

**Draft Terms of Reference**  
**Independent evaluation of Australia's humanitarian assistance to Myanmar**

**Purpose**

The evaluation will assess whether Australia's humanitarian investments from July 2014 to present in response to situations of protracted displacement in Myanmar were effective, efficient and appropriate. The findings will inform the design of a strategic, multi-year approach to Australian funding investments in Myanmar. Lessons identified through the evaluation will also be used to inform programmes addressing situations of protracted displacement in the Indo-Pacific region, where appropriate, including by leveraging partnerships to drive reform in the global humanitarian system.

**Background**

The humanitarian situation in Myanmar is characterised by situations of protracted displacement in three distinct contexts: active conflict in northern Myanmar; long-term displacement of Myanmar refugees in Thai camps; and ongoing intercommunal tensions and displacement in Rakhine State, which have intensified following attacks on Police border posts on 9 October 2016.

Two years after significant outbreaks of inter-communal violence in Rakhine State, over 416,000 people remain in need of humanitarian assistance. This includes 140,000 people in internally displaced people (IDP) camps, and many others living in isolated villages with limited freedom of movement, and poor access to services and livelihoods. Recent security operations in northern Rakhine have created additional displacement (over 20,000 IDPs and close to 70,000 displaced to Bangladesh). Security operations have also resulted in the prolonged suspension of most pre-existing humanitarian activities in the region. While it has not been possible to conduct a full needs assessment, it is likely that humanitarian needs have increased, due to the suspension of services, severe restriction of movement, the destruction of housing and alleged human rights abuses.

In Kachin and northern Shan States over 119,000 people remain in need of humanitarian assistance, including over 98,000 people displaced because of ongoing conflict. Around 50 per cent of these IDPs are located in areas outside Government control where humanitarian access is limited. The conflict in Kachin has escalated significantly in recent months and many people are now facing secondary or even tertiary displacement.

Australia has been a strong provider of humanitarian assistance to Myanmar over many years. Since 2012, Australia provided approximately \$67 million in humanitarian assistance to Myanmar. Of this, \$3 million was for disaster response (flooding after Cyclone Komen).

As Myanmar opened up during the reform period, Australia rapidly scaled up humanitarian assistance, at times working through up to 16 different partners simultaneously. Partners were engaged through direct-source grants, on the basis that the complex and restrictive environment in Myanmar meant there were a limited number of appropriate potential partners in any one location. In part, this proliferation reflected a need to respond to a variety of needs in diverse geographic locations.

Our humanitarian program was characterized by multiple short term, low-value and management-intensive investments. This was exacerbated by annual funding cycles; high levels of uncertainty about annual funding amounts; and late release of humanitarian funds to the program (due to the program's dependence on central emergency funding which is not released until late in the financial year).

Recent internal reviews of the humanitarian program in Myanmar, including the 2015-16 Aid Program Performance Report (APPR), identified the need to: adopt a strategic approach;

focus the program on Australia's humanitarian priorities as outlined in the DFAT Humanitarian Strategy 2016; move towards multi-year funding commitments for protracted-crisis situations; continue consolidation efforts; and increase human resourcing to manage the portfolio.

This evaluation will inform efforts to implement some of these changes, in a context where it is increasingly apparent that it will be some years before Myanmar's humanitarian needs are resolved. In the meantime, there is a need to move away from interim solutions to longer-term, more strategic and efficient approaches.

Australia's humanitarian assistance seeks to complement our broader diplomatic and development-related efforts to support nationally-driven peace and reconciliation processes aimed at resolving protracted crisis situations. These processes include the Panglong Peace Process, as well as efforts to find solutions for the complex political, humanitarian and development problems in Rakhine State.

Australia's humanitarian program for Myanmar is managed by a small team based at the Australian Embassy in Yangon and reporting to the Deputy Head of Mission. The team comprises two officers: one A-based officer and one locally engaged staff member. They are supported by one Desk officer in Canberra who also performs other duties; and by the Humanitarian NGOs and Partnerships Division (HPD).

The annual humanitarian budget for Myanmar is approximately \$10-15 million, which has been split between –up to 16 humanitarian partner organizations each year. Under the current management arrangements, a certain portion of DFAT's annual humanitarian budget is earmarked for Myanmar at the start of each financial year, however this cannot be accessed by the program until late in the financial year. This may be supplemented with additional funds once the Pacific cyclone season has passed (around April). The process to agree and allocate these funds each year is resource intensive; generates high levels of uncertainty; requires a rapid turnaround on funding decisions and contracting once funding becomes available; and means that both DFAT and partner organizations can only make short term planning and funding decisions.

### **Scope of the Evaluation**

The primary evaluation focus is Australia's humanitarian investments in response to situations of protracted displacement in Myanmar from July 2014 to present. This evaluation should consider both the individual investment/activity level, as well as the package of Australian support as a whole.

The evaluation should assess:

- the appropriateness and relevance of Australia's support;
- the effectiveness and efficiency of Australia's support;
- whether the support reinforced local and national leadership and capacity; and
- the extent and the effectiveness of Australia's engagement, particularly around advocacy, with the international humanitarian system in Myanmar.

The evaluation should conclude with some forward looking recommendations for the program, including regarding how Australian support could be improved (and the scope for further consolidation) and on the practicalities of moving towards multi-year funding and planning.

### **Evaluation Methodology**

The methodology will be refined in consultation with the selected consultant. It is likely that the evaluation will include:

- A desktop review of relevant documentation.
- Interviews with internal and external stakeholders involved in implementing Australia's response (including DFAT desk and post, delivery partners, other donors, UN agencies, and relevant representatives from the Government of Myanmar).
- Fieldwork in Myanmar (approx. 10 days), which will include stakeholder interviews, meetings with implementing partners, visits to locations affected by situations of protracted displacement, including at least two remote locations (preferably Rakhine, Kachin/northern Shan and potentially South East).
- Data analysis and synthesis of findings into an evaluation report suitable for publication.

### **Key Evaluation Questions**

The evaluation questions will be refined in consultation with the selected consultant. The proposed questions may include:

#### **1. Was Australia's humanitarian assistance to situations of protracted displacement in Myanmar appropriate and relevant?**

- a. To what extent were the partners and activities selected appropriate (i.e. did we select the right partners in the right locations on the right issues?)
- b. To what extent did the assistance appropriately complement/ align with Australia's development priorities/activities in the Myanmar country program?
- c. To what extent did the assistance complement/ align with Australia's Humanitarian Strategy and other key Australian government policies/priorities such as gender equality, women peace and security and disability inclusion?
- d. How relevant and appropriate is the assistance provided by Australian implementing partners from the perspective of affected communities?
- e. To what extent was Australia's assistance coordinated and complementary? Are there ways in which Australia could share information and coordinate better with other donors and international actors?
- f. Were there any unintended consequences and impacts (positive or negative) as a result of our assistance?

#### **2. Was Australia's humanitarian assistance to situations of protracted displacement effective and efficient?**

- a. Were the intended outputs and outcomes for Australia's assistance clearly defined?
- b. What were the most significant results achieved by Australia's humanitarian programming in Myanmar during the relevant period? Did these meet expectations and were they adequately captured in partner reporting?
- c. What did Australia's assistance achieve in terms of protecting the safety, dignity and rights of affected people, promoting gender equality and addressing barriers to inclusion, including for people with disabilities, ethnic minorities and indigenous populations?
- d. How effectively did Australia influence and inform partner programming with respect to meeting protection, gender and disability inclusion commitments?

- e. To what extent did Australian-funded activities promote longer-term resilience of affected communities and support broader recovery and stabilisation efforts?
- f. What were the barriers and enablers to effective and efficient program design and management?

### **3. Did Australia's humanitarian assistance reinforce national and local leadership?**

- a. To what extent did Australia's humanitarian assistance align with the needs and/or requests of the Myanmar Government?
- b. To what extent did Australia's support strengthen local partners, including civil society (e.g. local women's organisation, disabled people's organisations etc.)? Is there scope to increase support to local leadership, including by women, and support to local partners? What preparatory work might be needed to do this?
- c. To what extent were implementing partners sufficiently accountable to, and engaged with, affected communities? Is there evidence of programs having been influenced by effective communication, participation and feedback?

### **4. Additional questions**

These questions should be examined as part of the evaluation, but should be addressed in an annex to the main report.

- a. To what extent did Australia identify and use opportunities to influence high-level humanitarian engagement and global humanitarian reform efforts by leveraging lessons and partner experience in Myanmar? And vice versa, to what extent did Australia identify and use opportunities to influence the humanitarian response system in Myanmar based on high-level humanitarian engagement?
- b. Given the role of Myanmar's Government and military as an active participant in civil conflict and alleged human rights abuses how did Australia engage with national leadership to influence change and promote stabilisation? Are there ways Australia's engagement could be improved?
- c. What is the comparative advantage of Australia's humanitarian assistance in Myanmar?
- d. What steps were taken to ensure visibility and branding of Australian government assistance in Myanmar and could more have been done?

### **Outputs**

- Outputs should align with DFAT's monitoring and evaluation standards.
- An Evaluation Plan that will define the scope of the evaluation, articulate evaluation questions, describe methodologies to collect and analyse data, propose a timeline linked to key milestones, propose a schedule for in-country field work, outline costs and a detailed breakdown of responsibilities of all team members. The plan will be developed in close consultation with the evaluation team and Yangon Post.
- An aide memoire that will present initial findings, seek verification of facts and assumptions and discuss the feasibility of initial recommendations. The audience for this document is internal.
- Draft evaluation report (with the additional questions addressed in an annex, as noted above).
- Final Evaluation Report incorporating any agreed changes or amendments as requested by DFAT. The final evaluation report will include an executive summary

(of no more than 2 pages), a clear summary of findings and recommendations for future programming (no more than 20 pages) and relevant attachments. This report should be suitable for publishing.

### Evaluation Timeline

Indicative dates	Activity	Indicative days allocated
April	Initial document review and introductory brief with team at Post (via phone)	1
April	Write Evaluation Plan (with Evaluation Team)	3
April	Comprehensive document review	3
18 April	Draft evaluation plan due to DFAT	
21 April	Evaluation Plan finalised based on DFAT's feedback	2
Mid April	Organise interviews and in-country mission (with assistance from Yangon Post)	3
1 May – 13 May	In-country Mission	10
	Travel days	2
19 May	Aide memoire with initial findings (for internal DFAT audience)	1
	Report writing	7
31 May	Draft report to DFAT	
	Finalise report based on DFAT's feedback	3
30 June	Final report due to DFAT	
<b>Total</b>		35

### Team Composition

The consultant will be the Team Leader for the evaluation. Two DFAT officers will also be on the team: a Humanitarian officer and an officer from Myanmar Desk (both Canberra-based). The team will be supported by officers in Yangon Post and other specialists within DFAT.

The Team Leader (Humanitarian/ Evaluation Specialist) will:

- Plan, guide and develop the overall approach and methodology for the evaluation;

- Ensure that the evaluation meets the requirements of the Terms of Reference and contractual obligations;
- Manage and direct evaluation activities; lead interviews/consultations with evaluation participants;
- Collate and analyse data collected during the evaluation;
- Lead team discussions and reflection;
- Lead on the development of each deliverable;
- Manage, compile and edit inputs from the other team members to ensure high quality of reporting outputs;
- Ensure that the evaluation process and report aligns with DFAT's M&E Standards;
- Finalise a succinct evaluation report.

A local team member from Post will assist with translation and consultations.

### **Key Documents**

DFAT will make available to the team information, documents and particulars relating to DFAT's humanitarian response to situations of protracted displacement. These will include, but not be confined to, the following documents. DFAT shall make available to the evaluation team any other reasonable requests for information and documentation relating to the evaluation. The evaluation team is also expected to independently source other relevant material and literature.

- DFAT quality reporting (AQCs, HAQCs, PPAs covering the 2014-16 reporting cycles)
- Review of support to the Thai-Myanmar border (2014)
- Draft Humanitarian Strategy for Myanmar
- Aid Investment Plan for Myanmar 2015-20
- Review of Save the Children Education in Emergencies program in Rakhine (2015)
- Implementing partner proposals, appeals, funding agreements, reports
- Strategic Partnership Agreements with implementing partners
- Relevant unclassified DFAT cable reporting
- DFAT M&E Standards
- DFAT Humanitarian Strategy (2016)
- DFAT Protection Framework (2013)
- Humanitarian Protection Guidance Notes (Protection, Gender, Disability Inclusion) (forthcoming 2017)
- DFAT's gender and M&E guidance (on the intranet under the aid programming guide)  
<http://collaboration.titan.satin.io/kmu/gender/Gender%20in%20Development%20FAT%20Resources/Forms/AllItems.aspx>
- The Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Strategy  
<http://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/Pages/gender-equality-and-womens-empowerment-strategy.aspx>
- Australian National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security 2012-2018  
<https://www.dss.gov.au/our-responsibilities/women/publications-articles/government-international/australian-national-action-plan-on-women-peace-and-security-2012-2018>