

2020-21 Pre-Budget Submission
World Vision Australia
December 2019

Background

World Vision is a Christian relief, development, and advocacy organisation dedicated to working with children, families and communities to overcome poverty and injustice. Inspired by Christian values, the organisation works with the most vulnerable and believes that human rights and dignity are integral to Creation. We are a global community development organisation that provides short-term and long-term assistance to 100 million people worldwide (including 77 million children). We have more than 45,000 staff members working in 99 countries.

World Vision Australia is Australia's largest overseas aid and development organisation. We are actively engaged with over 700,000 members of the Australian public that have an interest in international development.

World Vision has a compelling track record on aid and development. For six decades, World Vision has been engaging people to work towards eliminating poverty and its causes. This could not be achieved without the generosity of our partners, supporters and donors, including the Australian public and the Australian Government, who help to create a brighter future for children and their families across the world. Over the past 50 years, more than two million Australians have chosen to partner with us when giving to charity.

World Vision is committed to the poor because we are Christian. We work with people of all cultures, faiths and genders to achieve transformation. We do this through relief and development, policy and advocacy, and collaboration and education about poverty, with an emphasis on personal growth, social justice and spiritual values.

World Vision Australia has a productive working relationship with the Australian Government in partnering to deliver the Australian Aid Program. Our partnerships span food security programs in East Africa, livelihoods and resilience programming in fragile contexts, gender-based violence programs in the Pacific, and programs piloting innovative approaches in South East Asia. The Australia NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP) partnership is at the core of this relationship and is orientated towards supporting community development globally.

World Vision Australia is a constructive and trusted partner who seeks to inform and influence policy makers through an evidence-based dialogue. World Vision Australia welcomes the opportunity to make a submission to the 2020-21 Australian Government Pre-Budget process.

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Executive Summary

Australian aid makes an essential contribution to the alleviation of poverty and suffering in our region and around the world. It achieves significant impacts, both overseas and for Australia. Among its many positive outcomes, Australian aid empowers people living in poverty, helps people live longer, healthier lives, provides lifesaving assistance during crises and improves regional security. As evidence of its impact, in the last 25 years, the number of people in developing countries living on less than \$1.25 a day has dropped from 47 per cent in 1990 to 14 per cent in 2015.¹ However, the inequality gap continues to rise within countries² and global displacement has reached record levels³, making it increasingly urgent to rebuild and restore Australian aid levels.

Australian aid expenditure is at historic lows at a time when other countries, including China, are taking a more active role in development in the Indo-Pacific region. In response, the Australian Government should increase the quantity and quality of its aid by rebuilding the aid budget and by focusing on its strengths and value add as an international development partner. For example, Australia's value add in the Pacific may not be in competing directly with rising donors such as China on the construction of economic infrastructure, but rather in supporting soft infrastructure and building the skills and capabilities of local communities based on Australia's technical strengths.

World Vision Australia believes that Australia's Official Development Assistance should be considered a core asset of Australia's international engagement – alongside trade and diplomacy. An expanded aid program, targeted towards the real purpose of aid – human development, especially through reducing poverty – would contribute to a safer and more prosperous world while also increasing Australia's soft power and its ability to exercise influence internationally.

World Vision Australia's position is that beginning with the 2020-21 budget, the Australian Government should restore Australia's aid level back to 0.33 per cent of GNI over the next six years as well as increase Australia's humanitarian program to 44,000 places within five years. If the Government does not act to address the persistent and sharp fall in Australian aid levels and increase its humanitarian program, it ignores the potential for further large-scale reductions in poverty alleviation and inequality. It also seriously puts at risk our previous development gains, as well as our ability to meet our commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – 17 agreed goals which form a roadmap for global development efforts to 2030 and beyond.

Within the context of that overall position, this Pre-Budget Submission proposes five new areas of investment over the forward estimates. It explains how the Australian Government can catalyse direct action on climate change in the Indo-Pacific and beyond, advance women's economic empowerment in the Pacific, invest in ending violence against children in the Indo Pacific, support measures to prevent humanitarian crises, and prioritise aid investment in children and their rights. As this submission highlights, we believe these five areas are aligned with existing Australian Government policy and commitments and will strengthen Australia's contribution to achieving the SDGs and being a good humanitarian donor.

¹ http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/Goal_1_fs.pdf

² <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/inequality/>

³ <http://www.unhcr.org/en-au/news/latest/2016/6/5763b65a4/global-forced-displacement-hits-record-high.html>

World Vision Australia proposes development funding of \$213.7 million for five costed programs outlined in the table below and detailed in the following New Policy Proposals:

Proposal	Description	Total funding over forward estimates	Page
Direct Action Regreening Program	Make natural climate solutions a cornerstone of Australia's international climate response by spearheading the ReGreen the Globe Movement and directly regenerating 680,000 hectares of degraded land across East Africa, South East Asia and the Pacific, which will sequester approximately 2.7 million tonnes of carbon per year and build community resilience	\$60m	5
Empowering Women in the Pacific Through Inclusive Market Systems	Program to support people's participation in emerging markets, especially women in the Indo-Pacific region, with a focus on Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu	\$8.5m	8
Ending Violence Against Children in the Pacific and Timor-Leste	Investing early to end violence against children reaches the root causes of the problem – it seeks to nurture and grow a wholesome individual. Over a lifetime, prevention programming like this can increase productivity, reduce the burden on healthcare and welfare systems, reduce incidences of violence later in life, and improve social outcomes. As the World Bank notes, investing in children is one of the smartest investments a government can make	\$73.0m	12
Preventing Humanitarian Crisis	Fund Multi-year, community-focussed resilience assistance in context of recurrent, chronic or protracted crisis. Australia to become a top-10 DAC donor in conflict prevention.	\$70.0m	14
Establishment of a Children's Rights Unit	Setting up a unit to oversee the mainstreaming of children's rights across all thematic areas of its Aid Program and to account for and help to track DFAT's spend on children	\$2.2m	18

PROPOSAL I

Proposed title: Direct Action ReGreening Program

Affected agency: Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Financial implications:

	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Total
Cost of proposal (\$m)	23.3	22.3	5.7	5.3	3.4	60
<i>ReGreening 680,000 hectares</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-</i>		<i>34</i>
<i>Global Secretariat, ReGreen the Globe Movement</i>	<i>0.8</i>	<i>0.8</i>	<i>0.8</i>	<i>0.8</i>		<i>3.2</i>
<i>National Secretariat, ReGreen the Globe Movement (Ethiopia)</i>	<i>1.5</i>	<i>1.5</i>	<i>1.5</i>	<i>1.5</i>		<i>6</i>
<i>National Secretariat, ReGreen the Globe Movement (Timor-Leste)</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>1.5</i>	<i>1.7</i>	<i>1.5</i>	<i>1.7</i>	<i>8.4</i>
<i>National Secretariat, ReGreen the Globe Movement (Indonesia)</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>1.5</i>	<i>1.7</i>	<i>1.5</i>	<i>1.7</i>	<i>8.4</i>
Number of additional staff positions sought (ASL)	0	0	0	0		0

Outline of proposal:

Australia is well placed to be a global leader on natural climate solutions through Australian Aid.

Direct, nature-based action on climate change including land regeneration is proven to build community resilience and store millions of tonnes of carbon pollution each year. World Vision has been implementing natural climate solutions for over two decades, and now works in more than 27 countries in Africa and Asia to regenerate degraded landscapes through regreening programs. Regreening just one hectare of land can store 4.4 tonnes of carbon per year, increase biodiversity, support livelihoods and build resilience. However, ecological restoration programs have only attracted 2.5% of mitigation funding.

This proposal outlines how Australia can spearhead the ReGreen the Globe Movement by supporting the global hub of the Movement and supporting chapters in Ethiopia, Timor Leste and Indonesia, directly contributing to the regeneration of 680,000 hectares of degraded land across East Africa, South East Asia and the Pacific. It is estimated that such an investment would sequester approximately 2.7 million tonnes of carbon per year and approximately 54 million tonnes over a 20-year tree growth period.

It is timely to make natural climate solutions a cornerstone of Australia's international climate response through the aid program. Australia's current climate financing commitments end in 2020, and the next phase will commence shortly. As part of this new phase, World Vision Australia is calling for greater investment and focus on natural climate solutions. This would coincide with the Decade of Ecosystem Restoration (2021-2030) which aims to accelerate progress toward the achievement of existing global restoration goals, including the Bonn Challenge target of bring 350 million hectares of the world's deforested and degraded land into restoration by 2030. The ReGreen the Globe Movement directly supports this goal, which could generate USD 9 trillion in ecosystem services and take an additional 13-26 gigatons of greenhouse gases out of the atmosphere.

Strategic policy alignment:

Australia's initial five-year commitment of \$1 billion in climate financing comes to an end in 2020, so there is an opportunity to make regreening the hallmark of this next phase in Australia's climate financing and international action on climate change.

Investing in large-scale regreening programs through Australian Aid would take the Government's Direct Action approach to climate change to the international stage. Practical climate action, including tree planting through the Green Army, was a hallmark of the Direct Action Plan. Supporting regreening initiatives at scale as outlined in this proposal would be a tangible and impactful demonstration of Australia's commitment to helping its development partners and neighbours combat climate change.

DFAT's Climate Change Action Strategy includes a commitment to "increase targeted climate change investments to achieve outcomes at scale" and leading the ReGreen the Globe Movement and investing in nature-based climate solutions would do just that. It would help realise the objectives of the Action Strategy to support innovative climate solutions and help partner countries adapt to and mitigate climate change.

In addition, the proposed regreening program would support the goals of the Paris Climate Change Agreement and achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (especially SDG 13 on Climate Action and SDG 15 Life on Land).

Rationale:

Deforestation and land degradation are significant drivers of climate change owing to related losses in above and below ground woody biomass and organic matter which play a vital role in carbon sequestration and storage.⁴ Between 1990 and 2015, it is estimated that the world's forest area decreased from 31.6% to 30.6%, representing a net loss of 129 million hectares.⁵ Unsustainable land and natural resource use practices also contribute to land degradation. In 2011, it was estimated that 25% of all land worldwide was highly degraded and 36% was slightly or moderately degraded.⁶

The combined impacts of climate change, deforestation and land degradation on natural systems have contributed to a disruption of vital ecosystem functions and services globally. This disruption of essential ecosystems has produced numerous negative flow-on effects that significantly threaten human survival and prosperity.⁷ If not urgently addressed, global land degradation and associated decreases in land productivity are projected to contribute to a global food security crisis.⁸

Restoring degraded landscapes to regain their ecological functionality has been identified as an "unparalleled opportunity" and "proven measure" for fighting the climate crisis and ensuring food security, water supply and biodiversity. The restoration of 350 million hectares of degraded land is estimated to generate US\$9 trillion in ecosystem services and take an additional 13-26 gigatons of GHGs out of the atmosphere between now and 2030.⁹ Nature-based solutions therefore offer significant untapped potential to regenerate degraded landscapes, restore ecosystems and biodiversity, and support climate change mitigation and adaptation by capitalising on the regenerative potential of the vast underground forests found globally.

⁴ Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). The State of Food and Agriculture: Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security. ISSN 0081-4539. Rome: FAO; 2016b. Available from <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i6030e.pdf>

⁵ Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). 2018 State of the World's Forests: Forest Pathways to Sustainable Development. ISBN 978-92-5-130561-4. Rome: FAO; 2018. Available from <http://www.fao.org/3/I9535EN/I9535en.pdf>

⁶ *ibid.*

⁷ Millennium Ecosystems Assessment. Living Beyond Our Means: Natural Assets and Human Well-Being. Washington D.C., United States of America: Island Press; 2005. Available from <http://www.millenniumassessment.org/documents/document.429.aspx.pdf>

⁸ United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division. World Population Prospects: The 2017 Revision, Key Findings and Advance Tables. ESA/P/WP/248. New York: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division; 2017. Available from https://population.un.org/wpp/Publications/Files/WPP2017_KeyFindings.pdf

⁹ United Nations Environment Programme. New UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration offers unparalleled opportunity for job creation, food security and addressing climate change. Retrieved from <https://www.unenvironment.org/news-and-stories/press-release/new-un-decade-ecosystem-restoration-offers-unparalleled-opportunity>

Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration (FMNR) is an evidence-based, low-cost, and replicable community-led approach to restoring land through the systematic regrowth and management of trees and shrubs from felled stumps, sprouting root systems or seeds. The FMNR approach integrates nine core components which include a mix of technical and socio-political practices or approaches which are applied to varying degrees depending on the context. When applied to forest landscapes, the practice of FMNR's core components can be defined as community forest management, while the practice of FMNR's core components on agricultural landscapes can be defined as agroforestry.

Implementation:

Over the past two decades, World Vision has scaled-up FMNR across our field programming in over 26 countries across Africa and Asia. Despite the success of these programs, we recognise that if the climate crisis is to be averted within the critical window of opportunity remaining, a more innovative and catalytic approach to scaling FMNR globally is required.

To accelerate action, World Vision has recently launched the ReGreen the Globe Movement. Modelled of the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement, ReGreen the Globe is a global Movement dedicated to inspiring, uniting and empowering diverse stakeholders to address the interrelated global environmental challenges of landscape degradation, ecosystem collapse, biodiversity loss, and climate change by supporting and enabling the scale-up of FMNR in member countries. The Movement is seeking to urgently catalyse action towards the Bonn Challenge's goal of bringing 350 million hectares of the world's deforested and degraded land into restoration by 2030.

The Movement is designed to facilitate diverse stakeholders to work together to maximise their collective impact in urgently supporting FMNR as a priority landscape restoration solution.

This proposal is seeking \$60m in seed funding to catalyse the scale up of this collective approach in Ethiopia and support the establishment of ReGreen the Globe chapters in Indonesia and East Timor. This seed funding would help power the Movement, supporting cross-sector engagement, provision of contextually relevant training, and enabling responsive monitoring and evaluation of the project.

Value for Money:

The international community urgently needs low-cost, high impact initiatives to sequester carbon and tackle climate change. While the carbon sequestration potential of FMNR can vary depending on climatic factors (including temperature and rainfall), tree species, tree density, and soil type; it is estimated that FMNR applied on forest landscapes can sequester between 6 and 20 tCO₂ per hectare per year¹⁰, while FMNR applied on agricultural landscapes can sequester between 1 and 2 tCO₂ per hectare per year.¹¹ Supporting FMNR is also proven to support a wider range of social and economic community benefits.

This proposal offers the Australian Government the opportunity to invest in an innovative, replicable and value-for-money approach to catalysing the global scale-up of FMNR, a low-cost and evidence-based nature-based solution to rapidly restoring degraded landscapes and ecosystems. Such an investment would place the Australian Government at the forefront of this global Movement and provides a tangible means of demonstrating the Australian Government's commitment to direct and practical climate action.

¹⁰ Drylands will sequester CO₂ at rates closer to the lower end of the range, while tropical wet forests will sequester CO₂ at rates closer to the higher end of the range.

¹¹ These estimates only cover above and below ground carbon pools. Soil and leaf litter pools are excluded which are estimated to contribute an additional 0.5 to 2 tCO₂ per hectare per year (depending on factors including soil type and tree density).

PROPOSAL 2

Proposal Title: Empowering Women in the Pacific Through Inclusive Market Systems

Affected Agency: Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Financial Implications:

	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	Total
Cost of proposal (\$m)	1.4	2.3	2.75	2.55	8.5
Number of additional staff positions sought (ASL)	0.5	1	1	0.5	1

Outline of proposal:

This program will use the power of markets combined with direct capacity building to economically empower small holder farmers (especially women) across the Indo-Pacific, with a focus on Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and Timor Leste.

The proposal, if implemented, would achieve four key interrelated outcomes:

1. Improve the income and the productivity of poor farming households;
2. Increase the investment-readiness of private partners by strengthening their commercial business model as well as their inclusiveness, incorporating a gender lens;
3. Improve empowerment outcomes for women from households engaged in gender inclusive business models; and
4. Increase access to suitable finance for private partners to strengthen and scale their gender inclusive business models.

In total, the program will benefit more than 10,000 poor farming households across the Indo-Pacific.

In order to achieve Outcomes 1 to 3, it is proposed that an inclusive Market Systems Development (IMSD) approach be implemented, including a target strategy for Women's Economic Empowerment (WEE). This would involve supporting poor producers in order to lift them up, alongside assisting other market actors and especially the private sector to reach down and engage the poor producers. World Vision Australia has a significant portfolio currently working across the spectrum in Market Systems, from poor farming households through to the private sector, and is keen to partner with the Australian Government to further leverage this expertise, including scaling its IMSD in the targeted countries.

World Vision Australia has prioritised women's economic empowerment within its IMSD approach. Women participate alongside men in local, national and international markets as producers, consumers, entrepreneurs and employees. Our approach recognises the importance of taking a holistic approach to women's economic empowerment that intentionally works across empowerment domains, including agency, access, equitable systems and economic advancement. To this end, World Vision Australia applies a gender-inclusion lens which seeks to identify and respond to the differentiated experiences of women and men in different contexts.

Recognising that women and men at different levels of poverty require different levels of support to equitably participate and benefit from market systems, this initiative – *Empowering Women in the Pacific Through Inclusive Market Systems* – will integrate a combination of 'push strategies' (e.g. inclusive business and financial literacy training, information provision) and 'pull strategies' (e.g. co-designing a sustainable business model through multi-sector partnerships and advocating for policy/regulation change), based upon the level of market-readiness, vulnerabilities and key barriers of different groups living in poverty.

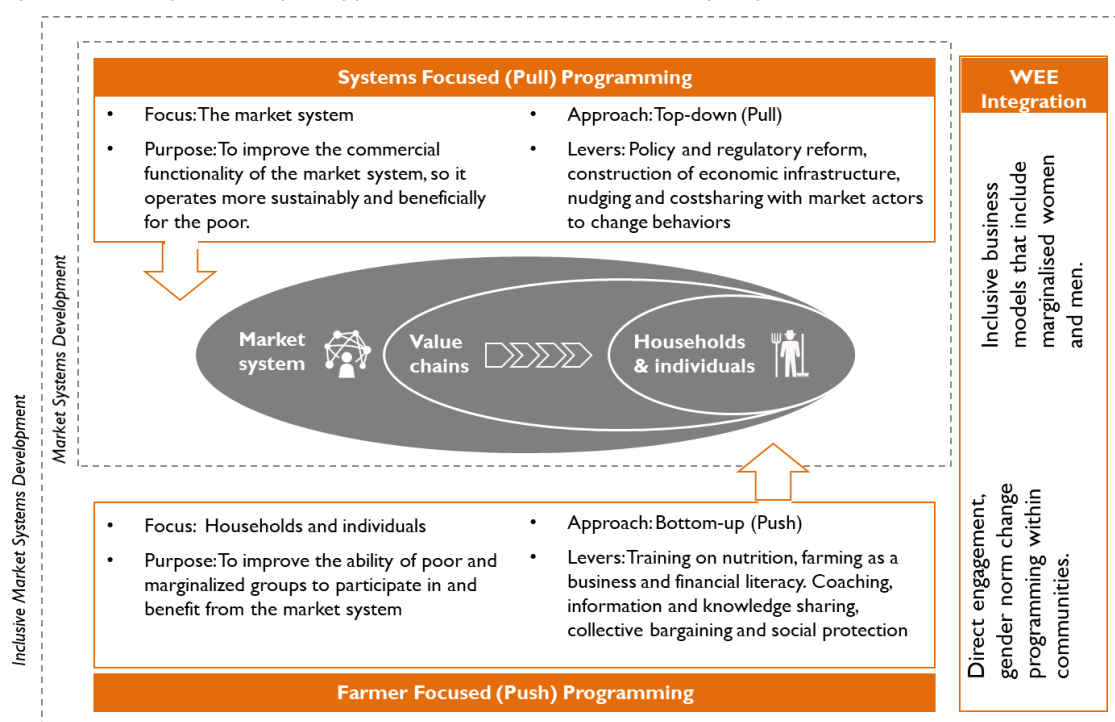
To advance the economic empowerment of women, the proposed project will work on selected sub-sectors and develop gender inclusive business models that intentionally include poor women. Secondly, the project will seek to promote women's empowerment by addressing key barriers to women's meaningful participation in markets through direct engagement, including ensuring that financial literacy training and business training

promotes ‘farming as a family business’, women’s decision making, choice and agency in relation to household finances, including both business decisions like investment as well as household spending, which influences the entire household, including girls and boys.

Recognising that harmful gender norms constrain women’s economic empowerment, as the part of the ‘informal rules’ that govern economic markets and households, the proposed project will include a focus on gender and social norm behaviour change, which will promote the business case for women’s economic participation with market actors while engaging community leaders, women and men to improve gender equitable relations. This holistic approach will ensure ‘do no harm’ given the high prevalence of gender-based violence in the region.

This mix of push and pull levers, that also integrates women’s economic empowerment, is illustrated by the graphic below.

Figure 1: Mix of ‘push’ and ‘pull’ approaches to be used to economically empower Indo-Pacific women



Finally, under Outcome 4, the proposed project will seek to increase access to suitable finance for private partners to strengthen and scale their gender inclusive business models. For example, World Vision Australia recently raised \$20m of impact investment capital along with VisionFund International as part of the Kangaroo Bond issue in the Australian marketplace.

Strategic Policy Alignment:

This proposal will contribute to the Government’s Pacific Step Up by supporting inclusive economic growth in the region, especially growth that involves and benefits women. This inclusive approach will help set Australia apart from other bilateral donors in the region and strengthen Pacific relations by building both people-to-people and economic linkages. It will seek to promote synergies with other related Australian investments in the region, including the undersea cable to improve internet connectivity in PNG and the Solomon Islands.

By breaking down barriers to women’s economic participation, the program will also promote women’s economic empowerment in line with DFAT’s *Gender equality and women’s empowerment strategy*. The proposal will directly contribute to Australia’s Aid for Trade objectives by building the productive capacity of local communities to engage in and benefit from trade. In fact, the proposal seeks to bring together the Australian Government’s market systems development, aid for trade, private sector engagement, impact investment and gender equality programming into a holistic development approach.

The proposal also supports the aid program's commitment to private sector development and innovative forms of development financing. Under this proposal, the delivery partner will identify and provide technical assistance to private sector partners to help them become investment-ready to be able to crowd-in future blended finance. Whilst increasing the investment-readiness of private sector partners working within the market system, the program will also leverage current ecosystem building initiatives (such as Scaling Frontier Innovation, Pacific RISE, and Investing in Women), membership deal-share platforms (such as the Asian Venture Philanthropy Network, Aspen Network of Development Entrepreneurs, and Impact Investment Group), patient or catalytic capital sources (such as the Frontier Brokers and future Frontier Capital opportunity) and crowd-funding partners (such as KIVA, Good Return) to facilitate access to the appropriate finance.

In addition, the proposal will help advance a range of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including reducing poverty (SDG 1), advancing gender equality (SDG 5), promoting inclusive economic growth (SDG 8), and reducing inequalities (SDG 10).

Rationale:

The proposed project is based on two key premises.

First, Australia's market-based programming in developing countries often has too narrow a focus on markets and is targeted too high at system-level change and, in the process, can neglect to build the productive capacity of the most marginalised people, especially women, so that they can participate in and benefit from markets. Most of DFAT's Market Systems Development programming is managed by a small group of commercial managing contractors. Their preferred method is to use indirect facilitation, influencing structural changes at the macro, system level or local economy level, while not assuming any long-term market function themselves. While having impact, these indirect interventions should be complemented by more direct facilitation to build the productive capacity of vulnerable groups – including women, smallholder farmers, and people with a disability – through training and capacity building, transfer of assets or technology, information provision and collective action, among other interventions – to empower them to more effectively engage in the market system. That is why a holistic and intentionally inclusive market systems approach, such as the one described in this policy proposal, is needed.

Productive capacity is the ability of individuals to produce goods and services as inputs to a market system, as determined by their physical ability, skills, knowledge and resources. DFAT's own publications refer to the development benefits that can be obtained by investing in farmer productive capacity, small holder aggregation and market awareness in combination with private partner led interventions. World Vision Australia embraces DFAT's own recommendations that large market development facilities should build on rather than replace the inclusive, community-level activities of NGOs. World Vision agrees that the most effective way to do this is to ensure that DFAT invests an increased proportion of market development programming through capable NGO partners. Drawing on collaborative thought leadership with DFAT over the past years and particularly recommendations emerging from sector specialist DFAT publications such as the draft 2019 ANCP Agriculture and Rural Development Thematic Review, this budget proposal calls for investment in market-led agricultural development in the Pacific that is focused on inclusion and productive capacity building as well as growth objectives. Investing in hybrid push/pull IMSD programming in the Pacific will build on the Australian Government's existing investments in market systems and would fill a gap in holistic programming that focuses on 'push' and 'pull' interventions simultaneously.

Second, despite women working alongside men in agricultural markets, programs often do not explicitly seek to understand and unpack the intersection between: social and gender norms and the formal rules of the markets systems, household dynamics and household farming businesses productivity, power dynamics in a market system and gender relations. Within the sector, there is a wide spectrum of approaches that seek to promote women's economic empowerment, including through private sector development (pull strategies) and adopting more traditionally implemented bottom up programs that seek to adopt a community development lens, support women's leadership, women's organisations and address harmful gender norms (push strategies). This proposal offers the potential to test a model that seeks to leverage the learnings from both pull and push approaches to intentionally promote women's economic empowerment.

As Australia seeks to scale up its engagement in the Pacific, this proposal offers the opportunity to test World Vision's IMSD and WEE approaches in the Pacific and country specific contexts.

Implementation:

Based on foundational gender sensitive sub-sector analysis, and gender and social inclusion assessments, the project will identify specific target groups and corresponding push pull strategies that will seek to improve household income, strengthen commercial business models and promote gender inclusion and women's empowerment. It will seek to identify private sector partners to co-design gender inclusive business models that include poor women and men in company supply chains as producers, employees, business-owners, or consumers of affordable goods and services.

Over the first 12-18 months, the focus would be on recruiting the right people, analysing sub-sectors and the broader market with a gender sensitive and inclusion lens, building partnerships, and designing relevant training curriculums and behaviour change materials.

By the proposal's second year we would expect to see formalised partnerships, preparation of pilot interventions and activities. And years 3 and 4 are where market change begins, laying the foundation for scale as related actors are crowded in over the years to follow.

In line with best practice, opportunities for cross-sector partnerships will be identified as a priority and will be used to co-design and implement interventions that directly build the productive capacity of farmers who are poor, including both women and men, as part of an inclusive business model.

Value for Money:

With a total budget of \$8.5 million, the proposal will directly benefit more than 10,000 poor farming households across the Indo-Pacific, with a focus on Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and Timor Leste. This presents a high return on investment. By integrating gender, aid for trade, market systems and private sector development, this proposal would contribute to multiple objectives through the one investment and it will have efficiencies and synergies in doing so. The pilot will unpack the potential for 'collective impact' amongst DFAT's economic development programming, presenting a sound and high impact investment.

Donors and practitioners are all too aware that while programming in the Pacific is expensive to begin with, effectively targeting inclusion, gender and farmer productive capacity in market development programming is more expensive still. Research however continues to support the value in investing directly in these areas, integrated with market led systems development. NGO's are uniquely placed to combine these approaches, with unequalled access to marginalised communities. Investing in sector-leading organisations like World Vision, which also holds some of Australia's leading technical capability in market systems development, could hold the key to producing a scalable market engagement programming modality that actively targets inclusion, poverty reduction, gender equality, and has the potential to unlock the potential of poor farming households in the Pacific.

PROPOSAL 3

Proposal Title: Ending Violence Against Children in the Pacific and Timor-Leste

Affected Agency: Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Financial Implications:

	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	Total
Cost of proposal (\$m)	13	17	21	22	73
Number of additional staff positions sought (ASL)	0	0	0	0	0

Outline of proposal:

The Australian Government should increase investment in programs targeted at addressing violence against children to \$73 million (1.5% of regional ODA) over the forward estimates.

A landmark report published in July 2019 by four child-focused Australian organisations – World Vision, ChildFund, Plan and Save the Children – revealed endemic levels of violence against children in the Pacific and Timor-Leste region and significant underinvestment in programmes to address this challenge. The report, **Unseen, Unsafe: the underinvestment in ending violence against children in the Pacific and Timor-Leste**, indicates that only 0.1 percent of all Australian foreign aid to the Pacific and Timor-Leste was directed to programs specifically addressing violence against children.

Unseen, Unsafe revealed that over 4 million children across the region experience violent discipline at home. In addition, child sexual abuse and neglect are also unacceptably high. For example,

- 1 in 4 adolescent girls experienced physical violence, and 1 in 10 sexual violence;
- In Papua New Guinea, more than half of all sexual violence cases referred to medical clinics in Port Moresby and Tari were against children; and
- In Papua New Guinea, 27 per cent of parents or carers reported beating their children “over and over as hard as they could”.¹²

Children growing up under these circumstances most often than not experience stunting, mental health, behavioural and social problems that are a cost to production and to the budget throughout their lives.

Strategic Policy Alignment:

The Government has committed to renewing its engagement with the Pacific region through the Pacific Step Up. Investing in programs to end violence against children in the region would add a new dimension to Australia’s relations with the Pacific and Timor-Leste region while addressing a key social challenge. This type of social transformation programming would complement the Government’s other initiatives in the region, such as infrastructure financing, and make Australia’s assistance more holistic and multi-dimensional.

The proposal also aligns strongly with the gender equality objectives of Australian Aid, as DFAT’s *Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment Strategy* lists ending violence against women and girls as one of its three priorities. World Vision’s call for increased investment to end violence against children not only aligns with DFAT’s intention but is more holistic and goes further to include all children, girls and boys.

¹² Unseen, unsafe: The underinvestment in ending violence against children in the Pacific and Timor-Leste, Save the Children, ChildFund Australia, Plan International, World Vision

Rationale:

Neuroscience tells us that the wellbeing of a person is rooted in the first 1,000 days of life and in their childhood experiences. It is of strategic importance, therefore, that the aid program prioritises children. While Australian Aid supports a range of programs to end gender-based violence, very few programs specifically address the issue of violence against children. In fact, **Unseen, Unsafe** notes that in 2017 only \$1.1 million or 0.1 percent of all Australian aid to the Pacific and Timor-Leste was channelled to programs specifically addressing violence against children. It is critical that funding be specific and directed towards strengthening child protection systems and the delivery of related services.

By investing at least 1.5 % of regional ODA to ending violence against children in the Pacific and Timor-Leste, Australia will be setting the tone of the value placed on children and encouraging its neighbours to allocate sufficient budget to honour the different national plans they have made to promote child well-being.

Implementation:

It is proposed that programs be ramped up over time and scaled based on outcomes. Programming will also need to be tailored to the context of different communities and different Pacific island countries. In the Pacific, where 90% of the population identifies as Christian, the Church is often the most significant civil society actor. Evidence from World Vision's programming affirms the importance of engaging faith leaders because they are trusted and play a central role in Pacific communities. Ultimately, ending violence against children is about changing behaviours and beliefs, and faith leaders play a central, trusted role in Pacific communities.

Value for money

Investing early to end violence against children reaches the root causes of the problem – it seeks to nurture and grow a wholesome individual. Over a lifetime, prevention programming like this can increase productivity, reduce the burden on healthcare and welfare systems, reduce incidences of violence later in life, and improve social outcomes. As the World Bank notes, investing in children is one of the smartest investments a government can make.¹³

¹³ World Bank <http://www.worldbank.org/en/programs/earlyyears>

PROPOSAL 4

Proposal title: Preventing Humanitarian Crises

Affected agency: Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Financial implications:

	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	Total
Cost of proposal (\$m)	22	22	23	23	70
<i>Investing in resilience</i>	2	2	3	3	10
<i>Conflict prevention</i>	20	20	20	0	60
Number of additional staff positions sought (ASL)	0	0	0	0	0

Outline of proposal:

In 2020, more than 167 million people around the world will be in need humanitarian assistance.¹⁴ This number has grown steadily over the past five years as a result of the increasingly complex relationship between natural hazards, armed conflict and human vulnerability.¹⁵ The ongoing crises in Yemen, Syria, and Myanmar continue to account for a significant proportion of people in need of humanitarian assistance, and each year an average 350 million people are affected by natural hazards and disasters.¹⁶ In this context, Australia's commitment to increase the humanitarian budget to A\$500 million is both welcome and urgently needed.¹⁷

However, Australia must do more to prevent these crises from occurring in the first place.

A key way to break the cycle of crises and humanitarian response for communities facing recurrent or protracted crises is a long-term investment in programs designed to reduce vulnerability and build resilience. Humanitarian crises are increasingly lasting longer and affecting more people. Between 2000 and 2017, 27 countries had more than 5 consecutive years of UN coordinated appeals. In 2018, 16 of these countries still had ongoing appeals.¹⁸ In this context of increasingly protracted crises, breaking beyond the short-term funding cycles of traditional approaches to humanitarian assistance is urgently needed.

World Vision's own experience in contexts including Somalia, South Sudan and Afghanistan have demonstrated the clear and improved impact on community resilience that multi-year programs have had.¹⁹ Building on this success, we **urge the Australian Government to, at a minimum, support in 2020-2021 a further two**

¹⁴ United Nations (UN) Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), *Global Humanitarian Overview*, 2019.

¹⁵ United Nations (UN) Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), *Global Humanitarian Overview*, 2019.

¹⁶ United Nations (UN) Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), *Global Humanitarian Overview*, 2019.

¹⁷ World Vision does note, however, that analysis suggests that Australia's true fair share of global humanitarian funding would be at least \$570 million when calculated by dividing the total figure across High and Upper Middle-Income Nations according to their GNI.

¹⁸ Development Initiatives, *Global Humanitarian Assistance Report 2019*.

¹⁹ Link to Shockproof

packages of multi-year, community focused, resilience assistance in contexts of recurrent, chronic or protracted crises.

Another critical approach in strengthening efforts to prevent humanitarian crises occurring is a greater investment in addressing conflict and violence. Between 2002 and 2013, 86 percent of humanitarian funding needs occurred in situations of conflict and violence.²⁰ In subsequent years, that number has risen to as high as 97 percent.²¹ The impact of conflict on support systems and coping capacities, and in some cases the destruction and deliberate denial of access to resources and services, has forced millions of families into a state of involuntary reliance on humanitarian aid. While Australia has championed conflict prevention in various international forums, it has not matched its policy ambitions with financial support, and has fallen behind its peers in conflict prevention funding: World Vision analysis found that Australia currently ranks 13 of 30 Development Assistance Committee (DAC) countries when measured by DFAT's own metrics²² of 'Conflict Prevention and Resolution' investments in the aid program and has provided 30 times less than the leading contributor (Germany).²³

We urge Australia to correct this now by committing to **become a top 10 DAC donor in conflict prevention and resolution**, which would mean increasing Australia's dedicated funding on this from A\$32 million to A\$93 million, while maintaining existing levels of core contributions to multilateral organisations. This increase could be staged over the coming three budget years.

Taken together, two commitments of this nature would make a substantial contribution to addressing the root causes of humanitarian crises.

Strategic policy alignment:

At the international level, Australia has already committed to do more to prevent humanitarian crises. In 2016, the UN Secretary General convened the World Humanitarian Summit in an effort to identify new approaches and commitments to reduce suffering and better support people in crisis. The summit recognised the urgent need for a "shift from perpetual crisis management towards effectively managing prevention and early action."²⁴ The Grand Bargain was adopted at the summit's conclusion and has, among other commitments, sought to enhance engagement between humanitarian and development actors. Signatories (including Australia) also committed to "increasing collaborative humanitarian multi-year planning and funding."²⁵ Further, Australia is a member, and past co-chair, of the Good Humanitarian Donorship (GHD) principles. The GHD principles recognise the provision of multi-year funding or planning instruments as best practice in situations of recurrent, chronic or protracted crises.

Australia has also already committed to preventing conflict and reducing risks of violence. At the World Humanitarian Summit, Australia committed to "improve prevention and peaceful resolution capacities at the national, regional and international level," and "address root causes of conflict and work to reduce fragility by investing in the development of inclusive, peaceful societies."²⁶ The Foreign Policy White Paper also notes that the Australian Government will "particularly encourage a more coordinated focus on conflict prevention, rather than waiting for crises to develop."²⁷

Just recently, the DAC members (including Australia) also committed to an approach of "prevention always, development wherever possible, humanitarian action when necessary," and noted that its members should seek to achieve this through, *inter alia*, "Increasing support for prevention, mediation and peacebuilding and early

²⁰ UN, *Strengthening of the Coordination of Emergency Humanitarian Assistance of the United Nations*, 2014.

²¹ OCHA, *World Humanitarian Data and Trends*, 2016.

²² DFAT currently includes the following DAC codes when reporting on 'conflict prevention and resolution' in the Official Development Assistance Statistical Summary: 15220, 15230, 15240, 15250, and 15261.

²³ World Vision, *Crisis Averted: Preventing the conflicts that drive humanitarian needs*, 2019.

²⁴ Agenda for Humanity – page 8.

²⁵

²⁶ OCHA Register, *Australia's Commitments (Final) from World Humanitarian Summit*, 2016.

²⁷ DFAT, *Foreign Policy White Paper*, 2017.

recovery, with a view to decreasing the risk of violent conflict, disasters and crises that generate humanitarian needs and undermine development.”²⁸

In this context, providing a greater portion of Australia’s funding to multi-year resilience efforts and to supporting conflict prevention would be a valuable opportunity to fulfil these policy commitments and establish Australia as a world leader in crisis prevention.

Rationale:

Each year, millions of families living in crises are missing out on lifesaving assistance due to a lack of humanitarian funding. While organisations like World Vision try to stretch the available resources as far as possible, the needs are vastly outpacing funding. In this context, donors must not only provide more assistance, but also work to break this cycle by addressing the drivers of crises.

Investing in multi-year, community resilience programs is a critical way to make Australia’s funding contributions go further. Recent evidence from Somalia has demonstrated that participants in a World Vision supported resilience program demonstrated better food security outcomes and improved coping strategies than those who had not participated when faced with another drought. World Vision has observed similar success in Afghanistan and South Sudan by taking this type of approach.²⁹ For the millions of people around the world in situations of recurrent or protracted crises, working differently has never been more important, and this is only likely to become more important as the impacts of climate change intensify.

Given the strong linkage between conflict and crises, investing in conflict prevention is also crucial to preventing crises. Not only do conflicts displace civilians, destroy infrastructure, and diminish individual coping capacities, but they also often undermine the ability of states to effectively meet the needs of their citizens – including in the event of natural hazards and climate-induced shocks. By preventing conflict, Australia can thus not only prevent immediate humanitarian needs, but can also help safeguard the ability of states to independently support their citizens in the event of a disaster. Preventing conflicts also reduces the key driver of forced migration to third countries, and as subsequent sections will show, is extremely cost effective.

Implementation:

To build community resilience to protracted and recurrent crises and break the cycle of dependence on humanitarian assistance, World Vision recommends that the Australian Government make an allocation of funding available to support, at minimum, a further two packages of multi-year, community focused, resilience assistance in contexts of recurrent, chronic or protracted crises **at a cost of approximately \$10million spread over four years**. An increased commitment of this nature would bring Australia’s contribution in line with the ambition made under the Grand Bargain. World Vision considers there are opportunities for community resilience focused programs in Bangladesh, South Sudan, Somalia and Afghanistan.

To become a top ten DAC donor in conflict prevention and resolution, Australia would need to **increase its current dedicated funding from A\$32 million to A\$93 million**, while maintaining existing levels of unearmarked contributions. While this may seem like a significant increase, World Vision believes it is both necessary and achievable – particularly in the context of Australia’s A\$38.7 billion defence budget. And indeed, to avoid cutting funds from lifesaving humanitarian or development programs, World Vision believes that a portion of the new conflict prevention aid should be reallocated from the defence budget. Given that Australia’s defence interests would undoubtedly benefit (and save) from a more conflict-free world, it is reasonable that defence should contribute to scaling up Australia’s civilian conflict prevention efforts.

This increase could be staggered over the three coming budget years rather than taking place all at once. World Vision does, however, encourage new conflict prevention funding from defence to be reallocated to DFAT

²⁸ Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC), *Recommendation on the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus*, 2019.

²⁹ See Shockproof for more info

(rather than being managed directly by defence) to ensure that investment decisions are made by technical specialists and remain independent of political or military interests.

In considering how to allocate the conflict prevention funding, World Vision encourages DFAT to ensure that peacebuilding funds are directed to program models with a demonstrated record of success. In World Vision's experience, two such models are programs that meaningfully involve children and young people, and programs that work with faith leaders. More details on both approaches can be found in World Vision's recent report *Crisis Averted: Preventing the Conflicts that Drive Humanitarian Needs*.

Finally, when considering broader aid investments in fragile contexts, we believe preference should be given to programs that proactively integrate a conflict prevention focus. World Vision has seen strong peace dividends come from programs that would not traditionally be associated with this area of work – for example, livelihoods programs that include a focus on reducing opportunity-related tensions or risks, or natural resource regeneration programs that help mitigate disputes associated with resource strain. Given the dual benefits of such interventions, World Vision believes this type of integrated approach should be used more intentionally in fragile contexts – doing so would help Australia to achieve greater prevention impact even within the existing budget.

Value for Money:

The World Bank's Pathways for Peace report notes that the best way to prevent a communities' descent into crises "is to ensure that they are resilient through investment in inclusive and sustainable development." Taking longer-term programming approaches that can build a bridge between humanitarian and development approaches are a more effective means of supporting communities facing recurrent crises than providing humanitarian assistance when a crisis occurs. Community resilience programs assist in building the foundations for sustainable development, bridging the nexus between humanitarian and development programs, and overtime reducing dependence on international funding.

Investing in conflict prevention is also highly cost effective. Two separate studies, one from the Institute of Economics and Peace³⁰ and one from Hannes Muller for the World Bank,³¹ both independently concluded that for every dollar invested in prevention, the global economy could save 16 dollars in loss linked to conflict and displacement. Based on Mueller's model, even if peacebuilding programs were only effective 50 percent of the time, net returns on prevention could be up to US\$33 billion.³²

Linked to this, Mueller estimates that the collective savings in humanitarian assistance and peacekeeping could reach US\$1.2 billion per year in the first 15 years.³³ After that time, savings could grow to US\$2.5 billion, or roughly 8 percent of total humanitarian assistance and peacekeeping spend.³⁴ **If this rate were crudely applied to Australian's humanitarian assistance and peacekeeping budgets, it would represent a savings of A\$54 million per year.**³⁵

The figures above do not even take into account potential savings in defence spending. Australia's current annual defence budget is A\$38.7 billion – a substantial amount. If a safer world requires less military investment, Australia could see further savings in its defence budget lines.

³⁰ Institute of Economics and Peace, *Measuring Peacebuilding Cost-Effectiveness*, 2017.

³¹ Hannes Mueller, *How Much is Prevention Worth?*, 2017.

³² Mueller's analysis is based on a collective annual investment of US\$2.1 billion from global donors.

³³ Mueller, *How Much is Prevention Worth?*, 2017.

³⁴ Based on Mueller's estimated global annual spend of US\$30 billion on humanitarian assistance and peacekeeping.

³⁵ Based on Australia's 2019-2020 humanitarian budget of A\$450 million and 2019 assessed contribution to UN peacekeeping of \$231 million.

PROPOSAL 5

Proposal Title: Establishment of a Children's Rights Unit

Affected Agency: Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Financial Implications:

	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	Total
Cost of proposal (\$m)	0.38	0.61	0.61	0.6	2.22
Number of additional staff positions sought (ASL)	3	5	5	5	5

Outline of proposal:

World Vision Australia calls on the Australian Government to put children at the centre of development by establishing a unit to oversee the mainstreaming of children's rights across all thematic areas of its aid program and to account for and help to track DFAT's spend on children.

World Vision draws on three compelling evidence-based arguments to advise on why the Australian Government should invest in children. Firstly, the rights argument based on Article 4 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) that binds signatory countries to action; second, the economic argument which focuses on the need to invest in human capital and the political and social argument which illustrates how limited social investment yields high levels of inequality and severe poverty which undermine social cohesion. Getting it right for children from an early age is critical given the increasingly young population in the countries supported by Australian Aid and evidence on the linkages between childhood experiences of, and the intergenerational nature of, poverty.

World Vision calls on the Australian Government to:

1. Place children at the centre of international development by establishing a children's rights desk to oversee the mainstreaming of a child rights-based approach and to ensure that all aid and trade interventions undertake assessments and consultations to consider their impact on children
2. Introduce child wellbeing as a metric for poverty reduction and ensure that at least 80% of investments of the Australian Aid program and trade regardless of their objectives undertake child impact assessments and make a public disclosure on how children's rights such as environment and health are affected.
3. Scale up Australia's funding to end violence against children and identify and track how much public spending is allocated to ending violence against children
4. Ensure that grant recipients listen to and capture the views and experiences of children so that their perspectives can help inform the Australian aid program and policymaking at the local, national and global levels.

Strategic Policy Alignment:

a) **The rights-based argument**

Australia is a State party to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. By ratifying the CRC, the Government accepted the obligations under international law to implement it. Article 4 of the CRC outlines the Government's responsibility in the context of international development as follows:

"States parties shall undertake all appropriate legislative, administrative and other measures for the implementation of rights recognised in the present convention. With regard to economic, social and cultural

rights states parties shall undertake such measures to the maximum extent of their available resources and where needed within the framework of international co-operation”³⁶

General comment No. 19 (2016) on public budgeting for the realisation of children’s rights (Article 4) specifies that programs of donor states must be rights-based.³⁷ This means that the framework for international development assistance whether directly or indirectly related to children should be rights based.

World Vision encourages the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade to view children as partners and active contributors to development. Children should be prioritised, consulted and their perspectives considered in matters concerning them, in the same way that the aid program intentionally considers women and people with disabilities in the design and delivery of aid. General comment No 19 further explains:

States parties should regularly hear children’s views on budget decisions that affect them, through mechanisms for the meaningful participation of children at the national and subnational levels. Participants in those mechanisms should be able to contribute freely and without fear of repression or ridicule ...

b) The economic argument

The purpose of Australian Aid is “to assist developing countries to **reduce poverty and achieve sustainable development**, in line with Australia’s national interest.³⁸

Children not only make up half the world’s poor, they are individuals, consumers, the human capital of tomorrow, dependent on adults for support, protection and for their welfare. Children’s rights are inalienable, indivisible and interdependent. Deliberately investing in children early and consistently monitoring the impact that aid programs have on children will enable the Australian Aid program to strengthen its contribution to the attainment of children’s rights and to the success of the Sustainable Development Goals. It must be noted that the Sustainable Development Goals unlike their predecessor the Millennium Development Goals are more child rights focused and identify children as beneficiaries with agency and significant stakeholders in development. Every dollar spent on children is an investment in the ‘future’ human capital of a nation.

c) The political and social argument

Each year, one billion children worldwide experience physical and humiliating punishment, sexual and emotional violence, child labour, child marriage or armed recruitment. Violence not only harms children but jeopardises their future survival, health and education. For example, a baseline study by UNICEF estimated the total costs of violence against children in the Asia-Pacific region at US\$160 billion or 2% of regional GDP in 2004.³⁹ One of the [smartest investments](#) a country can make is to invest in children early⁴⁰ to minimise intergenerational transmission of inequality and severe poverty which can undermine social cohesion.

Rationale:

Children are invisible stakeholders and beneficiaries in the Australian Aid programme and yet they are a fast-growing segment of the global population and constitute half of the world’s poor.⁴¹ World Vision Australia notes

³⁶ UNCRRC <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CRC.aspx>

³⁷ United Nations Human Rights Commissioner General comment No. 19 (2016) on public budgeting for the realization of children’s rights (art. 4), https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CRC%2fC%2fGC%2f19&Lang=en

³⁸ 2017 Foreign Policy White Paper, Australian Government, <https://www.fpwhitepaper.gov.au/foreign-policy-white-paper/chapter-six-global-cooperation/promoting-sustainable-development>

³⁹ Violence against children, United Nations, https://violenceagainstchildren.un.org/economic_costs_of_vac_viewpoint

⁴⁰ World Bank <http://www.worldbank.org/en/programs/earlyyears>

⁴¹ Strategic Framework for Australia’s Overseas Aid Program, https://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/Documents/wp_framework.pdf

that 1.3 billion people globally live in poverty - half of them are children aged 0 – 17 years. This means one out of every three children in the world are poor.⁴²

Even though children make up half of the world's poor, none of strategic targets for the aid program directly target children as key stakeholders nor measure progress made in the realisation of their economic, cultural and social rights. As a result, WVVA believes that Australian Aid is missing its mark and failing to directly account for half its target constituency of 'the poor' in partner countries.

Neuroscience shows that the foundation for health and well-being is established in childhood and that the first 1,000 days of life lay the foundation and building blocks of a person's life. It is the period during which the basics of an individual's lifelong health, cognitive development and growth are laid.⁴³ To break the cycle of poverty, address inequality, and boost productivity later in life, countries must invest in children early and Australia can lead by example by establishing the proposed child rights unit.

To be effective, Australian Aid must implement a rights-based framework thereby putting children at the centre of development; investing in children early, tracking its ODA spending on children and accounting for the impact of its policies on children.

Implementation:

DFAT should write children into policy and make them a priority by mainstreaming children's rights into the aid program using the approach the Department used to integrate gender and disabilities. This budget should establish a child rights unit to facilitate and account for the mainstreaming of children's rights in Australian Aid. The Unit could kickstart with 3 full time child rights experts in 2019/20 (including 1 x Director EL2; 1 x Assistant Director EL1; 1 x Senior Policy Officer APS 6). This resourcing should ramp up to 5 full time staff (1 EL2, 2 EL1, 2 AP6) by 2020/21 and be sustained thereafter. This will cost approximately \$2.2 million over the forward estimates. Costings are based on salaries and superannuation as outlined in DFAT's Enterprise Agreement 2019.

Value for Money:

The establishment of the Child Rights Unit represents value for money for Australian Aid because mainstreaming children's rights across the aid program is a sound investment in the long-term outcomes of aid. It is critical to ending inter-generational poverty and breaking the cycle of disadvantage.

If the Australian Government is to show commitment and deliver on its international obligations, provision must be made in the budget to enable the Aid program to engage child rights specialists to spearhead an agenda that puts children at the centre of development and cross checks to ensure that all DFAT policies, programmes and interventions are in the best interest of children.

⁴² [Multidimensional Poverty Index](#), 2018

⁴³ The first 1,000 days of life: The brain's window of opportunity. Sarah Cusick, PhD and Michael K. Georgieff, MD, UNICEF, <https://www.unicef-irc.org/article/958-the-first-1000-days-of-life-the-brains-window-of-opportunity.html>