

Australian Agency for International Development

Reconciliation Action Plan for the years 2011–12

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The Reconciliation Action Plan is endorsed by Reconciliation Australia.

Our vision for reconciliation

The Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) is committed to bridging the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. AusAID values and respects the cultures of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders and understands the advantages in developing a diverse workforce. In committing to the process of reconciliation, AusAID will work during 2011 and 2012 to embed practices that will establish the Agency as an employer of choice for Indigenous Australians. AusAID will work to increase and use Indigenous knowledge and community development experience within the Agency, in order to strengthen government program and policy outcomes for international development.

Our business

AusAID is the Australian Government agency responsible for managing Australia's overseas aid program. The Australian aid program assists developing countries to reduce poverty and achieve sustainable development. AusAID provides advice and support to the Government on development policy, and plans and coordinates poverty reduction activities in partnership with developing countries. AusAID's head office is in Canberra. AusAID also has representatives in 37 Australian diplomatic missions overseas.

Our Reconciliation Action Plan

This renewed AusAID Reconciliation Action Plan builds on the successes and learnings from our first Reconciliation Action Plan 2007–10. It has been developed with staff consultation, and has been closely guided by the advice from our Indigenous Employees Network.

The Plan is the overarching plan for AusAID's reconciliation activities. However, it is also supported by a detailed Indigenous Employment Strategy, learning and development strategy, and diversity plan to support and achieve a number of the actions identified in this document.

AusAID's progress against the Plan will be reported in AusAID's Annual Report and on Reconciliation Australia's website.

Relationships

Tell us why respectful relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people are important to your organisation and its core business activities.

AusAID's core business relies on respectful cross-culture relationships.

Focus area: AusAID will act as a catalyst for discussions highlighting where commonalities exist between Indigenous community development and international poverty alleviation and community development with the aim of two-way information sharing on approaches and lessons learnt.

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Target
<p>Appoint a senior champion in the Agency for Indigenous issues with responsibility for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• understanding and providing strategic direction on the links between domestic and international community development• championing Reconciliation Action Plan commitments, reporting and actions• encouraging staff participation in cultural events• liaising with Indigenous• Employment Strategy• driving a high-level commitment to Indigenous employment and retention.	Executive Branch.	Commencing May 2011.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Champion to be announced at launch of the Reconciliation Action Plan.

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<p>Continue a partnership with Indigenous Community Volunteers specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> encouraging information exchange through training opportunities and seminars as appropriate promoting participation in one another's volunteer programs. 	Volunteers and Business Partnerships Section.	<p>Following a review in 2010, a new partnership agreement will be signed by fourth quarter 2011.</p> <p>Two to three AusAID volunteers will be deployed with Indigenous Community Volunteers over the 18 month partnership.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AusAID will commit to up to three AusAID staff to participate in the Volunteer program. AusAID will promote volunteering with Indigenous Community Volunteers to returned international development volunteers. AusAID and the Volunteers will seek opportunities to participate in training relevant to one another's organisations. AusAID will participate in relevant cross-organisational seminars to discuss Indigenous community development and links to international development. AusAID volunteers will share their experiences and learnings via a summary report, staff news article and/or seminar to AusAID and the Volunteers.

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Actively promote the participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the overseas volunteer programs through increased publicity and targeted outreach.	Volunteers and Business Partnerships Section.	Four advertisements in Indigenous specific media by December 2012.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• AusAID will commit to targeted promotion of the volunteer program to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.• AusAID will collect data on the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples participating in the overseas volunteer program as identified by those participating in the program.
Continue to support the established Indigenous Employees Network as a group that provides advice and assistance on Indigenous matters.	Human Resources.	The Network to meet quarterly.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Human Resources to provide support/ assist in advertising meetings and provide secretariat support as required.

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<p>Promote relevant Indigenous focused seminars to AusAID staff to raise awareness of the similarity of, and links between development issues.</p> <p>Disseminate papers and research on Indigenous community development to encourage staff awareness and support discussion and debate.</p>	<p>Human Resources (to facilitate intranet page and update seminar information).</p> <p>Executive Branch to provide guidance to other thematic areas to foster linkages.</p> <p>Indigenous Employees Network (ongoing monitoring for relevant information/ upcoming events seminars etc.).</p>	<p>Intranet discussion page active by September–October 2011.</p> <p>Monthly updates.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AusAID staff will be invited to attend Indigenous focused seminars – (e.g. regular discussions held by the Centre for Aboriginal Policy Economic Research) through notices posted on the intranet. A discussion page will be established on the intranet (on the Reconciliation Action Plan page) for staff to post informal comments/ideas/learnings gained from attending seminars. This will also provide a platform for links to documents/ discussion papers and events.
<p>AusAID will act as a catalyst for discussions highlighting where commonalities exist between leadership in Indigenous community development and international work on leadership</p>	<p>The Governance and Social Development Branch is progressing a range of opportunities connecting Indigenous Australian leadership with leadership development initiatives in the region.</p>	<p>End December 2012.</p>	<p>At least four policy meetings and two programming or monitoring and evaluation workshops between AusAID and Indigenous development policy makers and practitioners.</p>

Respect

Tell us why respect for Indigenous people, culture, land, history etc. is important to your organisation and its core business activities.

AusAID works in developing countries and communities around the world and fundamentally must have respect for Indigenous peoples, culture, land and history. This appreciation includes a deep respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.

Focus area: AusAID will continue to develop greater awareness, understanding and respect for Indigenous cultures across the Agency through investment in staff training and promoting engagement in cultural activities.

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Target
<p>Provide Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Awareness training for all staff.</p> <p>Specifically the training needs to be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> delivered as one full day course facilitated by an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person endorsed by senior management as important/relevant and critical to attend. 	<p>Human Resources (training procurement/scheduling and promotion).</p> <p>Indigenous Employees Network (feedback and evaluation).</p> <p>Executive Branch (to highlight in EL2 forum encouraging managers to attend and support staff attendance).</p>	<p>Training to be included as part of the Learning and Development Strategy (end 2010) and rolled out from mid-2011.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ten per cent of AusAID staff to attend Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cross-cultural awareness training.
<p>Organise cultural activities to celebrate NAIDOC week:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> provide support to AusAID Posts to recognise and hold NAIDOC week celebrations. 	<p>Human Resources (logistics/arrangements).</p> <p>Led by Indigenous Champion, supported by Executive staff.</p> <p>IEN (advice/support).</p>	<p>NAIDOC sub-committee established March/April.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NAIDOC celebrations held and reflected in Annual Report. Support kits/information provided to Posts to encourage celebration of NAIDOC week at AusAID's Posts. Reports by Post on NAIDOC week celebrations.

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Display Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Flags at AusAID buildings.	Property and Security.	Early 2011.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and the Australian Flags to be displayed at security desk/ reception areas of AusAID buildings.
Ensure acknowledgement of country and welcome to country at significant meetings, training days and public events.	<p>All staff responsibility – led by Indigenous Champion, supported by Executive staff.</p> <p>All staff encouraged to note on course/training feedback forms if an acknowledgement was not included.</p> <p>Communications and Media Branch to include a prompt in speech template and/ or speech guidelines.</p>	<p>Renewed commitment by Executive in May 2011.</p> <p>Update early 2011.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protocol information available on intranet with clear guidance for staff on when and how to include acknowledgements. Prompt to include acknowledgement of country included in speech templates.
Promote Reconciliation Action Plan to staff as a message from the Director General.	Human Resources to coordinate with Office of Director General.	<p>Launch of the Plan early 2011.</p> <p>NAIDOC week message.</p> <p>Review of the Plan early 2012.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Plan launched by the Director General. All staff message for NAIDOC week. Review completed.

Opportunities

Tell us why opportunities for Indigenous people, organisations and communities are important to your organisation and its core business activities.

AusAID works in community development and sustainable poverty alleviation. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people can contribute unique perspectives on community structures and resilience.

Focus area: To attract and retain talented and skilled Indigenous Australians through targeted employment strategies and strategic and ongoing efforts to improve Indigenous employment experiences in AusAID.

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Target
<p>Develop a comprehensive Indigenous Employment Strategy which includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • APS best practice • outlines employment targets • clear and practical actions which will translate into increased Indigenous staff attraction/retention • measurable activities and targets • improve the employment experience of Indigenous employees in AusAID. 	Human Resources.	<p>Strategy finalised by early 2011.</p> <p>Actions to be implemented beginning 2011 ongoing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AusAID will increase the number of Indigenous employees over the two year period of this Reconciliation Action Plan to (at minimum) meet Australian Public Service Indigenous employment targets.
<p>AusAID to commission Indigenous art work to use in Agency promotions/documents for advertising the Agency as an employer of choice.</p>	Human Resources.	<p>Art work commissioned mid-2011.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Art work commissioned and completed. • Displayed in a prominent place in AusAID building with the artist's name and background information clearly visible. • Electronic images available for Agency promotions.

Tracking Progress and Reporting

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Target
Reconciliation Action Plan to be discussed at quarterly Indigenous Employees Network meetings with a progress updated provided by Human Resources Branch.	Human Resources Indigenous Employees Network. Report given to Indigenous Champion.	Quarterly.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress updates provided to Indigenous Employees Network.
Mid-way review of the Plan.	Human Resources.	End 2011.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and progress update provided to Indigenous Champion and Executive. Director General to report findings on progress to Agency via Daily Staff Notices. Review made available to all staff on the Plan's intranet page.
Plan final review/refresh.	Human Resources.	Review and refresh process to begin mid-2012.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final report developed and made available on Reconciliation Australia's website.
2013 and beyond.	Human Resources.	Refresh process mid-2012.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building on the successes of this 2011–2012 Reconciliation Action Plan explore initiatives that will promote links between AusAID and Australian Government agencies where similar objectives may exist.