



Australia's International Development Contractors Community

Linking policy with program delivery, using contractors' expertise and experience

Contractors and consultants provide a unique perspective on what works well in aid programs delivered in developing countries.

DFAT could draw on the insights and perspectives of contractors to strengthen development policies and programs, and provide practical policy advice to the Australian Government.

Program design is crucial to success - contractors should be routinely consulted to help shape program concepts and designs, as early on in the process as possible.

Project design requires relevant experience and skills

Development cooperation is most effective when it is thoughtfully designed and well implemented by people with the right expertise, skills and commitment. Consultants and contractors bring a wealth of relevant experience and insights, which could be drawn on earlier, more often and more strategically to improve development effectiveness.

Australia's development cooperation activities are designed and implemented in a range of ways within a policy setting that is established by DFAT. Programs are usually conceived of within DFAT before being designed and allocated to an implementing partner through a tender process. The design of a program is a crucial step, creating a blueprint for a program or activity. Designs are often produced by consultants, who will consult with a range of stakeholders as part of the process.

Contractors have a unique perspective

Contractors and consultants hold a wealth of experience and expertise that is beneficial to Australia's aid program. Their perspective is unique – that of the implementer. DFAT could more strategically draw on the insights and perspectives of contractors and consultants to strengthen development policies and programs.

The way a program is designed is crucial to its success. The IDCC believes that contractors and consultants can add significant value should routinely be consulted and provided opportunity to input into the shaping of program designs, as early on in the process as possible. Early engagement

and input into the design of programs would help ensure they are designed in a way that can realistically be implemented.

Policy is critical to success

The policy framework within which Australian aid is implemented is also critical: from overarching aid targets, to thematic policies like gender, environment and climate change, to country and regional strategies. The IDCC believes it can add value to the development and refinement of these policies, bringing a wealth of technical expertise and unique implementation experience. This would help ensure that policy development can anticipate issues that will be encountered on the ground during implementation, and that policy outcomes on the ground will be consistent with the original aims and intentions of the policy.