political issues such as Zimbabwe and Sri Lanka. In turn AusAID has presented at NGO meetings including participation in the World Vision in-house staff development meetings on child protection.

In terms of potential areas, CARE notes that it is the intention of their partnership to collaborate with AusAID in the area of women's empowerment. Also AusAID has proposed working with the partnership NGOs around innovative evaluation approaches for the purpose of AusAID learning and capacity building.

Overall however, the considerable opportunity for mutual learning and information exchange between AusAID and the NGOs seems to be still developing.

The NGOs have included in their annual reports to AusAID considerable detail about programs and about specific areas of learning and change. However, limited resources in AusAID to analyse and synthesise this information means that it has largely not been utilised or shared more widely in the agency. Also AusAID reports that it has been invited to participate in partner NGO evaluations but in most cases, this has not been possible.

A further missed opportunity and one that seems to be critical to maximising the value of the partnerships for AusAID more widely, appears to be a lack of connection between AusAID country and thematic areas with the ANCP partnership program. In turn, this lack of informed country and program engagement has contributed to AusAID difficulty in analysing the effectiveness and impact of ANCP programs.

### *Policy dialogue*

Increased policy dialogue was an intention of the partnerships. As noted above there has been increased interaction and conversations between AusAID and the Partner NGOs and the evidence suggests this has in some cases included policy dialogue. For example, the NGOs report that there has been dialogue around the area of community engagement and around the area of monitoring and evaluation for civil society programs. There are some additional examples such as Oxfam's work on youth leadership and its collaboration with the AusAID funded Developmental Leadership Program. Plan International Australia also reports a constructive policy engagement with AusAID around a focus on child rights through a program undertaken with Save the Children Australia and ChildFund.

AusAID reports that the partnerships have encouraged a consistent approach to implementing AusAID's mandatory child protection standards.

Overall however both AusAID and the NGOs note there has been limited opportunity for substantive and strategic policy dialogue, apart from the interaction between the NGO CEOs and the AusAID Director-General.

As noted above, the various areas of focus and expertise identified in each partnership agreement do not seem to have developed into substantive areas of sharing and dialogue, leading in turn to changed practice. The interactions that would facilitate this sort of exchange are those between NGOs and Country Posts and between NGOs and middle management levels at AusAID. However, these relationships have not been strong in the Partnership program.

### *Partnerships between agencies*

All of the NGOs have been involved in the ANCP Community Engagement Working Group (CEWG). This working group cooperates with AusAID and has been a successful collaborative effort across partnership agencies to research and implement innovation around Australian community engagement with international development. The working group has identified the challenges and trends in community engagement and is working to establish evidence-based programs to trial new forms of community engagement practice. It is anticipated that this work will be made available to the whole NGO sector in Australia.

Apart from this very active group the collaboration and partnership between the partner NGOs has been limited until recently. There has been some collaboration around particular sectors such as disability and child protection. For example Plan International Australia and ChildFund have worked together on research and working groups related to child protection. Oxfam has worked with Plan International Australia, sharing ideas and experience around learning and effective development practice.

Overall however the agencies have focused on their relationship with AusAID and externally with field and other partners rather than consider the possibilities and opportunities of greater partnership involvement with each other. Joint possibilities have therefore not been realised. While some sector collaboration has taken place there has not been any deliberate sharing of ANCP funded work in countries. Nor have the agencies worked together to identify the outcomes and lessons learned from their partnership funded projects.

The NGOs have recognised this and are interested to utilise the remaining time of the partnership program to move from an individual to more of a collective model of working together.

### **Partnership Objective Three: Be Accountable**

This outcome overlaps with the second but focuses more on the nature of relationships between the partner NGOs, AusAID and other stakeholders. The intention is for each partner to be transparent with aid recipients, the Australian public and other donors and accountable for the outcomes that they achieve under the partnerships.

The partner NGOs have responded to this objective in various ways. Many of the agencies have utilised the ANCP funding to develop improved systems of monitoring and evaluation, research and information dissemination for the purpose of accountability<sup>12</sup>.

For example, as noted in case study five, ChildFund has designed and put in place a new system to assess its development effectiveness which includes organisational outcome indicators and a process for measurement of these; standardised organisational outputs for planning, budgeting and monitoring purposes which can be aggregated across program areas and countries; and a process for identifying and preparing case studies to document the direct impact of ChildFund programs on children, youth and their families.

Plan International Australia has utilised the partnership funding to develop strong downward accountability mechanisms such as an annual participatory program review process (APPR). The APPR provides an opportunity for Plan International Australia's program units and country offices and its stakeholders, in particular the community to reflect on short-term programme progress and make ongoing programme adjustments. It has commenced production of additional reporting mechanisms including an Annual Effectiveness Review Report. Oxfam has developed a detailed framework for monitoring and evaluation and learning and has linked this deliberately to the ANCP partnership program. This includes focused research which documents Oxfam's approaches and examines the underlying theory of change in various programs. Likewise CARE has used ANCP money

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<sup>12</sup> It is important to note that ANCP includes an allowance of up to 10% of funds to be used for design monitoring and evaluation. With increased funds overall Partner NGOs have been able to draw upon that allocation to make significant improvements to their capacity in this area.

to support work on their Asia Impact Report, an initiative designed to present information on CARE's impact in Asia over a five-year period.

The NGOs have also placed a strong emphasis upon accountability to partners and communities. For example TEAR undertook a survey of partners in 2011 to examine ways in which the organisation could continue to be transparent with partners and communities. As a result new measures are being introduced including regional workshops with partners. The workshops will provide a mechanism to ensure those partners have a transparent understanding of TEAR and in turn require partners to extend the same level of accountability and transparency to the communities with which they work.

In a similar way Caritas have been working with partners to improve accountability to primary stakeholders. This focuses on partners improving their capacity to manage for outcomes and facilitating their partner's ability to plan with communities and report back to communities.

#### **Case Study Seven: Oxfam HIV/AIDS Program South Africa**

Oxfam focus their program work around notions of accountability and the right of people to experience and demand accountability. The 'Learning Hub' on accountability and active citizenship which cuts across all the agency programs, models different ways to build accountability between communities and powerholders.

The purpose of the HIV/AIDS program in South Africa is to enhance the quality and cohesion of the response to HIV and AIDS in South Africa, so that communities are less vulnerable to the impact of the disease.

The program has four objectives which focus on HIV prevention, service delivery and the rights of people living with HIV and AIDS. The program works with 30 partners across three provinces in South Africa. Direct beneficiaries are estimated to be 647,832 people (409,557 of whom are women).

While the program largely focuses on prevention and service delivery the additional accountability and active citizenship approach from Oxfam, it also ensures a focus on accountability to beneficiaries. People with HIV and AIDS are supported to hold donors accountable and to demand accountability from other duty bearers such as government.

In terms of accountability to AusAID and to each other, the Partner NGOs have reported as requested to AusAID on an annual basis. The reports are lengthy and contain considerable details about projects and agency development. They are not in a form which allows for synthesis or aggregation across the program. This has contributed to AusAID's inability to tell a coherent story about partnership outcomes.

There is currently a new reporting system being trialled for ANCP more generally. This will assist the partnerships reporting but will not be sufficient to capture the full story for the additional work undertaken through the partnership funding.

### Partnership Objective Four: Build Community Support

This outcome directs the NGOs to work to increase the understanding and knowledge in Australia and overseas about Australia's efforts to reduce poverty. This outcome builds upon the existing strengths and experience of NGOs in communicating their work within Australia. Its inclusion in the partnerships objectives was influenced by the then Minister for Foreign Affairs who was keen to see greater Australian community understanding and involvement in the aid program.

The agencies have used their existing networks and contacts and built upon these in a deliberate way for this objective. They have also worked together through the Community Engagement Working Group as previously outlined.

Individual agency work has been impressive in its spread and reach. For example Caritas has worked through its Catholic constituency of parishes, schools, universities and other Catholic organisations to deliver community based awareness and formal education around aid and development directly to more than 10,000 people.

Plan International Australia has worked through presentations in schools with more than 14,000 students in the last financial year as well as targeted work with smaller numbers of young Australians. The development awareness program operated by CARE has included a range of strategies tailored to the audience needs. CARE estimate that the program to date has reached 28,000 Australians.

#### **Case Study Eight: ChildFund Child Connect Project**

The ChildFund Child Connect Project partnered with 11 Australian schools (urban, rural and one indigenous/remote); with two universities (which provided research and creative input); with one NGO; and with six volunteer translators in Australia.

ChildFund recruited communications staff to use digital media to bring groups of children in Australia and the developing world into direct contact with each other. In Australia this is occurring through primary schools in New South Wales which are now able to access an online global learning program through the website. Children in Australia and overseas are taking part in a program which connects a class in Australia with a class in a developing country. In 2011 all the participating children (in Australia, Laos, East Timor and Vietnam) contributed to a short feature film which was shown at screenings in each country attended by children and families teaches local community members.

Over 1200 children have been involved to date across the four countries and the program is proving highly motivating for children, their families and their schools.

The other NGOs have similarly taken up this opportunity to extend their development education work. Oxfam use a range of opportunities and resources to engage Australians in conversations about aid and development. The estimate that their ANCP community engagement program will have contacted and worked with over 880,000 Australians by the end of 2012/13.

As the largest partner NGO, World Vision has a wide ranging approach to information provision for Australian communities. Their primary school resources are developed in partnership with the Primary School Teachers Association. There are currently two more resource kits being developed

with information about Indonesia and PNG. It is estimated that these online resources alone will be utilised by more than 1 million young people including rural populations in Australia.

As noted the CEWG have been looking at wider issues and strategies related to education of the Australian community. Phase 2 of a research project involves an online questionnaire with more than 1000 participants followed by in-depth focus groups and analysis. So far the reporting coming from this research confirms that support for aid is strong among the Australian public however there are limitations to that support. The intention for the CEWG is to undertake further research over the next 12 months to provide an evidence based approach for the aid and development sector to better engage with the Australian public.

Notwithstanding this extensive and undoubted list of achievements, AusAID have expressed some concern about changing political environment and the current more limited political support for funding this area of work. As a government agency they are bound to reflect government policy position and given this position has changed, there are now some tensions for AusAID in ongoing support for this area of work.

### **Partnership Objective Five: Demonstrate Results and Sharing Experiences**

This outcome area refers to sharing lessons from program activities and the need for each partner NGO to respect each other's comparative knowledge on policy and programming.

The NGOs have worked in several ways in this area. Several agencies have worked to extend their monitoring evaluation and research work, others have drawn on their specialist expertise to contribute to wider sector capacity building and, as noted previously, some of the agencies have worked in partnership with research organisations and universities to undertake joint learning in various areas. In addition as major NGOs within the development sector in Australia all of the partner NGOs contribute in multiple ways to sector governance and development.

### ***Evaluation and research***

Alongside further development of monitoring and evaluation systems, a particular feature emerging from the partner NGOs has been the emphasis upon evaluation of ANCP funded programs. For example, World Vision has utilised ANCP funding to conduct a meta-evaluation on WASH, Education and Health in the Pacific in 2011 which has guided strategy on these sectors in that region and been integral in the Terms of Reference for design of new projects. In 2013 its meta-evaluation review will include over 45 ANCP evaluations. World Vision has worked to share this information through an annual program review publication that highlights ANCP projects.

Oxfam places a similar emphasis upon evaluations and reviews. In 2009-10 they produced nine review or evaluation reports related to ANCP programs. In 2010-11 there were a further seven which covered areas such as sustainable economic development, gender, governance and saving lives.

CARE has a research strategy currently under development which will draw together the evidence base from programmes across Asia, the Pacific and Africa. CARE is also using ANCP funding to document its experience in using new tools and guidelines particularly through its African micro-finance program. As noted earlier the ANCP funds have supported CARE's work on their Asian Impact Report, a public report outlining impact across five years of work in Asia.

Smaller agencies are also giving attention to evaluation. TEAR report that they will evaluate eight ANCP projects in 2012-13. TEAR have specifically committed themselves to research into measuring effectiveness in complex operating environments as part of their shared priorities with AusAID. This research is ongoing and will be the contribution made by TEAR to the partnership and wider sector.

Overall there are considerable lessons in evidence emerging from the evaluation research work of the NGOs. The challenge appears to be drawing this together and disseminating it in communicating information in a way that is the value for AusAID particularly at the program level.

### *Contributions to the wider NGO sector*

While not a major aspect of changes achieved to date, some agencies can point to an increased ability to influence and contribute to the wider Australian NGO sector as a result of ANCP funding. For example, Caritas has made various presentations around its innovative approaches to project design.

A significant contribution to the wider sector has been made by CBM. The NGO has utilised the opportunity of the partnerships to provide training and mentoring in disability inclusive development approaches in the NGO sector in Australia.

To date, the agencies have not been able to provide a collective sharing of lessons and experiences to the wider sector. There would be considerable merit in this.

#### ***Case Study Nine: CBM contribution to disability inclusive practice***

The additional partnership funding has enabled CBM to promote disability inclusive practices and programs with organisations in Australia. The strategy for this has been to work with international NGOs, domestic disabled person's organisations (DPO) and through support for research.

The outcomes to date include the following:

- A workshop in 2010 sought to improve the disability inclusion practice of Australian NGOs in development and in humanitarian emergency response. Nineteen NGOs attended including three participants from DPOs. 100% of participants were satisfied with the workshop and were able to identify at least one issue they could take further in inclusion. As a result, one NGO has built practical disability inclusion into their Humanitarian Partnership Agreement and intends to share learning with other NGOs. Another NGO has revised its disability policy in its emergency manual. Two additional NGOs have requested formal technical assistance from the CBM Nossal Partnership
- In 2011 CBM also worked on a pilot project with World Vision Australia to strengthen disability inclusive development practice. This was supported by ANCP Partnership funds. Assistance included a training workshop for 10 World Vision program staff to provide advice and tools on achieving disability inclusive designs, development processes and projects. A resource was developed using examples of World Vision projects to highlight entry points for disability inclusion.
- Early in 2011 a workshop was held in Melbourne to strengthen capacity of 14 domestic DPOs to support and promote disability inclusive development principles and practices. At the end of the workshop DPOs identified actions they could take which included: networking with DPOs in developing countries, working with non-government organisations, and engaging with efforts and campaigns within Australia to promote disability inclusive development. In 2010 an initiative was funded to identify gaps in inclusive research. Five researchers from Asia Pacific were supported to attend the workshop at the ADDC Conference in Darwin. The subsequent report has been used in planning by ADDC in advocacy planning; by AusAID to draft a disability research strategy; and by the ACFID University Linkages group which have drawn on this research to shape conference topics e.g. Deakin University linkage conference.



### *Sector wide collaboration*

As well-established NGOs within the Australian NGO sector all of the partner NGOs are actively involved with ACFID and other Australian and international networks. This engagement is extensive and is summarised in the following table.

NGO	Representation on ACFID Executive committee	Representation on ACFID committee /s (DPC, APPC)	Representation on ACFID working groups	Representation on CDC	Representation on other sector wide groups
Plan Intl. Australia	1	2	9	1	Co-chair of the WASH reference group
World Vision	1	2	Numerous	1	Aid communications forum
Oxfam	1	2	8		
CARE	1		14		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NGO consortium on sexual and reproductive health</li> <li>• Secretary to the Parliamentary group on population and development</li> <li>• Partnership with Murray Stopes International on sexual and reproductive health in emergencies</li> </ul>
Caritas	1	1	7		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Church agencies network</li> </ul>
TEAR		1	3		
ChildFund	1	1	7		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Australian Coalition for Education and Development</li> <li>• Sydney Development Circle</li> </ul>
CBM			9		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Australian disability and development consortium</li> <li>• Micah challenge</li> </ul>

It is important to note that this collaboration and engagement is not the result of the partnerships or the funding available through ANCP but is a commitment made by each agency to the Australian NGO sector more generally. AusAID has chosen partners who are well connected and committed within the Australian NGO sector. Arguably this choice considerably increases the value of the partnership funding. As ANCP funds build the capacity and quality of these agencies, each is very well positioned and actively engaged across the sector to contribute more widely to governance, program practice and quality, development effectiveness and research and learning.

## Unexpected outcomes

In addition to outcomes recorded under each of the five objectives of the partnerships NGOs reported some additional unexpected outcomes. These include:

- ChildFund reports that there are signs the partnership process has reduced the level of competition among the NGOs and thereby encouraged more inter-agency collaboration. They provide the example of the Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) centred consortium that includes ChildFund, Plan International Australia and Save the Children.
- Oxfam reports there has been expanded cross sectoral partnerships developed through their expanded ANCP program, for example with the University of Melbourne.
- TEAR reports that arrangements have been made for their main partner in the Pacific to discuss its leadership and development programs with AusAID staff in Fiji. This was unexpected and certainly unlikely to have occurred outside of the partnership approach.
- Plan International Australia reports that a unique opportunity has arisen within the Plan International family for cooperation between Plan agencies that have partnership agreements in place with institutional donors. The increased and more predictable funding has facilitated this process of collective planning and implementation for greater effectiveness.
- AusAID reports that it has had the opportunity to provide input to NGO organisational and strategic planning.

## Discussion

The findings from the review suggest that the ANCP partnership program has made considerable achievements against the original five objectives particularly against objectives one, two and four.

### *Objective one – Poverty Reduction*

Using the ANCP funds AusAID has invested in and developed, together with NGOs, a global program that is focused upon poor and marginalised people in 53 countries and regions across the world. The program has 289 varied innovations in poverty reduction, expected to have tangible results for more than 6.5 million people.

At a minimum the program provides a global learning opportunity for AusAID around effective poverty reduction strategies at community level. It also makes it a significant contribution to the targets outlined against the five strategic goals of the Australian aid program<sup>13</sup>. Most importantly the available evidence suggests that the program is making a difference to the lives of large numbers of the most poor and marginalised people in the world.

The achievements under this objective appear to be directly related to three factors. These include the additional funding from AusAID; the flexible and long term nature of that funding; and the established competency and capacity of each of the partner NGOs. Put together these three factors mean more direct poverty alleviation has been achieved.

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<sup>13</sup> AusAID (2012) "Helping the World's Poor Through Effective Aid: Australia's Comprehensive Aid Policy Framework to 2015 – 16", Canberra, page 22.

The findings to date under objective one suggest that to further realise the potential of this program there needs to be attention given to develop systems to better capture information about impact and outcomes as well as generate detailed learning about effective strategies for poverty reduction with marginalised and poor communities.

There are clearly opportunities in countries where many NGOs have focused the ANCP programs to undertake cross agency impact studies which would generate valuable information for both the NGOs and AusAID.

The findings also suggest that more long term and flexible funding, directed to other ANCP agencies, (which are all accredited agencies, bound by the ACFID Code of Conduct), could reasonably be expected to also lead to increased poverty reduction.

### ***Objective two – Build Partnerships***

In the recently produced AusAID Civil Society Engagement Framework, AusAID have identified the importance of working with civil society in country programs, but also have identified the need to look for more effective strategies for these processes.

The results from the partnership program under the second objective of building partnerships, suggests that the partner NGOs have considerable experience in various approaches to capacity building and engagement with partners. There are obvious synergies here and opportunities to learn from their strategies as well as exploring the ways in which partner agencies and other ANCP NGOs can facilitate and assist AusAID in development of this area.

Once again there is a need to systematically capture information about the effectiveness of partnerships between Australian ANCP NGOs and civil society organisations and generate lessons and learning for AusAID more widely.

In regard to partnerships between NGOs and with AusAID, this has been less satisfactory. This is addressed below.

### ***Objective three – Be Accountable***

The results from the review suggest that NGOs are active in the area of accountability and are working to improve their monitoring and evaluation systems. It does appear that the support through the partnership program has made a substantial contribution to this attention to monitoring evaluation and accountability.

There may be some merit in considering how specific focus on this area could be extended more widely across the ANCP program and in other AusAID agreements with NGOs, to ensure a similar long-term focus on building good quality systems for accountability.

Accountability to AusAID has been high but not in a form that is easily aggregated or synthesised for wider communication. There is clearly a need for more attention to this area, probably in line with the redevelopment of the wider reporting for ANCP.

### ***Objective four – Build Community Support***

The information and results under the objective suggest that the partner NGOs have been very effective in using minimal funds to extend the discussion about aid and development with the

Australian public. The research undertaken by the CEWG is arguably important and something that would be of benefit to both the AusAID and Australian NGOs more widely.

At the same time it is necessary to be realistic about the political context and current and future government policy. It would be unfortunate if this became a barrier to further development and achievements under the partnership.

There maybe some merit however, in a continued focus on the research and collective examination of development education being undertaken by the CEWG. This will serve all the NGOs and AusAID as well as the wider sector. AusAID and the partner NGOs need to undertake further discussion in this area.

### *Objective five – Demonstrate Results and sharing Experiences*

Similar to objective three, it is clear that the NGOs are considerably increasing their focus on evaluation and sharing of lessons. As noted previously the issues here are around utilisation and dissemination of this information, particularly within AusAID.

The MTR has identified that one of the strengths of the NGOs has been their established connections and contributions within the development sector in Australia and internationally. A significant part of the value of the ANCP partnership program has been the capacity building and learning of these eight organisations which in turn has resonated more widely throughout the sector because of those connections. Some attention to both assessing and valuing this interaction and wider engagement would be of value as the partnerships continue. It would contribute to AusAID identification of the particular characteristics of partner agencies that makes them of most value to AusAID.

### *The partnership approach*

‘Partnership’ has been a contested term in the review of this program. NGO and AusAID experience in other programs has been that a partnership modality provides for significant changes in methods and resources for the relationship between the two and what they can achieve together. While the ANCP partnerships have resulted in greater contact engagement between AusAID and the individual NGOs, it has not led to significantly greater engagement between the NGOs or the increased learning and policy dialogue between NGOs and AusAID that was anticipated. In large part this has been due to the lack of resources and dedicated technical support.

AusAID has now made a very large investment in these NGOs, supporting development of their systems and their expansion. This should not be wasted and consideration needs to be given about how to take forward this partnership program beyond 2012/13. At the same time attention needs to be given to the intent of the program. If the program continues as it is then realistically it is an expanded ANCP program with flexible funding arrangements. The evidence shows this is of benefit to the agencies and result in more services to poor people and more effective and in-depth development programs. There would be merit in considering how this could expand to other ANCP agencies, which presumably could also increase and expand their programming in a similar way.

Alternatively, if the program intent is to develop more towards a partnership model with increased emphasis upon learning and exchange then serious attention needs to be given to the mechanisms and resources to support the program in that direction. And even with more resources, the number of partner agencies would need to be limited.

It should be noted that most NGO partnership programs in other parts of AusAID, generally of much smaller size than the ANCP partnership program, have dedicated secretariats or support facilities alongside AusAID management and oversight.

## Conclusions and recommendations

AusAID and the partner NGOs have established a program that has considerable value because it, in line with the wider ANCP, targets poor and marginalised people. This supports AusAID's intention towards contribution to the MDGs and directly supports the Australian aid policy framework.

The program has considerable potential but fully realising this potential will require attention to a number of areas. These include better assessment of impact, better communication and sharing of outcomes and learning, more systematic and dedicated resourcing and better understanding of the purpose, scope and responsibilities of partnership.

In addition the current context for this partnership program has to include consideration of the remaining ANCP NGOs and the nature of their relationship to AusAID. It also has to include consideration of the Civil Society Engagement Framework and the many issues and actions within the Framework that directly overlap with areas emerging from this review.

### *Partnerships till 2013*

The partnerships have approximately twelve months remaining. In that time attention should be given to identification and consolidation of learning, as well as positioning for the future. It is therefore recommended that:

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.*
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.*
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.*

### *Beyond 2013*

As noted above, AusAID need to consider how to build on the effective development practice undertaken to date beyond 2013. Notwithstanding any decision about additional partnerships, given the positive outcomes of the partnerships to date, AusAID should seek to extend the opportunity for flexible and increased funding to all ANCP NGOs.

If AusAID decide to also maintain a partnership program then it is recommended that:

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.*
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.*

The development of the partnership has had implications for the ANCP more generally. The partnerships have established objectives which reflect mutual aims of the NGOs and AusAID as opposed to the ANCP intention of AusAID to support NGO work and objectives. The partnerships have not been managed through the AusAID NGO ANCP mechanism, the Committee for Development Cooperation (CDC). The partnerships used selection criteria for funding to ANCP agencies in addition to accreditation (albeit accreditation was the starting point for these additional criteria).

These and other features are all raised as areas for clarification and further development in the AusAID CSEF. In light of the experience of the partner NGOs to date in managing these changes, they are well positioned therefore to assist AusAID to therefore address the actions and processes to work through these developments. It is therefore recommended that:

6. *AusAID utilise the partner NGOs to assist with relevant areas and actions under the Civil Society Engagement Framework.*

## Annex One

### *Midterm review: stage one*

#### *Introduction*

As the first stage of the MTR of the ANCP partnerships the nine agencies (including AusAID) are being asked to prepare short papers (*five pages plus annexes as appropriate*) that outline the value and the challenges of partnership for their agency.

The intention is to use these papers as the beginning of the evidence for the value of partnerships. The intention is also to learn from these experiences and utilise the information for further discussions and redevelopment of the partnership approach between ANCP NGOs and AusAID.

#### *Task*

Each of the nine agencies is asked to respond to the following questions:

1. (*1/2-1 page*) Given the particular identity of your agency (both AusAID and Partner NGOs), including your strengths and approaches to development, how have you approached the Partnership process? (This includes how you have operationalised the funding, the opportunities offered through a partnership engagement with AusAID and with other agencies?) What would not have happened without the partnership?
2. (*3-4pages*) Given this approach, how has the partnership enabled your agency to work more effectively with poor people and your in-country partners? In particular:
  - a. *The overall advantages and disadvantages of partnerships for your agency development work?*
  - b. *What has been achieved in your development work through the increase in funding and funding certainty?*
  - c. *What has been achieved in your development work due to the partnership approach, both between NGOs and between NGOs and AusAID? Why?*
  - d. *What other unexpected outcomes have occurred? Why?*
  - e. *What has not been possible? Why?*

Please indicate (in annexes) the evidence base you have for your assessments, including reference to relevant documents, existing monitoring information and reports, people within your organisation, partners or elsewhere. Do not repeat existing information. Simply attach and refer to it or indicate how it can be accessed for verification.

3. (*1/2 -1 page*) As far as possible outline your ideas about the critical areas where further improvement of the partnerships is required (drawing from your experience of the partnership process), alongside suggestions for these improvements (such as how partners should be chosen, and what their roles and responsibilities are)?

#### *Submission*

Responses are due to Linda Kelly by 2 March, 2012.

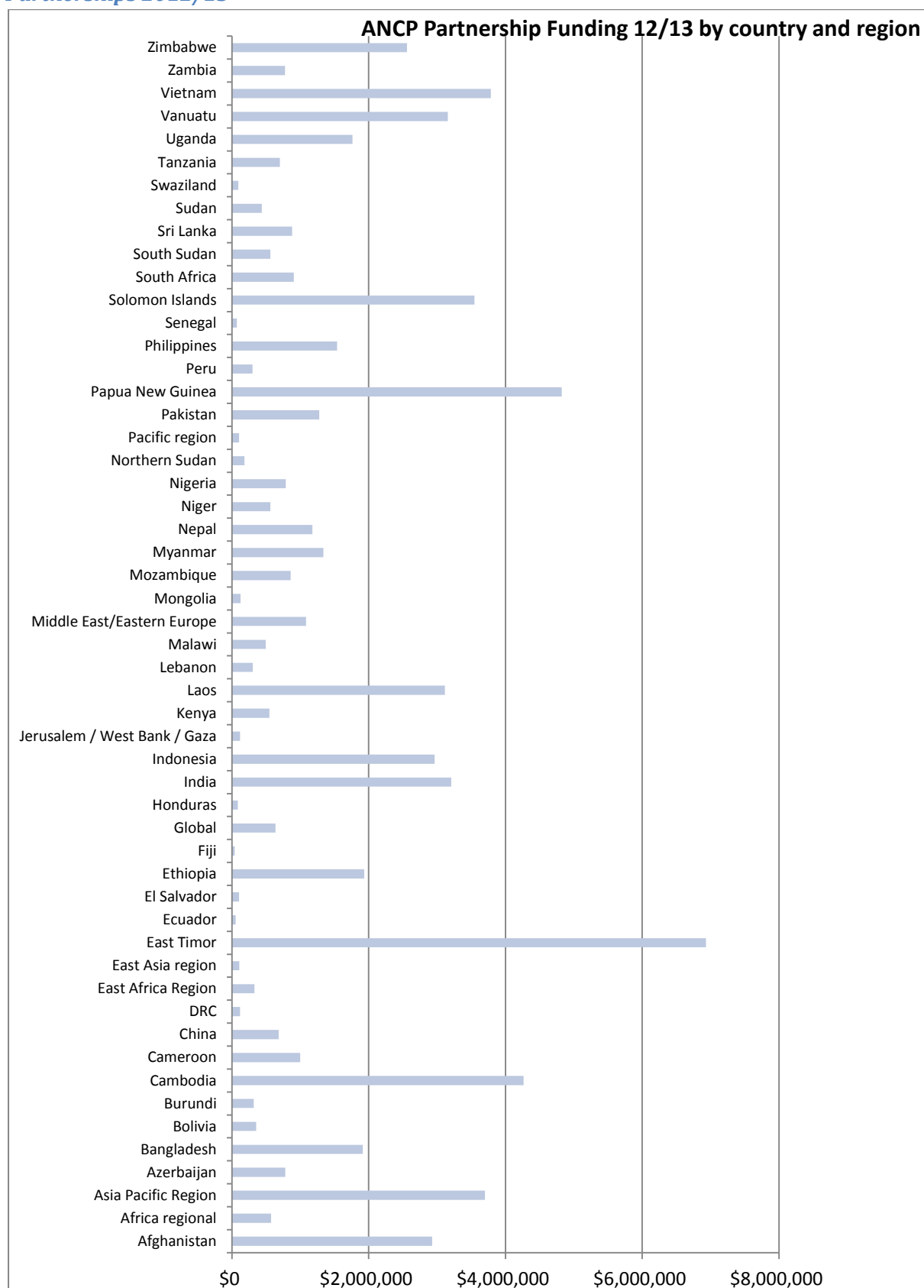
The intention is to gather an in-depth and useful picture of the outcomes and challenges, based on available evidence. Therefore any additional information or clarification that is required will be sought from individual agencies. If agencies are having difficulty presenting their information they can contact the consultant to discuss ([linda.kelly@praxisconsultants.com.au](mailto:linda.kelly@praxisconsultants.com.au)).

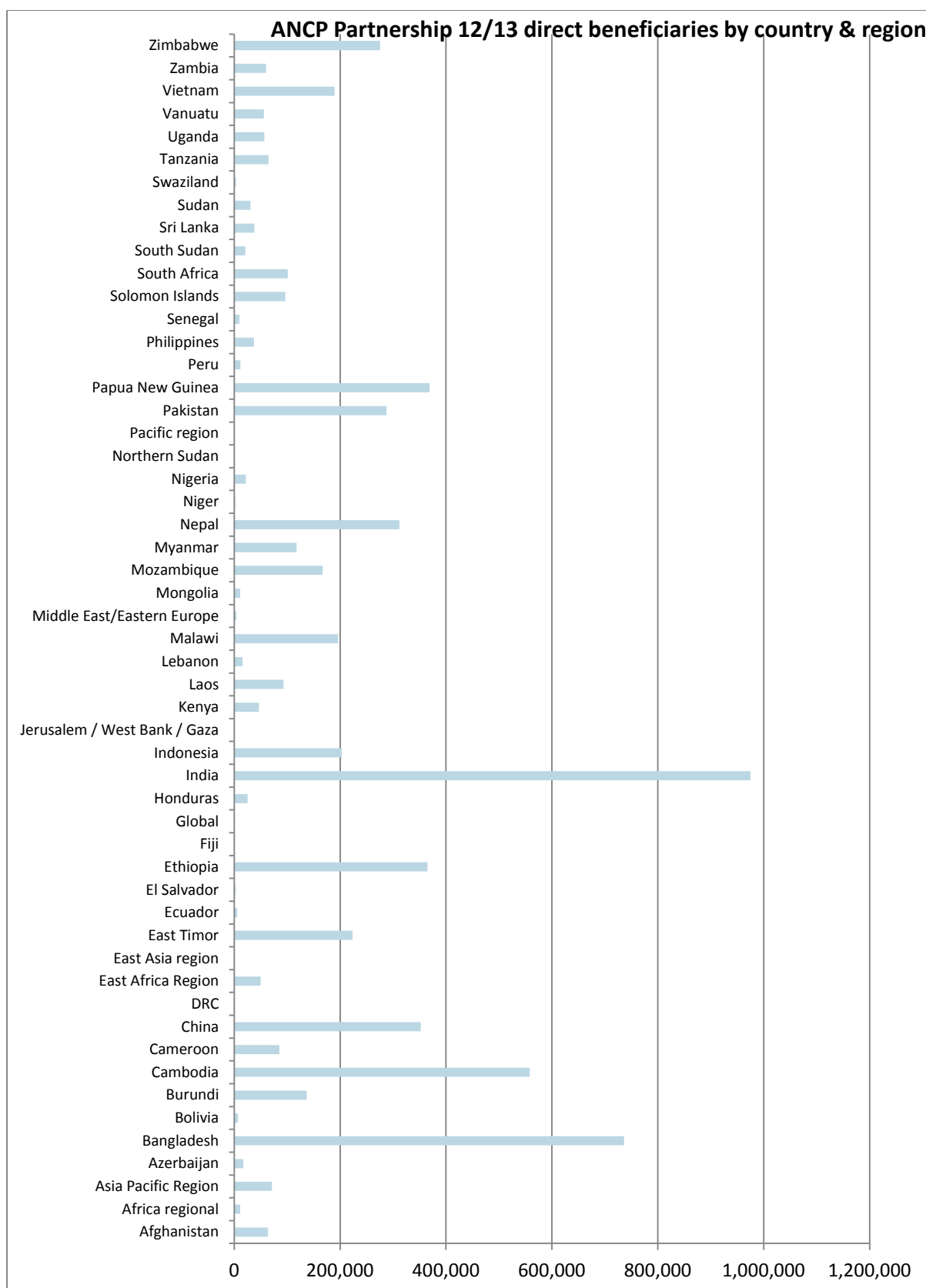
Responses will be analysed and synthesized by mid March and all agencies as well as AusAID will be able to see and comment on the draft findings.



## Annex Two

### NGO estimates for beneficiary numbers and dollar amounts per country for ANCP Partnerships 2012/13





Note that these figures need to be understood in the context of the programs funded. For the large scale advocacy and awareness raising programs undertaken in India for example, beneficiary numbers can be expected to be high, despite ANCP funding to this country being much lower than for many other countries.

On the other hand, given the particular challenges of working for effective development in countries such as PNG and Solomon Islands, beneficiary numbers may be low, despite a considerable focus of ANCP funding into these countries.

## Annex Three

### *World Vision and Oxfam ANCP funding by country: 2009 & 2013 comparison*

The following graphs show for the two partner NGOs receiving the largest funding amounts how their programs have shifted and focused over the four years of ANCP partnership funding. (Note that figures for 2012/13 are indicative.)

