# World Vision Australia's PODCY PLACE CONSTRUCTION

World Vision Australia calls on all political parties to raise the level of ambition for Australia's aid program at this historic moment.

COVID-19 has delivered a once-in-a-lifetime shock to global development. The world economy was plunged into its deepest recession since the Great Depression. More than 44 million people in 38 countries are now on the brink of famine. The war in Ukraine has given rise to the greatest humanitarian crisis Europe has seen since World War II.

These once-in-a-lifetime crises offer the Australian Parliament the chance to make once-in-a-lifetime choices and take once-in-a-lifetime action – to rise to overcome these challenges and put Australia at the heart of the global response.

We must grasp the historic opportunity before us: to build a better world through a modern, revitalised aid program which Australians can be proud of. Now is the time to:

> **Build a Stronger World** by anticipating and preventing crises

**Build a Fairer World** through an inclusive economic recovery

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**Build a Safer World** by ending violence against women and children

**Build a Better World** by investing in children to break the poverty cycle

**Build a Healthier World** by prioritising maternal and child health



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**Build a Greener World** with ambitious climate action

HIS MEANS THE WORLD

# About WORLD VISION

World Vision Australia is the country's largest overseas aid and development organisation. As a Christian organisation, we work with children, families, and communities to overcome poverty and injustice in every corner of the globe. During 2021, the generosity of Australians enabled us to reach 11.4 million people, including 5 million boys and girls, through both development projects and humanitarian response. We engage with over 700,000 members of the Australian public. Because of our size, World Vision is a barometer of generosity for Australia – and the good news is that Australians were even more generous during COVID-19, despite pandemic hardships.



Children in Afghanistan facing severe food insecurity would be among those who benefit from a \$150 million Famine Prevention Package © 2019 World Vision

"World Vision is the greatest force for good in the world. We connect everyday Australians to the global issues that matter. We are an expression of the generosity of Australians and Australia's aid program can likewise be an expression of the generosity of the nation."

- Daniel Wordsworth, CEO, World Vision Australia

# INTRODUCTION

Australians are concerned about the state of the world and they want to see their Government step up to help solve the biggest global challenges of the day.

There is unprecedented upheaval and change – from COVID-19, to the conflict in Ukraine, to climate change and Australians generously want to do their part to address these big issues. World Vision understands the concerns and aspirations of the electorate through our engagement with hundreds of thousands of Australians across the country. We understand the causes they care about and what they choose to donate to. Australians care about building a better world and they are calling for Australia to lead the charge.

Since COVID-19 began, global progress on almost every development indicator has stalled or gone backwards. Australia has not been immune, but we have emerged from this crisis stronger than most – arguably the strongest of all developed economies. Australia has an opportunity to not only respond to the demands of a COVID world, but to

proactively Build a Stronger, Fairer, Safer, Better, Healthier, and Greener World through its most hands-on and impactful foreign policy lever: Australia's aid program.

A revitalised, modern aid program – grounded in Australia's strengths of inclusive, people-centred development - could seize the opportunity to build a better world and put Australia on the front foot. Now is one of those moments in the story of Australia when we can take a leap forward, moving from 'Fortress Australia' to 'Global Australia', by actively helping our neighbours and those further afield deal with the big issues - COVID-19, climate change and conflict - and emerge from this pandemic stronger, fairer and safer.

This election platform describes how Australia can do just that. It outlines immediate actions which decision-makers can take in the first 100 days of government, as well as practical longer-term reforms, to achieve real impact and position Australia as a development partner of choice.

# World Vision Australia's POLIC PLATEORM

# Key actions for the first 100 days



**\$150m Famine Prevention Package** to address the worsening hunger crisis

**\$72m Fragility Hotspot Pilots** to build community resilience

and prevent conflict



### \$100m Pacific Child Nutrition **Initiative** to curb record rates of

## child stunting in the region

# Aid reform to build a better world

# **BUILDING BLOCKS FOR A MODERN AID PROGRAM**



Prevent and mitigate disasters and conflict through anticipatory action and flexible, multi-year resilience programming

### **Build a Safer World** Protect the most vulnerable by reducing violence against women and children, including early/forced marriages

## **Build a Healthier World**



Reprioritise maternal and child health and rebuild health systems for life-long well-being and productivity

# **REFOCUSED OBJECTIVE OF AUSTRALIAN AID**

To reduce poverty and promote shared prosperity by partnering with communities to build a better world

# **BUILD BETTER WITH NGOs**

NGOs deliver sustained impact because we don't 'fly in, fly out'; we work alongside communities 'day in, day out'.

• On the ground

- Deep community trust
- Human-to-human connection
- Efficient and effective

World Vision Australia calls on all major parties to raise the level of ambition for Australia's aid program to meet the mega-challenges of our time. Resurgent poverty, the hunger crisis, climate change, fragility, and the aftershocks of COVID-19 are once-in-a-generation challenges ... but they play into Australia's strengths of inclusive, people-centred development. This critical moment in time provides an opportunity for Australia to not only be responsive, but to proactively build a better, smarter and fairer world through a modernised aid agenda.



**\$50m Economic Inclusion Fund** to ensure the recovery reduces, not worsens, inequality



\$50m Indo-Pacific COVID-19 Vaccine Awareness Initiative to improve vaccine uptake



\$60m Green Recovery Package for landscape restoration



**Build a Fairer World** Support inclusive economic growth by broadening market participation for the poorest, especially women



### **Build a Better World**

Establish a children's unit to develop and implement a children's aid strategy to break the inter-generational poverty cycle



Build a Greener World Become a global leader in nature-based solutions by regenerating 50 million hectares of degraded landscapes

- Authentically Australian Local and global expertise
- THIS MEANS THE WORLD

# **THE FOUR Cs:** Mega-trends facing Australia and the world

The landscape of international development is being reshaped before our eyes by four headwinds: conflict, COVID-19, China, and climate change. These are also the issues of greatest concern to the Australian public. In the face of these mega-trends, Australia has a choice: to shy away from them or step up courageously with solutions we know work.

### CONFLICT

There is a new wave of conflict and fragility sweeping the globe. Previously stable countries - such as Ethiopia, Myanmar, Solomon Islands, and Lebanon – are experiencing outbreaks of violence and growing instability, ushering in a new era of fragility. And the war in Ukraine has pushed the globe into a state of heightened instability not seen since the end of World War II. Meanwhile, in existing fragile contexts, protracted crises carry on year after year, leaving the world's most vulnerable people trapped in a cycle of poverty and instability. By 2030, 80% of the world's extreme poor will live in fragile contexts. How the world, including Australia, grapples with fragility and conflict will be a defining feature of the century.

### CHINA

China's rise is changing the entire geopolitical landscape. Great power rivalry is being played out on Australia's doorstep as the world transitions from a post-Cold War, unipolar era to a new multipolar world. China's approach to international development - with a focus on loans, infrastructure and channelling assistance through stateowned enterprises – is changing the development playbook. At the same time, donor competition is heating up, with the number of state donors more than doubling worldwide over the past 25 years. Australia needs to set itself apart as development partner of choice.

### **COVID-19**

The outbreak and pandemic of COVID-19 was a once-in-acentury health crisis, and measures to contain it triggered the deepest global economic recession since World War II. While the COVID-19 vaccine rollout was the fastest in history and now provides hope to end the health crisis, the deep socio-economic impacts of the pandemic could be felt for decades in developing countries. Global extreme poverty has already risen for the first time in over 20 years. Education losses from COVID-19 could cost students close to \$17 trillion in lifetime earnings. Livelihoods have been devastated. Average incomes in the Pacific are not expected to recover until 2028, ushering in a lost decade of economic progress. An unequal recovery could exacerbate these impacts but an inclusive, pro-poor recovery could put us on a path to shared prosperity.

### **CLIMATE CHANGE**

Climate change is much more than an environmental challenge—it's a fundamental system-wide crisis which is increasingly transforming international development and stability as we know. At the beginning of 2022, 44 million people in 38 countries were on the brink of famine across large swathes of Africa and the Middle East. The world is already 1°C warmer and sea levels 21–24 centimetres higher than pre-industrial levels. From more intense cyclones in the Pacific to the risk of widespread displacement across Asia's mega-deltas, climate change directly threatens Australia's development partners and the regional stability that Australia has often taken for granted. Our Pacific neighbours, in particular, are calling for greater action from Australia domestically and internationally - and expectations for climate leadership are only growing.

This new landscape demands a new approach to development. Business as usual is not an option. To be relevant and do our part into the future, Australia needs to help address these big global issues through its aid program. We believe Australia should embrace expectations to play a more prominent role in helping solve these historic challenges and take a pivotal role on the global stage.

# **'BUILD A BETTER WORLD'** ΙΝΤΙΔΤΙVΕ

Australia is well placed to deal with these mega-challenges and shape the post-COVID world, supporting communities to Build a Stronger, Fairer, Safer, Better, Healthier, and Greener World. The Build a Better World Initiative requires a transformational approach, tackling long-term problems by addressing the root causes of poverty and inequality. The most vulnerable – women, children and people with disability – must be at the centre, because only by empowering the marginalised can we truly build a stronger, fairer and safer region and world.

The Federal Election provides an opportunity for political parties and candidates to shape the future direction of Australia's multi-billion-dollar aid program. Australia is at its best when it is generous and gives a fair go for all. Australia is already a global leader and it is the thirteenth largest economy. It is time for Australia's aid program to reflect its new-found status in the world.

Australia's aid strategy, Partnership for Recovery, expires in the second half of 2022. Partnerships for Recovery was fit for its time – a flexible, two-year strategy to address the initial emergency phase of the pandemic. What is needed now is a longerterm, more visionary plan for Australia's program which moves from response and recovery to focus on the future and proactively Build a Stronger, Fairer, Safer, Better, Healthier, and Greener World.

# **BUILD A STRONGER WORLD**

• First 100 days: Urgently deliver an emergency \$150 million Famine Prevention Package to avert famine in the Horn of Africa and the Middle East

• Longer-term reform: Pilot at least three multi-year, flexible programs in a 'test and learn' approach to build resilience and prevent conflict in fragility hotspots

Prevention and anticipatory action are at the heart of Build a Stronger World. Preventing crises – whether they're related to conflict, disasters, or famine – saves lives and it also saves money. For every dollar invested in conflict prevention, the global economy could save \$16 in losses linked to conflict and displacement. Every dollar invested in disaster risk reduction can generate savings of \$3 to \$15 in disaster losses. And it is far cheaper to avert a famine before it begins, than to alleviate it once it is declared.

By prioritising prevention, Australia could develop a smarter and more sophisticated aid program. The most immediate task at hand is to prevent famine by joining the US, UK and other G7 governments in providing emergency food aid to countries on the brink of famine in Africa and the Middle East. This is now even more urgent given the conflict in Ukraine ('Europe's breadbasket'), which is leading to food price spikes and could push a further 40 million people into extreme poverty. In the medium to longer term, Australia should Build a Stronger World through more flexible, holistic, 3-5 year programs which build community resilience to current and future shocks in the world's fragility hotspots. Furthermore, we recommend integrating a 'crisis modifier' into programs in fragile contexts to enable them to be responsive to new or changing needs. Agility and horizon thinking are the foundation for a smarter aid program.

Prosperity is fairer, stronger and more resilient when it is shared. Broadening involvement in the economy widens the consumer base and makes it more resilient to shocks, while providing the poorest with the tools they need to lift themselves out of poverty. The pandemic reset provides a unique opportunity to Build a Fairer World, levelling up opportunities for the most vulnerable by rebuilding livelihoods, economically empowering women and making markets work better for the poor.

World Vision surveyed more than 7,000 households across Asia and the Pacific since the pandemic – loss of livelihoods was their number one concern. Australia has already made large investments to support the region's economic recovery from COVID-19. Our most important mission is to ensure the recovery reduces, rather than worsens, inequality. We recommend that, in its first 100 days, the government set up an Economic Inclusion Fund to specifically support the recovery of the most vulnerable, including the poor, women and other vulnerable groups, who have been hit hardest by the economic downturn. These groups are often excluded if they are not intentionally included, and they require additional, targeted support to recover. Over the longer term, we recommend that Australia's economic development work in the region be centred on economically empowering women because it is a more direct and effective path to prosperity than providing budget support or financing infrastructure.

# **BUILD A** FAIRER WORLD

• First 100 days: Establish a \$50 million Economic Inclusion Fund for Regional COVID-19 Recovery to rebuild livelihoods of the poorest

• Longer-term reform: Make women's economic empowerment, not economic infrastructure, the defining feature of Australia's economic development assistance

# SAFER WORLD

• First 100 days: Safeguard children in the Pacific from violence at this time of increased risk during and after lockdowns by investing \$58 million over three years in specific programs

• Longer-term reform: Adopt a three-pronged approach to ending violence in the region by integrating a focus on women, children and people with disability in all violence prevention and community safety programs

Build a Safer World means having a focus on those most at risk of violence – women, children, and people with disability - and ensuring they are safe to live life free from harm. This involves strengthening protection services but also preventing violence from occurring in the first place by changing attitudes and behaviours.

Before COVID-19, seven in 10 children in the Pacific experienced violent discipline at home, and one in 10 adolescent girls in the region experienced sexual violence. The rate of violence against people with disability is 4-10 times higher than for people without disability. The pandemic has made a bad situation worse, increasing family stress and incidences of violence.

We are calling for the Government to invest an additional \$58 million over the next three years to protect children from violence at this time of increased risk during and after lockdowns. Violence can be prevented by transforming harmful attitudes and promoting healthy relationships and, going forward, we recommend ongoing community safety programs with a three-pronged focus on women, children and people with disability to address all forms of violence in a holistic way.

# **BUILD A** BETTER WORLD

• First 100 days: Set up a children's unit in DFAT to develop and implement a children's strategy for the aid program

• Longer-term reform: Ensure at least 80% of aid investments, regardless of their primary objectives, effectively protect, support and empower children

Build a Better World means putting children at the centre of Australia's aid in the next term of government, and beyond. Children make up half of the world's poor and half of the world's refugees. Australia's immediate region - the Pacific - is home to one of the world's youngest populations. If Australia genuinely wants to step up in the Pacific, it needs to make child wellbeing a policy priority.

Children are key to breaking the intergenerational cycle of poverty and disadvantage. Investing in children brings a triple dividend of development benefits: it immediately improves the lives of vulnerable children; builds their health, capacity and productivity for future life stages; and lays the foundations for the next generation, and for the productivity and resilience of society writ large.

That is why we are calling for a next-generation aid program - one which protects and empowers children as a priority group. It starts with setting up a children's unit in DFAT to develop and implement a children's strategy for the aid program with child-specific metrics, targets and benchmarks. This unit would mainstream children's rights across the aid program using the approach the Department has already used to ensure women and people with disability are included in the design and delivery of aid projects. Over time, it is envisaged that 80% of aid investments, regardless of their purpose, will consider their impacts on children as part of an inter-generational approach to aid.



# If the pandemic has taught us anything it is that the health of our people and the health of our economies are intrinsically

countries

linked. In addition to strengthening overall health systems, we need to Build a Healthier World by addressing the health challenges which have taken a back seat during COVID-19. Tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS and child malnutrition have all risen under the shadow of COVID-19.

BUILD A HEALTHIER WORLD

• First 100 days: Invest \$100 million over four years in a

flagship child nutrition initiative to curb undernutrition and

• Longer-term reform: Set up a centre of excellence,

the Indo-Pacific Centre for Maternal and Child Health,

to share best practice and build capacity with partner

record stunting rates in the Pacific region

Children in Australia's immediate region – the Pacific and Timor-Leste – suffer from some of the world's highest rates of stunting (short for their age) due to undernutrition. It can have life-long health impacts. Timor-Leste has the second and PNG has the third highest stunting rates worldwide. In PNG alone, child malnutrition costs the national economy an estimated \$700 million each year due to losses in productivity, income, and increased health care costs. Stunting cannot be reversed beyond the age of two years, but it can be prevented through education and early nutrition support.

# **BUILD A** GREENER WORLD

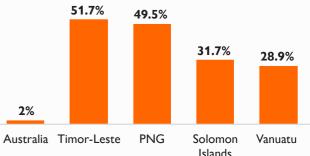
• First 100 days: Pilot a \$60 million green recovery package for East Africa and the Pacific with an innovative combination of proven nature-based solutions to combat climate change

• Longer-term reform: Restore 50 million hectares of degraded land overseas through natural regeneration techniques, building community resilience and storing carbon at scale

Climate change is a crisis which - without immediate action will have devastating outcomes, particularly for Australia and our region. With Australia's development partners, World Vision is calling for Australia to Build a Greener World with nature-based solutions.

There is tremendous potential for Australia to become a leader in natural climate solutions through its aid program, unleashing the power of nature to combat climate change by restoring degraded land at scale. One quarter of the world's land area has been degraded, and two billion hectares of this degraded land has the potential to be restored. The benefits of environmental restoration are ten times higher than the costs

As a member of the Pacific vuvale (family), Australia should make reducing child stunting a central goal of its development assistance with a \$100 million flagship initiative. Every dollar invested in reducing stunting generates an economic return of about \$18 in high-burden countries. Australia has a wealth of expertise in child and maternal health so, looking further ahead, we recommend Australia set up a regional centre of excellence to share best practice and build the capacity of partner countries to promote the health of mothers and their children. Like the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR), this centre will feature the 'go-to' experts in the field and help lift nutrition and health outcomes across the region.



### Rates of child stunting in the Pacific

There are proven, evidence-based, low-cost and scalable approaches to restoring land. Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration is the leading solution World Vision Australia has pioneered and the results can be seen from space! Every hectare of regenerated land can store 4.4 tonnes of carbon per year. Additionally, landscape restoration restores not just degraded land: it restores hope, enhances biodiversity, builds resilience and transforms lives through improved water, shelter and livelihoods. Through its aid program, Australia should restore 50 million hectares of degraded land as a practical demonstration of its commitment to climate action and a green recovery from the pandemic.

# **PRINCIPLES FOR BUILDING A BETTER WORLD:** Four aid cornerstones

The aid program should be built upon four foundational principles which apply to every aid investment and every development partnership. These principles are about maximising the impact and influence of Australia's aid program, while also ensuring it is grounded in Australian values.

Australia's aid program should be needs-based, strengthsbased, community-driven and impact-driven:

• **Needs-based:** All aid investments should aim to improve the lives of those in greatest need, especially women, children and people with disability. This needs-based approach reflects Australian values of fairness and equality.

• **Strengths-based:** Aid should focus on areas where Australia can make a real difference, building on its strengths and value add as a development partner. Our view is that Australia's greatest strength is inclusive, people-to-people development and social transformation, working through civil society to support communities from the grassroots.

• **Community-driven:** Aid projects should be designed and delivered with local communities, through partners with the strongest links to those communities. This creates a sense of ownership that it is critical to the self-sustainability of projects.

• **Impact-driven:** Aid should be outcome-focused instead of resource driven. This means prioritising evidence-based approaches which make the greatest difference and measuring that difference through outcome-based monitoring and evaluation. Efforts should be mobilised around a handful of signature impact goals to drive coherence across the aid program.



Khadija and her son, John Peter, walk home from a food distribution centre in South Sudan  $\mbox{\sc Scovia}$  Faida Charles World Vision 2021



THIS MEANS THE WORLD