

Performance of Australian Aid 2013-14

Some Comments

Stephen Howes, Devpolicy, ANU

5th [?] (3rd type of) report on the performance of the Australian aid program since the 2006 White Paper

- 3 ARDEs (Annual Review of Development Effectiveness)
 - Emerged from the 2006 White Paper
- 1 ARAE (Annual Review of Aid Effectiveness)
 - Emerged from the Independent Review of Aid Effectiveness
- 1 PAA
 - Emerged from *Making Performance Count*

The best of the five

- ARDEs were good, but produced with increasing delay: 2008-09 released in December 2010.
- ARAE timely, but ignored country and project performance.
 - Davies-Howes: part “rosy and out of step” and part “worrying and uninformative”.
- PAA uses the country and project performance

My critique

1. The top 10 targets: automatic or problematic?
2. Country performance: will there be consequences?
3. Missing targets: stakeholder survey
4. Headline results and Ministerial endorsement: from one extreme to another
5. PNG performance-linked aid
6. ODE: role and publications?

4 quasi-automatic targets

- Aid for trade: meant to increase from 15 to 20% by 2020. Cut the aid program by 20%, and you're just about there.
- Engaging with the private sector: it's government policy
- 90% aid to Indo-Pacific: already achieved.
- Anti-corruption strategies for all programs: impact?

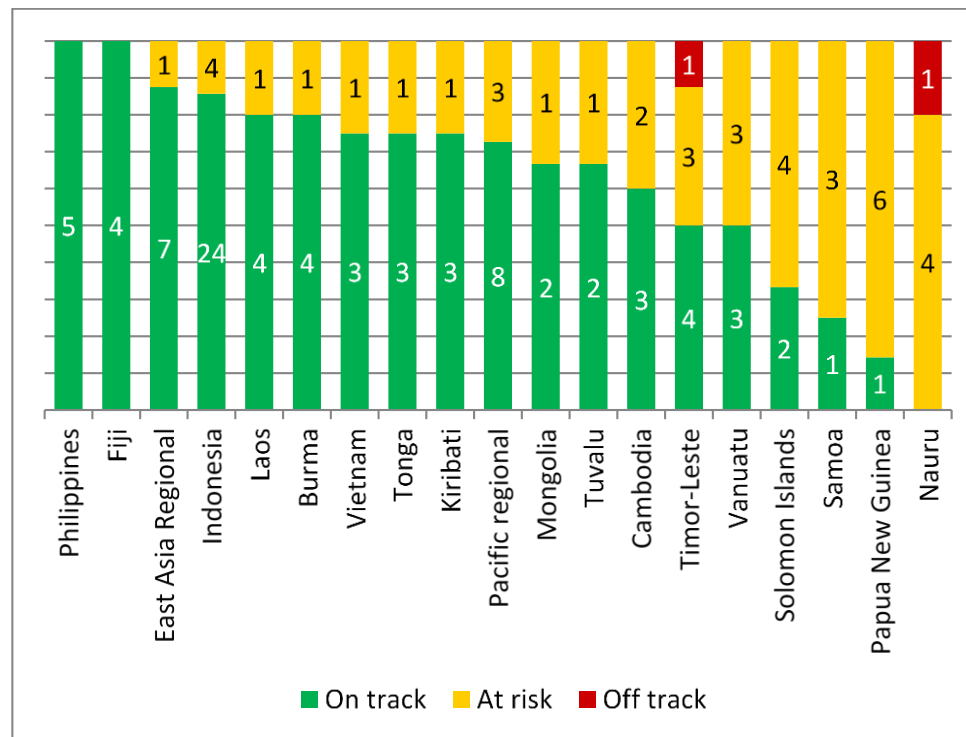
6 problematic targets

- Aid Investment Plans for all countries by July: not with the budget cuts
- Annual assessments of partner performance
 - Will be delayed if plans delayed
 - Mutual accountability overplayed
- New performance assessment systems
 - Why not repeat the multilateral assessment system of March 2012
- Empowering women and girls
 - 80% satisfactory gender rating does not mean 80% effectively address gender
- Aid program consolidation:
 - From 1,319 in July 2013 to 1,142 in July 2014 to 1,055 in 2015.
- Effectiveness and efficiency 85%.
 - What are the ODE ratings?

Country performance

- “The assessments made in the report will inform annual budget allocations...” (From *Making Performance Count*)

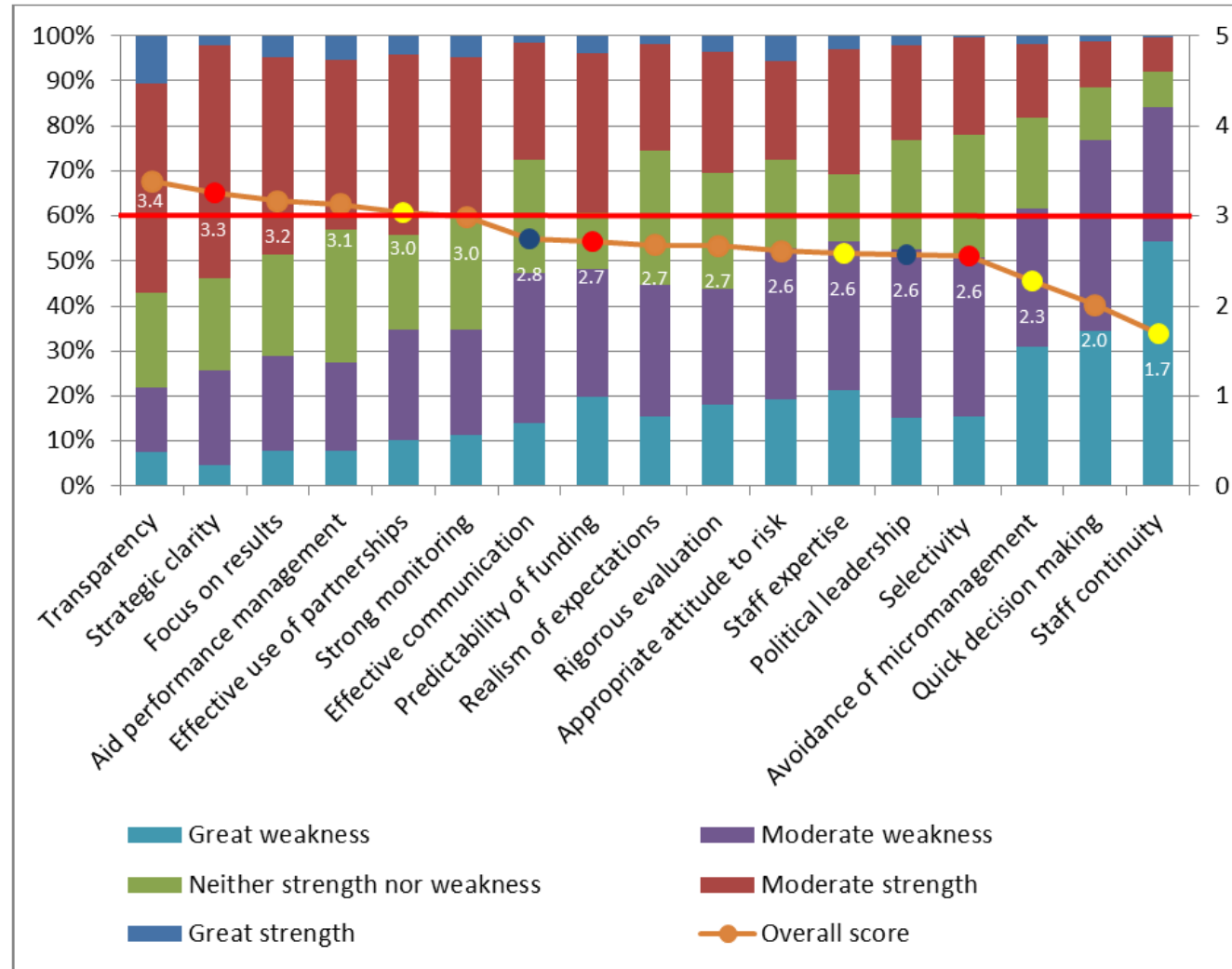
Performance of Australian aid programs against program objectives



Missing targets

- Transparency
- Staff turnover
- Timeliness

2013 Stakeholder Survey: really getting at what matters.



Transparency

Transport Sector Support Program

Phase 1 \$386 million, 2007-2014

Phase 2 \$400 million, 2014-2019

The PNG-Australia Transport Sector Support Program (TSSP) has been the primary Australian Government investment in transport infrastructure in PNG since 2007. The shared long term development goal of PNG and Australia for TSSP is a safe, reliable transport system that enables economic and social development in PNG. Approximately 75 percent of TSSP funding is spent on roads through the National Department of Works, directly assisting it to maintain sections of the core network of 16 National Priority Roads across 12 Provinces and Bougainville. In 2014 the program entered its second phase, under which the focus will shift to supporting larger highway rehabilitation projects for economically important roads, while handing more responsibility for routine road maintenance to the PNG Government. TSSP funding is also directed to assist aviation and maritime transport services to consistently move towards full compliance with international safety and security standards. To deliver more integrated Australian assistance and to improve oversight and coordination, the Program also includes inputs delivered through the Strongim Gavman Program, and the Australia-PNG Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in the Transport Sector.

Related documents*

Name of document	Year published	Type
Australia-PNG Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in the Transport Sector	2010	Memorandum of understanding

Australia and Papua New Guinea have reaffirmed their partnership to support jobs, trade and access to services by improving PNG's transport infrastructure.

In a signing ceremony with the Minister for National Planning and Monitoring, the Hon. Charles Abel MP, Australia committed almost K900 million over five years to continuing the PNG – Australia Transport Sector Support Program (TSSP).

The signing ceremony occurred at the Australian High Commission on 18 September.

Headline results and Ministerial endorsement: from one extreme to another

Ministerial foreword

Effective overseas aid is a cornerstone of Australia's engagement with the world. From the Pacific to Africa and the Middle East, Australia is a leader in improving the lives and prospects of millions of people living in poverty or afflicted by conflict or natural disaster.

Recent Australian assistance has helped vaccinate over two million children against diseases such as diphtheria, whooping cough and tetanus. It is helping four million more children gain access to basic education in the world's poorest countries. It is helping train midwives where they are desperately needed, in countries such as Pakistan.

In May 2012 I launched *Helping the World's Poor through Effective Aid – Australia's Comprehensive Aid Policy Framework to 2015–16*. This is the



PNG medical supply reform: a successful case of performance linked aid?

- 2011 and 2012 Australia took over medical supplies procurement and distribution.
- Joint press conference with PNG PM O'Neill, May 10 2013, Australian PM Gillard [said](#)
 - We also agreed to delegate health procurement to AusAID as a precursor to establishing an Independent Health Procurement Authority. And I thank the Prime Minister for that.
- But PNG Government drugs procurement process was already underway, announced in November; Australia end-December 2013 declared misprocurement.

ODE: role and publications?

- Good to see the ODE quality review at the back
- But what has happened to
 - *Lessons of Australian Aid 2013 report on independent evaluation and quality assurance*, January 2014
 - *2013 quality review of aid program performance reports*, January 2014

Performance and quality analysis

ODE produces a range of products that quality- assure the DFAT aid program's performance management and reporting systems, and analyse the performance information that comes out of them.

ODE works closely with the Contracting and AID Management Division to improve these systems.

In conclusion

- Encouraging to see the Australian aid country and project performance management system continue and be used.
- While the PAA is by no means a perfect document, it is the best effort yet.
- At best, PAA will only provide part of what is needed in terms of performance reporting and accountability. ODE needs to play its role, and so do external stakeholders.
 - Please participate in our 2015 stakeholder survey.