



**Department of Home Affairs**  
6 Chan Street  
Belconnen ACT 2617

## **Australia's 2019-2020 Humanitarian Program**

World Vision Australia welcomes the opportunity to provide a submission on Australia's 2019-2020 Humanitarian Program. With over 68.5 million people displaced worldwide, and 1.4 million refugees in need of resettlement, finding effective approaches to global responsibility-sharing is today more important than ever.

World Vision Australia provided a detailed submission in response to the 2018-2019 Humanitarian Program, and the policy recommendations included in that submission remain equally relevant today. In this context, we would refer you to our previous submission (available [here](#)), and will highlight only three points that we believe merit particular attention.

### **1. Engaging constructively in global responsibility-sharing processes.**

While recognizing Australia's valuable contributions to global refugee resettlement, World Vision Australia regrets that the 2019-2020 Humanitarian Program Discussion Paper did not mention the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) or Australia's role in ensuring its implementation and success. Eighty-five percent of the world's refugees continue to be hosted by developing regions, and by endorsing the 2016 New York Declaration and the GCR, Australia committed itself to working towards a more equitable global responsibility-sharing model.

World Vision Australia encourages the Department to make these renewed commitments a central pillar of its 2019-2020 Humanitarian Program, including by developing – in consultation with civil society – a national program of action that outlines how Australia will further contribute to strengthened responsibility-sharing in light of the unprecedented humanitarian and resettlement needs. The Global Refugee Forum that will take place at the end of 2019 presents an important opportunity for Australia to demonstrate its leadership in this space, and we encourage Government to make new, concrete pledges at the Forum in line with Australia's fair share – either in the form of resettlement places, financial assistance, or other in-kind support.

### **2. Increasing the humanitarian intake.**

World Vision Australia is concerned by the lack of a clear target for Australia's humanitarian intake in 2019-2020. As highlighted in our 2018-2019 submission, sector calculations for Australia's fair share indicate that Australia should be accepting a minimum of 44,000 humanitarian entrants per year. Australia's 2017-2018 intake of 16,250 individuals and its 2018-2019 target of 18,750 places fall far short of this fair share figure. World Vision Australia encourages the Government to scale up its intake to 44,000 places over the coming five years (by 2024-2025).

1 Vision Drive, Burwood East, VIC 3151  
[worldvision.com.au](http://worldvision.com.au)  
Ph: 13 32 40 Fax: 1300 303 448

World Vision further encourages Australia to ensure that the majority of these places are allocated for referrals by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, without regard to an individual's race, religion, nationality, or any factor that is perceived to affect their "integration prospects." The Australian Government should commit to a discrimination-free resettlement program, and work on the basis of needs alone.

Likewise, while recognising the immense value of community sponsorship mechanisms, it is critical that community sponsorship places are separate from the Humanitarian Program quota. Community sponsorship offers an innovative way for the Australian public to offer support above and beyond what is provided by Government, but should not be seen as a replacement for Government action. Just as the Australian Government would not reduce its funding for a natural disaster response because of the generosity of private donations, it should not reduce the number of Government-supported resettlement places because of the generosity of private sponsorship.

### 3. Prioritising children and human rights in Australia's domestic refugee policies.

Australia campaigned successfully for a seat on the UN Human Rights Council and has worked hard to position itself as a global leader on human rights issues. This role in the Council presents an unparalleled opportunity to influence human rights worldwide, but with this opportunity comes responsibility – most notably, to redress Australia's human rights and refugee policies here at home and to lead by example.

World Vision Australia welcomes the Australian Government's decision to take all the children off Nauru and ensure appropriate medical care for the remaining adults. This is an important first step. Building on this positive momentum, we encourage the Australian Government to continue to work towards resolving the issues highlighted by peer governments in Australia's most recent Universal Periodic Review.<sup>1</sup> These include to:

- End offshore processing of asylum claims
- End mandatory and indefinite detention of asylum seekers
- Ensure children are not detained under any circumstances
- Remove any penalties based on a refugee's mode of arrival to Australia
- Increase transparency of all operations at sea and ensure sufficient protections against *refoulement*
- Remove the ban on resettlement from Indonesia

World Vision Australia endorses the findings and recommendations of the Australian Human Rights Commission's Pathways to Protection report, and urges the Australian Government to act upon them.

World Vision Australia further recognises the Refugee Council of Australia's role as the national umbrella body for refugees, and supports both their 2018-2019 submission to the Humanitarian Program and their current recommendations.

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<sup>1</sup> UN Human Rights Council, Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review: Australia, 2016, A/HRC/31/14



We thank you again for the opportunity to provide feedback on the 2019-2020 Humanitarian Program, and would welcome the chance to discuss any of these issues in greater detail with the Department.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Quinton Clements".

**Quinton Clements**  
Government Relations Manager

18 March 2019

World Vision Australia is a Christian relief, development and advocacy organisation dedicated to working with children, families and communities to overcome poverty and injustice. It is part of the World Vision International Partnership, which operates in more than 90 countries worldwide. World Vision is Australia's largest overseas aid and development organisation, and also carries out development work in Australia.

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