



## INDEPENDENT EVALUATION COMMITTEE

### TERMS OF REFERENCE

#### BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

The Office of Development Effectiveness (ODE) is an operationally independent unit within the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) that monitors and reports on the effectiveness of the Australian aid program. ODE's work spans three main areas. It undertakes performance and quality analysis to test and quality assure the department's aid performance assessment systems. It supports, conducts and reviews operational evaluations of Australian aid investments. It conducts strategic evaluations with a policy, program, sectoral or thematic focus. ODE helps build stronger evidence for more effective aid. While ODE's main focus is on official development assistance (ODA) managed by DFAT, it does, on occasion, evaluate ODA expended by other Departments as well. ODE's work is subject to external oversight by the Independent Evaluation Committee (IEC).

#### ROLE AND MANDATE

The Independent Evaluation Committee (IEC) is an external, advisory body that oversees the work of ODE. Its objective is to strengthen the quality, credibility, influence and independence of ODE's work through the provision of independent strategic and technical advice. The IEC advises ODE directly, but is also available to advise the Department more generally on issues relating to evaluations.

#### MEMBERSHIP

The IEC is comprised of three independent external members (including the Chair) and one senior DFAT representative at Deputy Secretary level. A representative from the Department of Finance attends meetings as an observer.

The independent external members are appointed by the Minister for Foreign Affairs. Members are appointed for terms of between one to three years (renewable).

The Assistant Secretary of ODE represents ODE at IEC meetings. The IEC may also invite DFAT Division Heads and/or senior representatives from other relevant government agencies to attend IEC meetings where an agenda item is relevant to their area of responsibility.

The IEC meets three times a year. It may also consider documents out of session at the request of the Chair. Three members constitutes a quorum.

#### RESPONSIBILITIES AND TASKS

The IEC has the following responsibilities:

- Provide advice on DFAT's aid monitoring and reporting systems as verified by ODE. It also assures and endorses ODE's assessment of the annual Performance of Australian Aid report (as summarised in Figure 1);
- Provide advice to ODE in preparing its work plan and endorse the work plan for submission to the Secretary DFAT for approval;
- Provide technical advice and quality assurance of ODE's strategic and operational evaluations, including endorsing ODE evaluation and performance analysis products;
- The Chair of the IEC to submit IEC endorsed ODE evaluations to DFAT for management response. Response to be received within 28 days and be included in the final publication;

- Provide independent expert advice to DFAT on other matters related to the performance of the Australian aid program;
- Participate in relevant meetings and events at ODE’s request to help promote improved aid effectiveness; and
- Provide relevant advice and information to the DFAT Audit and Risk Committee to assist it in meeting its responsibilities under the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013 (PGPA).

ODE will provide secretariat services for the IEC, including preparing draft papers for the committee and minutes of IEC meetings

**ACCOUNTABILITY MECHANISMS**

The IEC reports through the Chair to the Secretary DFAT.

IEC members will assist the Chair to carry out the activities listed and will be available to meet as scheduled.

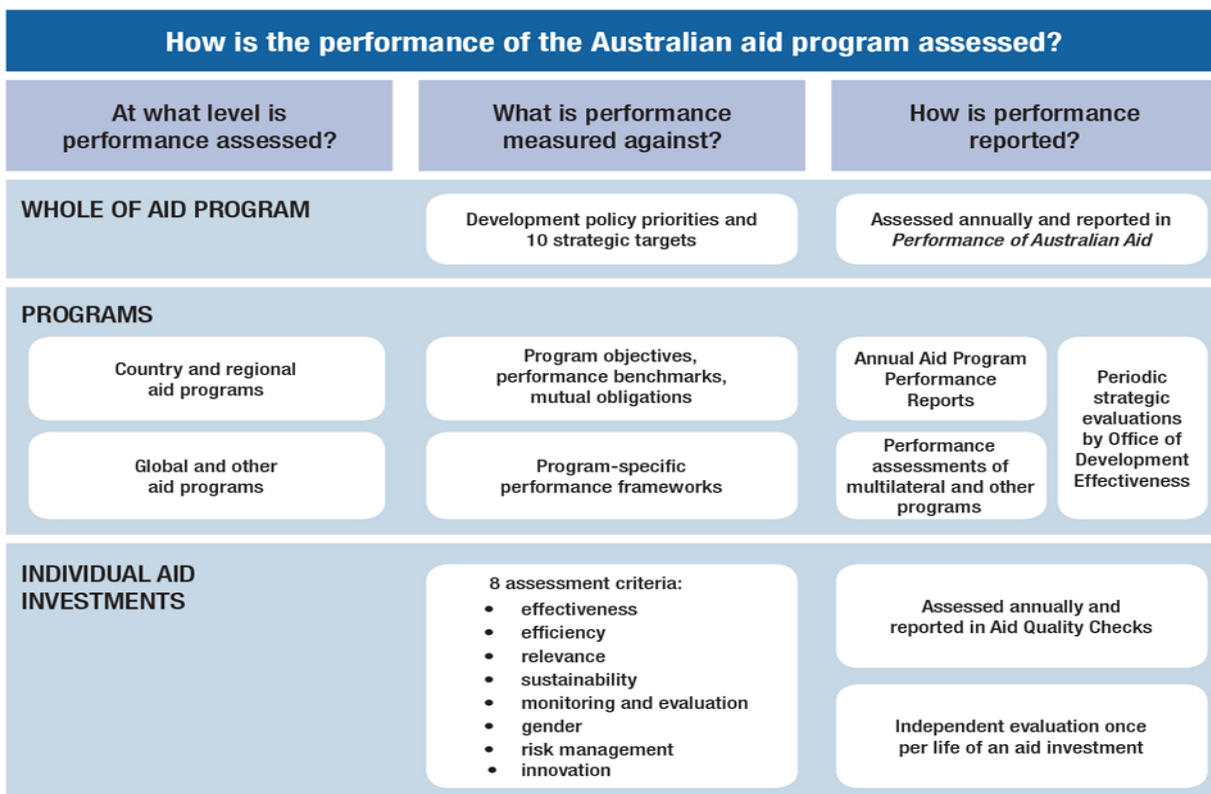
**CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

The external IEC members must retain independence from DFAT and aid program implementation. Any actual or possible conflicts of interest must be declared in writing.

All IEC members must declare their outside interests and absent themselves from any discussions and judgements that involve activities of any individual, external consulting firm or other organisation in which they have a financial or personal interest.

All committee members must have a sound understanding of the Australian Public Service (APS) Values, set out in section 10 of the Public Service Act 1999.

**FIGURE 1: AUSTRALIAN AID PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK**



Source: Aid Programming Guide (Chapter 7, Performance Management for Results), DFAT, 2014