



CHOGM  
BRISBANE 2001

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# focus

on the Commonwealth





## From the Minister

This year, Australia is privileged to host the first Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in the new millennium. I look forward with keen anticipation to the meeting in early October in Brisbane. Heads of Government will have the opportunity to discuss and resolve many issues of common interest, benefiting from shared values and an informality that is often missing in international meetings.

With a population of nearly 19.5 million, Australia is among the 10 most populous Commonwealth countries. It is also the third largest financial contributor to Commonwealth organisations, giving Australia a prominent position in the Commonwealth.

Support for the Commonwealth is an important element of Australia's foreign policy. In earlier days, Australia perceived the Commonwealth mainly as an adjunct to its relations with Britain. Now the chief value of the Commonwealth resides in its ability, as an association of countries from all parts of the world, to protect and advance the fundamental political values of democracy, human rights, the rule of law, independence of the judiciary and good governance of its members.

The modern Commonwealth is an effective forum for addressing key economic and development issues. Australia values this contribution. We applauded the Commonwealth's early analytical work and consensus-building on the Heavily Indebted Poor Country debt initiative; its ground-breaking joint study with the World Bank in 2000 of the special challenges facing small

states; its constructive approach to helping members understand, and benefit from, economic globalisation; and its important capacity-building technical assistance, particularly for improving governance.

The Brisbane CHOGM will provide an opportunity to showcase, once again, the Commonwealth's principled position in support of democracy, good governance and the rule of law. The interdependence between these fundamental political values and sustainable poverty reduction gives the Commonwealth particular relevance as an aid channel and partner. Australia is a major contributor to the Commonwealth's development work, mainly through the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation. We look forward to further collaboration with the Commonwealth in the practical pursuit of the development and broader objectives we share with the Commonwealth.

Alexander Downer  
Minister for Foreign Affairs

Front cover:

Members of a Bougainville dance group with a gift to present to the Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea, Sir Mekere Morauta, at the signing of the Bougainville Peace Agreement. Photo: Geoff Tooth

# Australia's aid in Commonwealth countries — a development partnership for all seasons

With almost 40 per cent of its aid program going to Commonwealth countries, Australia is a strong supporter of poverty reduction and sustainable development in the Commonwealth. And it is making a significant difference, Peter Davis reports.

In the areas of health, education, infrastructure strengthening and peace monitoring, small, medium and large scale aid programs are reinforcing communities and improving the lives of hundreds of thousands of families throughout the poorer nations of the Commonwealth.

Commonwealth countries receive around \$650 million, or nearly 40 per cent, of Australia's aid. A significant portion goes to our nearest neighbours in Papua New Guinea and small Pacific island states. Australia also provides targeted assistance to Commonwealth countries in South Asia and Africa.

Some aid programs take the form of emergency relief in the wake of natural disasters such as floods or earthquakes. Speed is the key to success here. Needs must be quickly assessed and resources quickly allocated to help stabilise a situation and return order to chaos. The positive results of emergency relief can be almost immediate. In recent years Australian emergency relief aid has helped alleviate the devastation wrought by a tsunami in PNG, floods in Mozambique and an earthquake in India.

## TRAINING FOR GOOD GOVERNANCE

At the other end of the scale is development aid in the form of training programs for good governance. In this area the results are less tangible in the short term. But the long-term impact is significant. Institutions become stronger

and more democratic. This helps the nations concerned to function with increased confidence in a competitive and globalised world.

Between these two ends of the spectrum, there exists a vast range of Australian aid projects that train teachers, implement primary and preventative health care, provide vocational training, construct roads and bridges, develop curriculum materials, build hospitals and protect environments.

## ALLEVIATING POVERTY

Australia is a major supporter of small Pacific island states, contributing \$165 million in aid in 2001/02. Across eastern and southern Africa, Australian aid is assisting African farmers to improve water storage, soil fertility, crop diversity and tree growth, helping communities to avoid chronic food shortages. And nearly 500,000 Africans living in villages now have safe water and latrines, thanks to Australian aid. In 2001-2002 Australia will spend around \$76 million to help those in poverty and distress in Africa.

Nearly 40 per cent of the world's absolute poor live in South Asia, and in the region Australian aid focuses on projects which alleviate poverty. Last year in Sri Lanka, Australian aid contributed to better nutrition for 350,000 babies and in the country's north, Australia helped destroy over 600 landmines.

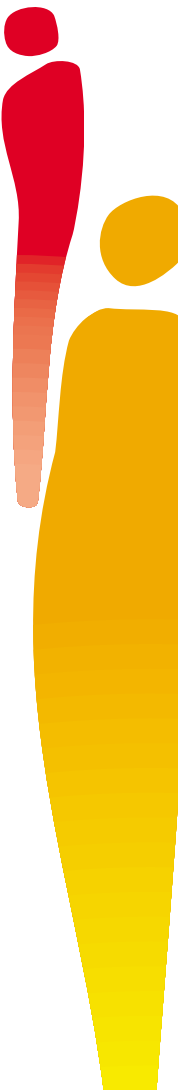
The recent commitment by the Australian Government to collaborate with the World Bank in the provision of Internet connectivity for on-line education and training in remote communities — titled the Virtual Colombo Plan — is an example of the innovation and cutting-edge technology that underpin some development programs.

Some programs are highly labour intensive. Some are delivered directly in partnership with recipient governments through bilateral agreements. Others are delivered through non-government organisations such as the Red Cross, or through United Nations organisations such as UNICEF and the World Food Programme.

## COLLABORATION ESSENTIAL

Common to all programs is the emphasis on collaboration. Projects are developed, implemented and evaluated in consultation with the beneficiaries. This ensures that each specific program remains appropriate to the real needs of the recipients.

Poverty reduction is the central objective of the Australian aid program. Within Australia's region an estimated 800 million people struggle on less than two dollars a day. It is not possible in this article to mention all of the Australian government aid projects. But the sheer diversity of projects reflects the many approaches to poverty reduction.





## MEETING THE CHALLENGE ON AUSTRALIA'S DOORSTEP

Papua New Guinea is Australia's closest neighbour. It is also the largest single beneficiary of aid from the Australian Government. However, proximity to the recipient does not make implementation of aid programs any easier.

Infrastructure in PNG is fragile.

Employment opportunities are few and poverty is widespread. Add to this the fact that approximately 800 languages are spoken among the five million people and that those people are thinly spread over some of the world's most rugged territory, and the development challenge becomes apparent.

The success with which this challenge is being met is an inspiration for the design and delivery of aid anywhere. Take, for example, the \$43 million Women's and Children's Health Project (WCHP). This was begun in 1998 and is scheduled for completion in 2003. Like all major projects, there are many facets to this one.

### DISTRIBUTING VACCINES

The long-term aim of the WCHP is to achieve improvements in key health indicators. A major challenge is the transportation and storage of vaccines to remote and rugged communities. The challenge is being met with the implementation of a system known as the cold chain. This involves a series of small specialised refrigerators in every health centre around the country so that even in the remotest part of the nation, people are never more than a few hours walk from vaccine. It also means that the vaccine won't expire prematurely.

A part of the WCHP involves the installation of 25 solar refrigeration systems in remote communities. This phase will complete the cold chain. An associated training program ensures that local technicians are appropriately skilled to maintain the system.

Already the achievements of the cold chain can be counted. Far more children

have access to vaccines for such illnesses as measles, polio, TB, tetanus and Hepatitis B. The infrastructure is now in place for the long-term health indicators to show significant improvements.

Access to vaccines makes perfect sense. But what if a vaccine doesn't exist? This is the case with malaria – a number one enemy in many regions where Australian aid is committed. At the PNG Institute of Medical Research in Goroka, researchers are working hard to develop an eagerly anticipated malarial vaccine. Australian aid is supporting much of the research, including the all-important clinical and field trials. This is a long-term project that will have a positive and far-reaching impact in many other areas.

It is one thing to ensure a child's health. But generating opportunities for a child's future in PNG involves significant education reform. As part of its support to the reform program of the PNG

Government, Australian aid has helped expand and restructure many high schools to enable students to study to years 11 and 12. The restructuring of primary schools and the creation of elementary schools as feeders have been major achievements in this reform program.

However, Australian support involves much more than restructuring systems and constructing school buildings. Teacher training and the development and production of curriculum materials are key components. For two months in 1999, printing presses in Port Moresby ran hot. Two million schoolbooks comprising 126 separate titles rolled off those presses. The printing and subsequent distribution of the books throughout every province in the country represented a triumph of the most complex logistics.

Road building in PNG also tests logistics, not to mention human and other resources. Only the most



The smiles on the faces of Dr Nese Ituaso and Dr Miliama Simeona tell of the success of an Australian-sponsored project to support the training of Tuvalu's first female doctors. Nese and Miliama have recently returned home after nine years away from Tuvalu pursuing their education and gaining medical qualifications in Australia and Fiji. The small, remote atoll of Tuvalu currently does not have the capacity to provide the training needed for medical doctors. The return home of Nese and Miliama has benefited this island community by doubling the number of practising local GPs.



Australia's international rugby team, the Wallabies, visit Luthuli High School, KwaZulu-Natal Province, during their South African rugby tour. The province has the highest incidence of HIV/AIDS in the world. Team members Jim Williams, John Eales (captain) and Joe Roff visited the Australian-funded YMCA Better Life Options project which is training young people to educate their peers about HIV/AIDS. Australia has provided \$400,000 support for the last two years. Team members met school children and encouraged them to 'stay safe'. Better Life Options uses workshops, theatre, training, classroom and after-school activities. (Photo: Steve Rose/Allsport)

experienced engineers would attempt such an undertaking in such rugged territory. And Australian aid has secured some of the world's best practitioners in this area. Since 1996, more than 1,000 km of roads have been maintained and over 30 km of the Highlands Highway have been upgraded.

In the same period, 21 bridges have been replaced or rehabilitated. Even with all these roads, air travel is sometimes the only means of moving between communities, especially in the wet season. Australian aid has funded a major upgrade of four major airports and maintenance work at a further 13 airports. The commitment to skills transfer has enabled many local engineers to gain expertise in surveying, construction, maintenance and project management.

Roads and bridges are highly visible. But some of the most successful aid is hard to see. Australia has a strong commitment to peace-building efforts in PNG such as that on the island of

Bougainville, helping to bring parties to the negotiating table during the recent civil conflict. As well as the reconstruction of roads, schools and police and health facilities, the aid program on Bougainville has helped re-establish open and regular communications. This has included a major upgrade of Radio Bougainville as well as the distribution of solar powered radios. A group of villagers gathered around a solar powered radio listening to a broadcast over Radio Bougainville is not an uncommon sight. Behind this scene lies the success of the Australian commitment to peace and reconciliation in the once troubled province.

#### **BEYOND THE DOORSTEP – AUSTRALIAN AID TO INDIA**

Australian development aid to India concentrates on a number of vital regions and sectors. In Hyderabad it's helping to develop systems for treatment, storage and disposal of the city's industrial

hazardous waste. In Chennai and other regions, it is supporting HIV/AIDS prevention. When a devastating earthquake struck Gujarat, Australia provided \$2.5 million in humanitarian assistance to earthquake victims.

Australian aid is also helping women achieve greater representation in local government. Some projects are helping to make a difference to the poorest of the poor such as street kids and waste pickers.

#### **CREATING OPPORTUNITIES FOR STREET KIDS**

Street kids in India are so ubiquitous that they are almost invisible. Many of these children are vulnerable to the predictable paths of drug addiction, prostitution and crime.

Youth for Unity and Voluntary Action is one of the many local organisations working to improve the opportunities for these children. And it is receiving Australian aid to support its outreach and counselling programs. Rural retreats are an important aspect of the program. The children are invited by welfare workers to a residential camp outside the city of Mumbai. There they develop bonds and learn survival skills. Through these programs many children have found foster homes and are now attending school.

#### **EMPOWERING THE WASTE PICKERS**

India's waste pickers are mostly women. They live in the slums of big cities and they work in excess of 10 hours a day gathering waste materials such as glass, plastic, paper and metal. They sell this to middlemen who on-sell to recycling depots. On a good day, the waste pickers might earn \$2.

In the Indian city of Pune, where about 7,000 waste pickers ply their trade, Australian aid has helped seed a co-operative store that has enabled about 40 women to bypass the middlemen and sell their materials directly to the recycling depots. In its first year of operation the store achieved a profit, paid dividends and is now self-sustaining.





## STRENGTHENING SOCIETY'S INSTITUTIONS

Democracy, justice and good governance don't come about automatically. They have to be carefully built, supported and strengthened. But good governance – where a society's institutions such as elections, the public service, financial institutions and judicial and regulatory systems are well-managed, equitable and transparent – is an essential ingredient of poverty alleviation.

In Vanuatu, for example, the redrafting of legislation is being supported by the Australian Government as part of the Institutional Strengthening Project under the Comprehensive Reform Program. Last year alone, 54 different acts were drafted under this program. The work is painstaking but the impact will be far reaching. Stronger legislation means stronger governance and that means more positive opportunities for sustainable development.

The public sector plays a very large role in Tonga's economy. Australia has been involved in assisting to redefine the role of the public sector and is helping a number of Tongan institutions with reforms that will help the country to meet its economic needs from its own



Examining flood-damaged Samoan immigration files, Senator Kay Patterson, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, is pictured with Mafaituuga Vaasatia Poloma Komiti, Secretary to the Samoan Prime Minister's Department, during a visit in June this year. The Australian Government is to start a project to improve the operations of the Samoan Immigration Service.



The delight on the faces of these students in a Bangladesh Primary school reflects the success of programs that improve children's learning. The students enjoy the benefits of an Australian Government-sponsored project called IDEAL (Intensive District Education for All) – designed to increase participation in teaching and learning by students, parents and the whole community. IDEAL employs a range of new strategies to make learning more lively and engaging, and to improve attendance in schools, particularly by girls.

resources. A project aimed at strengthening revenue-raising departments has contributed to a 23 per cent increase in government revenue collection. And in Samoa, a remarkable 75 per cent reduction in the time it takes to clear goods off the wharf has resulted from an Australian aid program-sponsored overhaul of the country's Customs Department.

Australian aid is helping increase the technical capacity of Vanuatu through a major support program at the *Institut National de Technologie de Vanuatu*. Strengthening a major institution such as this involves careful long-term planning and a major overhaul of all operations from administration and information systems to teacher training and curriculum development.

Another significant contribution by the Australian aid program is to the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation (CFTC). At the 1999 Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, Australia announced that it would increase its contribution by 10 per cent per year for three years, bringing it close to \$9.6 million in 2002-03. This increased support allows CFTC to deliver more technical assistance to developing

members of the Commonwealth and recognises its important role, particularly for smaller states and in capacity building for improved governance.

As with so many institutional strengthening programs, much of the work is behind the scenes. But to walk into a village and see young women fixing an engine, running electrical cables or building a house, is to know that there has been a significant and positive shift in educational and employment opportunities.

## IN CONCLUSION

The achievements of Australian aid can be measured in many ways. The appropriateness of design and efficiency of delivery is one measure. Another is the impact on the lives of individuals, families and communities. 'Before we formed our co-operative, I had no hope for my family. Now there is hope and I think my children will have a better future,' said Asha Bai, a waste picker in Pune. Similar sentiments have been expressed by village teachers in PNG, community health workers throughout the Pacific island nations and many other beneficiaries of the type of aid that fosters dignity and creates opportunities.

# People of Bougainville celebrate peace agreement

Australia's role in peace-building in the Commonwealth is nowhere more evident than on the island of Bougainville, just hours from north-east Australia off Papua New Guinea's east coast. Bougainville faces huge challenges after 10 years of civil war, but this did not dampen the joyous celebrations last month in Arawa at the signing of the Bougainville Peace Agreement.

There is a trunk road that runs for 300 km around the province of Bougainville. This road, like much of the island's infrastructure, was destroyed in years of heavy fighting between the island's Bougainville Revolutionary Army (BRA) and the Papua New Guinean Defence Force and its supporters. The BRA was fighting for independence from Papua New Guinea.

The rehabilitation of this road by the Australian aid program has become a symbol of Australia's efforts to restore and rebuild, helping the people of Bougainville back to peace.

Australia has spent \$100 million in the last five years to establishing peace, repairing infrastructure and strengthening communities in Bougainville.

Last month's signing of the Bougainville Peace Agreement was a major step on the road to peace and a sign that the people of Bougainville are ready to embrace a more constructive future.

Many thousands of Bougainvilleans attended the peace ceremony, undeterred by the sweltering 42 degree Celsius heat of the day. Long speeches from many dignitaries were cut short as the people, led by singsing groups from all over Bougainville, broke into dancing that lasted for some five hours in the streets.

Australia's contribution to the peace process was recognised by all the speakers at the ceremony. Joseph Kabui, President of the Bougainville People's Congress, extended particular thanks to



The Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea, Sir Mekere Morauta (right), and the President of the Bougainville People's Congress, Joseph Kabui, with a woven ceremonial basket containing the Bougainville Peace Agreement at the signing in Arawa last month. Photo: Geoff Tooth

the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Alexander Downer, saying that without the Minister's personal intervention earlier this year to negotiate a compromise on a future referendum, the agreement would not have been reached last month.

The next step on the move towards autonomy will be the agreement's passage through PNG's parliament which is necessary for the constitutional changes to be made.

According to Anthony Regan, an academic from the Australian National

University and adviser to Bougainville in the negotiations with the PNG Government on Bougainville's future, Australia's support of the peace process has been crucial.

'There have been two years of negotiations on the political future of Bougainville. Australia has been providing aid throughout – but in particular, it has provided very significant support to both sides of the negotiations,' says Anthony.

During this period Mr Downer and Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister, Senator Kay Patterson, both visited Bougainville and mainland PNG in support of the peace process and remained committed to efforts by both sides to reach an amicable agreement.

Australian support for the negotiations has included providing lawyers to assist Bougainville, a consultant to the PNG Government and facilitating transport for Bougainville's negotiators to participate in 22 rounds of talks, some of which lasted for six weeks.

'Just moving people around Bougainville has been crucial,' Anthony says. 'Bougainville leaders have at all



Senator Alan Ferguson, Chair of the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade, represents Australia in witnessing the Bougainville Peace Agreement. Photo: Geoff Tooth

stages wanted large numbers of people involved in the negotiations because the many divisions among Bougainvilleans resulting from the conflict made it essential that the process was transparent.'

Since the ceasefire, Bougainville communities divided by the crisis have been actively working on reconciliation. This includes customary ceremonies, in which 'people acknowledge the wrongs they've done, exchange wealth such as shell money and pigs, and, in some cases, offer compensation,' says Anthony. — CTS and CS

For more information on the history and current situation in Bougainville, see [www.dfat.gov.au/geo/png/bougainville/index.html](http://www.dfat.gov.au/geo/png/bougainville/index.html)

For information on Australia's aid program in Bougainville, see [www.ausaid.gov.au](http://www.ausaid.gov.au)

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## Bougainville: the origins of struggle

Bougainville's independence movement was influenced by many different factors, including cultural links to neighbouring Solomon Islands, remoteness from Papua New Guinea, perceived neglect by the Australian colonial regime, and even the impact of fighting during World War II. However, a key factor was resentment of what many Bougainvilleans regarded as the imposition of the giant copper and gold mine at Panguna, in the mountains of central Bougainville.

Calls for independence intensified following landowner resentment towards the mine in the late 1980s. Destruction of power lines to the mine late in 1988

resulted in a police crackdown that contributed to localised conflict expanding rapidly into a more general independence movement led by the Bougainville Revolutionary Army.

As the tension escalated into all-out fighting, life on Bougainville was thrown into turmoil. In the following years, thousands died, and many of the island's 160,000 inhabitants fled to refugee centres on the coast, or into the jungle-dense mountains.

In one case, a village near the town of Buka was deliberately burnt down. Many of the villagers hid by living in caves at the bottom of a cliff – the same place their grandparents had used to

escape bombing in World War II.

The situation was made worse by a blockade of the island by mainland Papua New Guinea throughout much of the 1990s. During this time, many people died from lack of medicine, and the economic impact was crushing.

People showed amazing resourcefulness during this period. Some communities in central Bougainville used coconut oil to run cars, and developed mini hydro schemes to generate electricity.

It is this same level of resourcefulness and determination that is driving the current peace efforts. — CS



# Australian Overseas Aid

Australian aid in the Commonwealth

# Governance

The Australian overseas aid program supports the Commonwealth principles of good governance, human rights and democracy. These are vital for reducing poverty and ensuring everyone is treated equally.

Australia works cooperatively with other Commonwealth countries to improve governance so that legal and administrative services are managed in an open, transparent and equitable way.

With leading experts and advisers, the Australian overseas aid program assists in efforts to reduce corruption, improve economic management, and promote free and fair elections.

This maximises the impact of Australian aid and fosters long-term peace and security.

In recent years, Australia has made a strong contribution to governance in Commonwealth countries:

- A quarter of Australian aid to the Pacific is for economic and government reform programs, which help remote island nations become more self-sufficient. Australia has helped develop effective customs regulations in Samoa, improve the legal system and media in Vanuatu, and deliver more effective health services in Fiji.
- Working through the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation, Australia has helped strengthen governance in over 50 Commonwealth states and territories – training 4,850 nationals in public sector reform, trade, and economic management.
- During 1999–2000 Australia placed 37 technical advisers in 25 Papua New Guinean Government departments and agencies, helping to improve the management of programs and resources.
- Australian aid supports free and fair elections in Commonwealth countries, including assistance to Mozambique as it emerged from years of civil war.
- An Australian-sponsored pilot project in Sri Lanka resulted in nearly 1,000 minor offenders being given community service punishments instead of jail. This allowed offenders to stay working to support their families, and reduced the strain on government facilities.



*'If you don't have a full range of skilled human resources in an economy you can't achieve much. That's why we place the highest priority on the sort of institutional strengthening and capacity building that the Australian Government is helping us with.'*

Tuilaepa Sailele Malieagaoi,  
Prime Minister of Samoa.

# Trade negotiation course an outstanding success

Training courses form an integral component of Australian aid and development.

Peter Davis reports on a course that trained 40 African trade officials to develop successful negotiating techniques.

At the Durban CHOGM, the Australian Prime Minister, John Howard, promised to assist African Governments to develop skills in negotiating international trade agreements. What followed was an intensive and highly practical two-week course in Pretoria on the theme of 'Africa, the World Trade Organisation and Trade Negotiation Techniques'.

The course, funded by the Australian Government and designed and delivered by the Melbourne company, International Trade Strategies (ITS), simulated the toughness, complexity and delicacy of trade negotiations.

'We designed the course in five weeks,' said Alan Oxley, Managing Director of ITS and former Australian Ambassador to GATT. The 40 participants in the course were senior trade officials from 20 African nations. According to Alan Oxley, the focus of the course was to inform participants of the details of WTO agreements and to develop practical techniques in negotiating with multilateral organisations.

## GETTING YOUR VOICE HEARD

'A key question we were keen to address was, how do you get your voice heard if you are a small player?' explains Alan. 'We wanted to stress that small countries can, and do, have very important roles to play. Often they can increase their influence by forming strategic coalitions.'

One of the outcomes of the course is a comprehensive training manual that demystifies many aspects of the WTO and provides practical strategies for

those who will find themselves at the negotiating table. Under the heading, *Key elements of negotiations*, the manual states: 'For a negotiation to be successful, there are four key elements which must be agreed by the participants: the subject or aim of the negotiations; the process of negotiations; a timetable for the negotiations; and who is participating. Agreeing on these elements is often part of the process. Unless these four elements are agreed, there cannot be a successful conclusion to a negotiation.'

This need to form an agreement about the nature of what will be

negotiated led to a very practical hands-on exercise during the course. 'We took the mandate of the Uruguay Round and broke into teams to develop the negotiations,' says Alan. 'All participants entered the spirit of the exercise. It became the glue that bound the course together. And it felt like a very real situation. We even secured a letter of commendation on the outcome of the simulation from the head of the WTO.'

An independent review by the Commonwealth Secretariat singled this course out for its quality of product, its relevance to the participants and the professionalism of delivery.

## Australian Aid for Commonwealth Funds, Organisations and Programs in 2001–2002

|  | \$                |
|--|-------------------|
| <b>Commonwealth Fund For Technical Cooperation —</b>   |                   |
| promotes economic and social development by providing technical assistance, training and policy advice     | 8,717,000         |
| <b>Trade and Investment Access Facility —</b>  | 500,000           |
| helps countries benefit from increasing world trade and investment   |                   |
| <b>Commonwealth Foundation —</b>   |                   |
| promotes contact and cooperation among Commonwealth NGOs by facilitating networking and training           | 677,000           |
| <b>Commonwealth Youth Programme —</b>  |                   |
| provides training for young people and facilitates their participation in national development             | 536,000           |
| <b>Commonwealth of Learning —</b>  |                   |
| provides training, materials and information to promote and facilitate the provision of distance education | 458,000           |
| <b>Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan —</b>  | 115,000           |
| strengthens capacity through postgraduate scholarships   |                   |
| <b>Commonwealth Small States Office —</b>  | 295,000           |
| helps Commonwealth small states participate in the United Nations in New York                              |                   |
| <b>Commonwealth Media Development Fund —</b>   | 52,000            |
| promotes development of professional and fair media through training                                       |                   |
| <b>Caribbean Community Sport Development Program —</b>   | 150,000           |
| promotes social development through community sport  |                   |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>11,500,000</b> |

# Australian Overseas Aid

## Australian aid in the Commonwealth

# Education

Australia works in partnership with other Commonwealth countries to provide disadvantaged and remotely located children with essentials such as school supplies, textbooks, trained teachers and a safe place to study.

Half of the Commonwealth's population is under 25 years of age. Many live in countries where there are high rates of illiteracy, particularly among girls. Poverty, illiteracy, child labour and infant mortality often result from poor access to education.

With leading educational experts and services, the Australian overseas aid program has already helped millions in Commonwealth countries receive a fair go in education:

- In Papua New Guinea, Australia has helped increase school enrolments by 192,000. In one project, Australia helped train 6,000 elementary teachers and provided materials to 1,000 elementary schools.
- The Australian-sponsored Solomon Islands Teacher Education Project graduated 65 primary teachers to secondary level in mathematics and English, redressing a critical shortage of qualified secondary teachers in community high schools there.
- In conjunction with UNICEF, Australia has provided a primary school education for nearly one

million vulnerable children, mainly girls, in three Indian states known for high levels of child labour and exploitation.

- Working with the World Bank, Australian aid has helped construct or rehabilitate 45,000 classrooms in African countries – allowing 1.8 million children to attend primary school. Commonwealth countries have benefited from the scheme.
- Thousands of Commonwealth students have studied in Australia under the Australian Development Scholarships scheme, providing graduates with skills and knowledge to assist in their home country's development. Many graduates – such as Dr Matagialofi Luaiifi-Moli, who became Secretary of Samoa's Public Service Commission – have become leaders and reformers in their home countries.
- Working with the World Bank, Australia is now involved in an innovative global education initiative to promote distance education via the Internet. Last year, 37 Commonwealth



countries directly benefited from Australian educational aid expenditure: 56 per cent to Papua New Guinea, 26 per cent to Pacific islands, 12 per cent to South Asia and 6 per cent to Africa.

*'Since this program began in 1996 we've trained 450 primary school teachers of grades seven and eight. That's 40 per cent of all teachers taking those grades – enough for significant changes to begin filtering through the system.'*

Collin Hindson, Australian team leader of BEMTUP, a program to enhance teaching skills in Fiji.



# Wired for good health

There's a lot to be learnt as a volunteer, according to Australian Youth Ambassador Leigh Roberts, on assignment in Vanuatu. Along with a smattering of Bislama, he's returning to Australia with a strong sense of accomplishment.

Politics can get in the way sometimes, as Leigh Roberts found out when his first assignment as a Youth Ambassador, training young electricians in Fiji, was cut short after the coup.

Undaunted, he searched the list of proposed projects on the AusAID internet site, and applied for another position as electrician at Vila Central Hospital, Vanuatu. In March he found himself back in the Pacific.

His project was to rewire Vila Central Hospital, a large 200-bed hospital. 'The existing wiring was a dangerous and incompatible mix of Australian and French practices,' Leigh says. 'The hospital had none of the materials necessary to carry out this work, and wasn't able to buy them.' But after discussions with the Australian Government, \$10,000 was allocated to allow work to start on some of the urgent tasks.

'Not all of my time has been spent inside the hospital roof pulling cables,' Leigh says. He also repaired many pieces of hospital equipment, including sterilisers and x-ray equipment, 'and I had a great time trying to impress staff and patients with my slowly progressing Bislama,' he laughs.

As well as working with, and training the hospital's maintenance staff, Leigh helped train three students from INTV, the local Technical Institute. 'It's important for the students to understand Australian Standards as most of the new building projects in Vanuatu require wiring installed to these standards,' Leigh says.

'The hospital has been a great place to work, and has provided me with accommodation and lunches. When I have to leave, I will miss my work mates who've taught me as many things as I have them'.



Visiting the remote village of Jet on Tanna Island, Vanuatu, to install solar powered tele-radio communications equipment to link the island's only hospital with Vila Central hospital, Australian Youth Ambassador Leigh Roberts (centre) works with Nakapue Thompson (left), from Tanna, and Rodney Spooner, a communications officer from the Vanuatu Mobile Force.

Students from Commonwealth countries awarded Australian Development Scholarships, by country of origin, 2001-02 (est.)

| Commonwealth Countries   | 2001-02 |
|--------------------------|---------|
| Papua New Guinea         | 396     |
| Pacific Island Countries |         |
| Kiribati                 | 18      |
| Samoa                    | 23      |
| Tonga                    | 25      |
| Tuvalu                   | 3       |
| Vanuatu                  | 15      |
| sub-total                | 84      |
| South Asia               |         |
| Bangladesh               | 96      |
| India                    | 46      |
| Maldives                 | 40      |
| Pakistan                 | 29      |
| Sri Lanka                | 15      |
| sub-total                | 226     |
| Africa                   |         |
| Kenya                    | 11      |
| Lesotho                  | 4       |
| Malawi                   | 5       |
| Mauritius                | 8       |
| Mozambique               | 54      |
| Namibia                  | 5       |
| South Africa             | 44      |
| Swaziland                | 5       |
| Tanzania                 | 10      |
| Uganda                   | 10      |
| Zambia                   | 5       |
| Zimbabwe                 | 22      |
| sub total                | 183     |
| TOTAL                    | 889     |



# Australian Overseas Aid

## Australian aid in the Commonwealth

# Health

Poor people all over the world, including those in Commonwealth countries in the Pacific region, South Asia and Africa, are more seriously affected by health problems than people who are better off.

Australia works in partnership with other Commonwealth countries to help break this cycle of poverty and poor health. This, in turn, helps control the spread of diseases that cross all regional boundaries.

With leading experts in health and development, the Australian overseas aid program helps to improve people's access to healthcare services, to control and prevent deadly diseases such as malaria and HIV/AIDS, and to strengthen healthcare delivery systems.

Through cooperative efforts, the Australian overseas aid program has already helped make a big difference in healthcare throughout the Commonwealth:

- Australia has worked with Papua New Guinea to ensure that 1.5 million PNG children are now immunised against polio and measles.
- Australia provides significant support to small Pacific island nations, often remote from medical training facilities. With assistance from Australia's Development Scholarship program, Tuvalu now has its first two female doctors.
- Australian support for control of Hepatitis B in Pacific island nations (where the disease is endemic) has reduced carrier rates by 80 per cent.
- Australia is providing \$60 million over five years to support AIDS awareness and prevention activities in Papua New Guinea, where 10,000 to 15,000 people are infected with HIV. Australia also contributes to major HIV/AIDS education and support programs in eastern and southern Africa – including assistance to orphans.
- In Bokaro, India, Australian aid has helped reduce atmospheric pollution from a major steel works, reducing health risks for more than 51,000 people.
- Water is essential to life and good health. Australian support for water supply and sanitation programs has resulted in fresh water for nearly 500,000 people in the African Commonwealth countries of Tanzania, South Africa, Zimbabwe and Mozambique.



'This is the major strength of the Australian project. It's reinforcing our communities and providing an integrated health system.'

Sister Tiko, senior health nurse on Taveuni, Fiji, where Australia's biggest Fijian aid project is providing vital local health services.

# Workshop puts Caribbean children in the game



'Today has been the best day of my life. I love cricket but I never dreamed that I would ever be able to play.' This young Trinidadian schoolboy was able to realise his dream through the use of modified equipment at a sports festival conducted by local Special Education teachers. The festival was part of a five-day professional development workshop in inclusive Physical Education (PE) practices.

The workshop was facilitated by Judy Myers, manager of the Australian Caribbean Community Sport Development Program (ACCSDP), a project supported by the

Australian aid program. It was the first workshop in Trinidad to focus on practices in PE designed to be inclusive of children with disabilities. The ACCSDP is working in partnership with Commonwealth countries in the Caribbean to assist in uniting communities and strengthening regional relationships through new sports initiatives.

A professional association for Special Education Teachers has now been formed as a result of the workshop and has continued to improve the opportunities for children with a disability to participate in PE.

## Country program expenditure for Commonwealth countries – 2001-02 (est.)

| Country                      | 2001-02 (Estimate)<br>\$ million |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <b>Papua New Guinea</b>      | <b>314.4</b>                     |
| <b>Pacific Islands</b>       |                                  |
| Cook Islands                 | 1.5                              |
| Kiribati                     | 7.3                              |
| Nauru                        | 0.2                              |
| Niue and Tokelau             | 1                                |
| Samoa                        | 11.1                             |
| Tonga                        | 9.5                              |
| Tuvalu                       | 2.7                              |
| Vanuatu                      | 12.5                             |
| Policy and management reform | 20                               |
| other and regional           | 34.8                             |
| <i>sub total</i>             | 100.6                            |
| <b>South Asia</b>            |                                  |
| Bangladesh                   | 22.1                             |
| India                        | 14.7                             |
| Maldives                     | 3.1                              |
| Pakistan                     | 2.4                              |
| Sri Lanka                    | 6.1                              |
| <i>sub total</i>             | 48.4                             |
| <b>Africa</b>                |                                  |
| Kenya                        | 0.4                              |
| Lesotho                      | 0.1                              |
| Malawi                       | 0.9                              |
| Mauritius                    | 0.2                              |
| Mozambique                   | 10.1                             |
| Namibia                      | 0.2                              |
| Seychelles                   | 0.1                              |
| South Africa                 | 10.1                             |
| Swaziland                    | 0.1                              |
| Tanzania                     | 2.2                              |
| Uganda                       | 0.3                              |
| Zambia                       | 0.8                              |
| Zimbabwe                     | 5.3                              |
| Regional southern Africa     | 4.6                              |
| <i>sub-total</i>             | 35.4                             |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                 | <b>498.8</b>                     |

Note: Australia's aid program allocations for Fiji and Solomon Islands will be determined during the course of the year. Uncertainties over political developments in these two countries make it difficult to determine in advance appropriate levels of funding for activities there. However, given a higher overall allocation to the Pacific in 2001-02, there will be sufficient flexibility for the Australian Government to respond quickly and appropriately to developments as they occur.





# Australian Overseas Aid

## Australian aid in the Commonwealth

# Economic Reform

A stable and efficient economy is vital for reducing poverty – it generates employment, investment and the production of essential goods and services.



The Australian overseas aid program works cooperatively with Commonwealth developing country partners to maximise their economic potential. Economic growth is best achieved in an open, market-based economy, supported by an efficient public sector. Australia seeks to promote an ethical, accountable, competitive and appropriately regulated economic environment. This helps drive long-term economic growth, and increases self-sufficiency.

In recent years, the Australian overseas aid program has made a strong contribution to economic reform in Commonwealth countries. Australia is working with Pacific countries that are remote from major markets to improve economic performance and self-reliance. Australia is contributing \$20 million this year to the Policy and Management Reform Fund, which strengthens economic and financial management in

Pacific countries, including Samoa, Kiribati and Tonga. Australian assistance to the Tongan Ministry of Finance helped improve revenue collection by 23 per cent, making more funds available for public programs.

The Commonwealth Trade and Investment Access Facility was an Australian initiative proposed at the Edinburgh Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting. Australia is providing \$1.5 million annually to improve trade policy capacity in Commonwealth developing countries, helping them become more competitive in the global market.

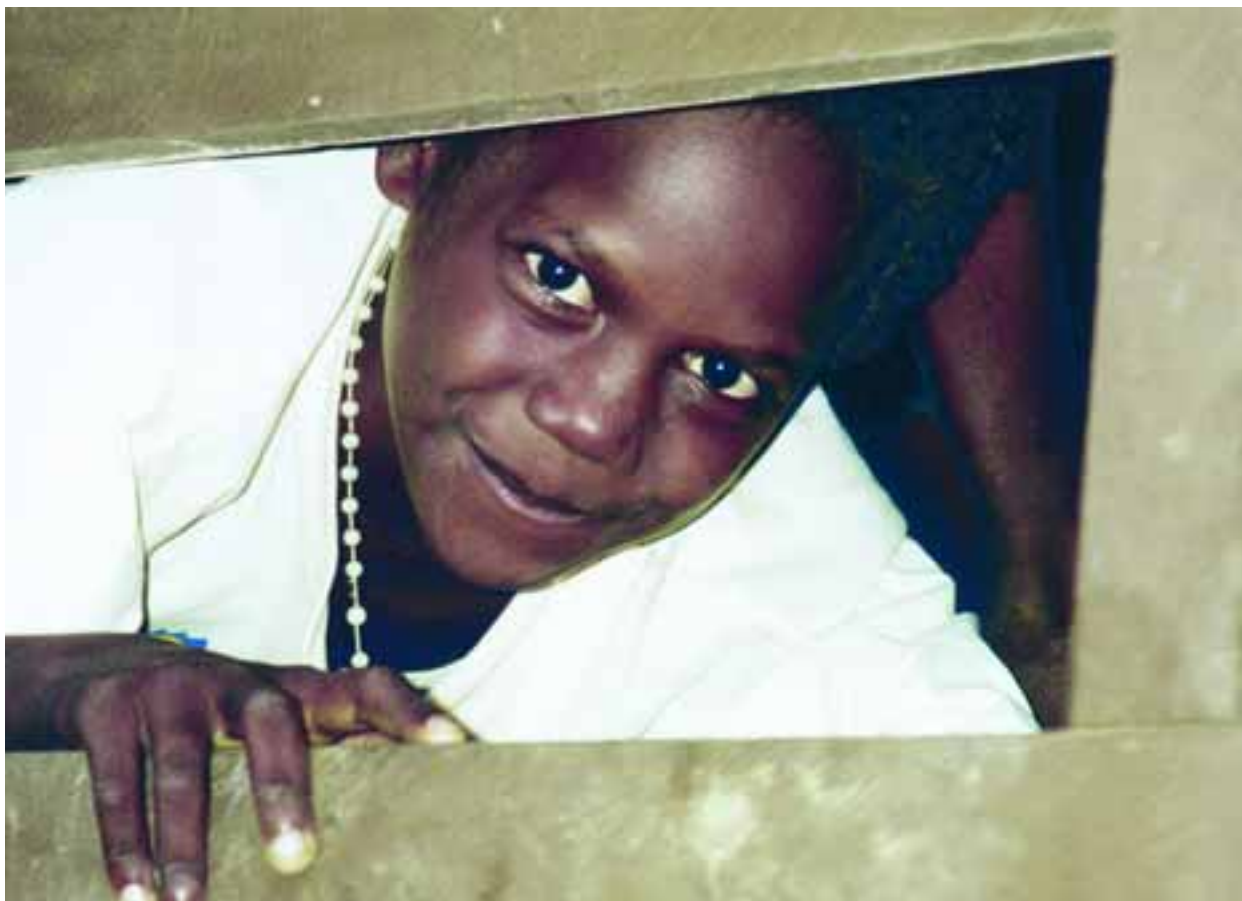
Australia will provide about \$13 million towards microfinance activities this financial year, including to Commonwealth countries such as Bangladesh and Papua New Guinea. These make credit and other financial services available to poor households helping them to escape poverty through their own efforts.

Australia is providing financial and advisory resources to key agencies in Papua New Guinea, including the Prime Minister's Department and Treasury. This is helping to strengthen the country's economic and financial management capacity.

Australia is providing around \$55 million to the special international Heavily Indebted Poor Countries initiative, which supports debt relief in 11 Commonwealth countries that have shown a commitment to economic policy reform.

'No program of economic reform will succeed unless the Government and citizens of a country own the program, and see it as their own. The Government must also have the administrative and legislative capacity to implement reforms.'

Don McKinnon,  
Commonwealth Secretary-General.



The children of Bougainville are experiencing peace for the first time in their lives — Judith Kuhn, Nopan village.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION  
ABOUT CHOGM:**

Visit the CHOGM website at [www.chogm2001.net](http://www.chogm2001.net) or telephone the CHOGM 2001 Task Force, Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet on (07) 3017 1400.



A father collects coconut juice in a cup for his child at the Buka market. After years of strife that have disrupted so many people's lives in the province, last month's Bougainville Peace Agreement offers a more hopeful future.