



Minutes of the 152nd Committee for Development Cooperation (CDC) Teleconference Meeting held on 10 May 2018

DFAT CDC Members

Megan Anderson (Chair)
Jon Burrough (DFAT)
Simon Cann-Evans (DFAT)

Secretariat

Rebecca Lysaght (DFAT)
Rebecca Hamilton (ACFID)

NGO Members

John Morley (Plan International Australia)
Kalene Caffarella (Australian Red Cross)
Anthea Spinks (Oxfam Australia)
Chris Jensen (World Vision)

Observers

Sarah Burrows (ACFID)

Apologies

Sally-Anne Vincent

13:00 – Meeting Opened

Item 1 – Welcome Remarks

In opening remarks, the Chair:

- Welcomed participants to the meeting.
- Acknowledged traditional custodians of the land on which the meeting took place, and paid respects to elders past and present.
- Acknowledged the importance of the work that has been undertaken on the accreditation review, the consultations and the importance of moving it forward.

Conflict of Interest Check

- The Chair requested participants declare any conflicts of interest they have to the particular issue of the accreditation review.
 - No conflicts were declared.



Item 2 – Accreditation Criteria Review – Management Response

The Chair:

- Thanked the CDC members for their involvement and contributions as the NGO Reference Group for the Accreditation Review; also thanked non-CDC Reference Group members Phil Lindsay and Shane Nichols.
- Noted that DFAT delivers ANCP in partnership with the NGO sector and that accreditation is more than just due diligence and ensuring administered funding is spent effectively. It is a joint commitment from the sector to ensure that confidence is maintained in the sector and in the effective implementation of the Foreign Policy White Paper.
- Highlighted that it is important to get the balance right and noted that accreditation at least every 5 years is appropriate.
- Thanked the Reference Group for their feedback into the Review process, noting that DFAT had also sought feedback from the broader NGO community by writing to all 57 CEO's of accredited NGOs to seek feedback. The Review team also received strong feedback from the Australian Charities and Not for Profit Commission (ACNC), who are currently looking at external conduct standards. Internally the team also received good feedback from DFAT's Child Protection and Compliance Section, Aid Risk Management and Fraud Control Branch (responsible for the Department's approach to Due Diligence) and DFAT's Consular and Crisis Management Area.
- Noted that where possible feedback was incorporated but there was a need to balance views.
- The Chair opened the discussion for comments on the proposed Management Response.
- John Morley started the discussions noting that overall he was pleased with the review outcomes and that the Management Response noted that a number of the issues raised in the feedback would be covered in the revised Accreditation Manual and Agency Profile, which has not been finalised.
- Mr Morley also noted that there were some 'new criteria' that will be included. He said that no concerns had been raised; however the first round of NGOs to be reviewed under the new criteria will need to have sufficient time to prepare.
- Kalene Caffarella noted that she was also broadly comfortable with the Management Response. She noted that it would be good to revisit the issue of RDE thresholds in 2019-20 and also welcomes the feedback from the 31 May Assessors Workshop when the new criteria is rolled out.
- Chris Jensen agreed with earlier comments and thanked DFAT for ensuring that all ANCP NGOs had the opportunity to review the revised criteria. He appreciated the generous timeframes and how the consultants found efficiencies in the process and kept it simple.



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- Mr Jensen also noted that he thought it to be an improved process and thanked the review for paying attention to how smaller NGOs would work with the process.
- Simon Cann-Evans agreed that the process was good and provided a number of comments for thought. He noted the importance of highlighting the expectation that partners pass on all obligations throughout the supply chain. He also noted the importance of stressing that failing non-redline criteria may still result in an overall fail.
- Mr Cann-Evans also noted that the Department's review of Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) in the aid program was still underway and would be released shortly. He also noted that for future consideration, elements of the criteria might be modularised so that NGOs could complete and submit them separately; for example if they were to update their policies during the five year period.
- Anthea Spinks noted that the review process was thorough and inclusive. She requested clarity on the reduction of duplication in the process, particularly in respect to DFAT's Audit processes and the due diligence requirements of Managing Contractors.
- Ms Spinks also raised the issue of timing for new applicants, noting that there are likely to be significant changes to the Agency Profile. Ms Spinks appreciated that the timing of re-accreditations would be considered on a case-by-case basis in a practical manner.
- Jon Burrough noted that he thought the flexibility of the timelines in the review process had been useful to ensure appropriate feedback. He was very happy with how Criteria A2 and A3 had landed and noted that the revised criteria meant that we are well placed for the future.
- The Chair thanked the Committee for their observations and responded to questions/queries raised noting:
 - Although the Child Protection criteria is the only redline issue, NGOs can still fail accreditation on other criteria.
 - DFAT's SEA internal review will be finalised soon, but there does not appear to be a reason to wait on it or ACFID's review. The Accreditation Criteria was strengthened to include SEA. The Chair also noted that if there were changes resulting from the internal review or ACFID review these would be managed at a DFAT level and DFAT's Grant Agreements and accreditation process would reflect that.
 - Further consideration will be given to RDE thresholds and the ANCP team has been asked to undertake further analysis and modelling as part of the Funding Policy review. The Chair noted that there could sometimes be a perception that the ANCP is hard to access and is seen as a closed shop, and did not want to see RDE thresholds increased without appropriate analysis.
 - The Assessors workshop will be an important meeting to ensure consistency in how the 'subject to' criteria will be implemented and noted that she thought it was increasing responsible management.



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- The Chair also noted that we would continue to strive to look for a reduction in duplication of processes, noting that previous Organisation Review reports had a lot of duplication across criteria.
- The Chair thanked Mr Cann-Evans for his comments, noting that there is more work to be done to reduce the repetition in due diligence processes and that the NGO Programs, Performance and Quality Section will be working on it.
- Following questions on the timing of implementing the review, the Chair noted that it would be a risk to have new criteria and not utilise them for upcoming reviews.
- John Morley noted that some agencies may have stopped preparing Agency Profiles and may be at various stages of preparation, but noted that it will be useful if the 'subject to' provision can be utilised in instances where agencies have not had the time to adapt to new criteria.
- John Morley raised an issue about the cost of compliance with the Core Humanitarian Standards and Sarah Burrows asked whether DFAT was seeking to have Humanitarian Processes align with CHS. The Chair noted that she was unable to answer that question, as it was a separate conversation that would need to be held with the DFAT section that managed the Australian Humanitarian Partnership.
- John Morley noted that it would be useful to have a clear definition of partner/partnership in the manual in terms of obligative and non-obligative. The review team will work with the Contracting and Aid Management Division on some consistent wording around this issue.
- John Morley also noted Mr Cann-Evans's comments on modularisation, suggesting that a timely audit might cover off the requirement for the financial element of an Organisation Review.

Management Response

- The Chair sought endorsement for the Management Response noting areas where the response disagreed or agreed with comments to the recommendations. These were recommendations 6a, 8a, 12a, 19a and 21a. The Chair also noted:
 - Chris Jensen's comment that it is useful that accreditation reviews will look at projects outside of RDE if necessary, as that would cover wider risk implications.
- Rebecca Hamilton asked whether the learning nature of accreditation would still be apparent in the manual. The Chair responded that this would be the case.
- The Chair thanked the CDC for their consideration of the Management Response and feedback and sought the endorsement of the response. The CDC agreed unanimously to endorse the response.
- John Morley asked about when the revised Criteria would be published.



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- Rebecca Lysaght explained that following the DFAT Delegate's final approval of the revised criteria, the document would be published on the website and all accredited NGOs would be informed. DFTA hopes that this would be achieved by the end of May.
 - The revised Accreditation manual (including guidance notes) and Agency Profile will be published by the end of May 2018.
 - An ANCP Assessors workshop to discuss the changes will be held on 31 May 2018 – CDC members will be invited to attend.
 - Information sessions, including a webinar will disseminate the changes to the broader NGO community.
- Sarah Burrows asked whether the criteria could be shared with the Code Committee at their next meeting. The Chair responded that it would only be possible if the DFAT Delegate had approved it.

Next Meeting

- The next CDC meeting is proposed to be held on 29 May 2018 in Canberra. DFAT will confirm availability with CDC members.

Australian Aid: Friendship Grants

- Following a request from the CDC, the Chair gave a brief update on the recently announced Australian Aid: Friendship Grants (AAFG). The briefing noted that :
 - information about the AAFG has been available on DFAT's website since the Grant was announced on Budget night
 - Recipients would be required to meet DFAT's Due diligence requirements
 - The listening tour assisted in formulating the design of the program
 - Accredited NGOs would not be eligible for the Grants.
- John Morley was interested to see whether the AAFG acts as a pathway to the ANCP and whether some of the organisations would be interested in partnering with larger NGOs.
 - The Chair explained AAFG is open to not for profit community based organisations, broader than just the NGO sector.
- The Chair highlighted that the design was still being finalised and would welcome further feedback/discussion from the CDC on it.

Budget

- The Chair provided a brief update on the ANCP Budget appropriation for 2018/19.
 - The ANCP budget increased by \$3 million to \$132.5 (\$131.8 million for Grants)
 - This is a reflection of the ANCP being a well-respected program in the sector and the positive way it is viewed publicly.

Meeting Closed 14:20