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ACL Submission: Australian Foreign Aid Review

The Australian Christian Lobby (ACL) welcomes this opportunity to contribute to the public consultation process invited by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade concerning its review of Australia's foreign policy. With more than 80,000 supporters, ACL facilitates professional engagement and dialogue between the Christian constituency and government, allowing the voice of Christians to be heard in the public square. ACL is neither party-partisan nor denominationally aligned. ACL representatives bring a Christian perspective to policy makers in Federal, State and Territory Parliaments.

This submission will particularly focus on the matter of foreign aid. Australia is a prosperous nation, with an obligation to be generous with our prosperity and to actively encourage the prosperity of our neighbours. This is why the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) need to be reinstated.

In deciding how to distribute our aid, it is vital to avoid the certain pitfalls of funding organisations that may be exploiting, rather than helping, the world's most vulnerable populations. The provision of 'safe abortion care' and comprehensive sexuality education are particularly controversial aspects of a wider sexuality rights agenda being promoted internationally by (among others) IPPF (and IPPF's 148 member associations), Marie Stopes International, the United Nations Education Social and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). There is evidence to support the view that – though disguised with virtuous intentions – the 'sexual rights' these organisations promote work to destroy the basis of social stability and economic prosperity of the countries they propose to 'help', while significantly growing the customer base for their own multi-billion dollar businesses. Such misuse of aid to impose ideologies and values which run counter to the traditional values of developing countries should form no part of Australia's foreign aid program.

Millennium Development Goals

The eight MDGs, agreed to by all 189 member nations of the United Nations in 2000 were intended to galvanise international co-operation to address the most pressing needs of the world's poorest by 2015:

1. To eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
2. To achieve universal primary education
3. To promote gender equality and empower women
4. To reduce child mortality
5. To improve maternal health
6. To combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases
7. To ensure environmental sustainability.
8. To develop a global partnership for development.¹

Clearly post-2015, these goals remain unmet. They nevertheless form a useful framework for guiding Australia's giving and our approach to foreign aid. In a region that is vulnerable to natural disasters and public health issues, Australia's contribution to increasing foreign aid is a means of acting justly to ensure the long-term peace, health and wellbeing of the region in which we reside. In addition, we are financially well-placed to respond with generosity to those effected by genocide in the Middle East and famine in Africa.

As a signatory to the MDG, Australia promised to peg foreign aid at 0.7 per cent of Gross National Income (GNI). It has failed to honour this commitment in recent years under both Coalition and Labor governments, which have decoupled aid funding calculation from GNI. The May budget forms an opportunity for the Turnbull government to respond to the moral imperative for Australia to honour its commitments by acting on Australia's Howard-era promise to achieve the MDG target of 0.7 per cent of GNI.

Gendercide and sex-selective abortion

As well as re-establishing foreign aid at the promised level of 0.7 per cent of the GNI, Australia ought to be highly selective about types of program funded with foreign aid money. The Ministerial foreword to the DFAT document *Australian aid: promoting prosperity, reducing poverty, enhancing stability* sets out the objectives of Australia's foreign aid program, which include:

*increased attention to empowering women and girls as a central objective of our aid program, recognising the significant benefits that flow to whole communities from women's participation.*²

ACL supports the aim of reducing gender inequality by empowering women through education and increased economic participation. It is important, however, that initiatives funded with this aim are sensitive to the traditional values of the communities in receipt of our aid; communities that affirm the monogamous, heterosexual family as the fundamental social unit. ACL is particularly concerned that Australia's finances should not be directed toward programs that provide abortion services or

¹ The Millennium Project. See <http://www.unmillenniumproject.org/goals/>

² *Australian aid: promoting prosperity, reducing poverty, enhancing stability*, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, June 2014, p. iii. Available at: <http://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/Documents/australian-aid-development-policy.pdf>

radical comprehensive sexuality education programs. Both of these activities negatively impact the societies, and particularly the women, that Australian Aid proposes to assist.

International studies have shown that where gender inequality is extreme, this has ramifications for social cohesion and political stability as well as having detrimental effects on the health and happiness of entire populations. In 1990, the research of Amartya Sen first drew attention to the problem of 'gendercide' – the systematic elimination of girl babies through abortion, infanticide and neglect.³ Analysing demographic information, Sen calculated that at least 100 million women were demographically missing from the world's population, resulting in strongly skewed sex ratios.⁴ The causes of these skewed sex ratios are not simple, but certainly cultural traditions where sons support parents in their old age, or which impose large dowry payments on the families of brides, work to encourage a preference for sons, particularly among the poor. Gendercide can therefore be regarded as one symptom of extreme gender inequality. Research into gendercide has highlighted how this preference for sons serves to significantly disadvantage women in these cultures at all points of the life cycle, perpetuating patterns of intergenerational disadvantage for women.⁵

The problem of gendercide is widespread and endemic. In terms of absolute numbers, the world's most populous nations, India and China, present the biggest problem. China's 'one-child' policy, introduced in 1979, intensified the problem of gendercide in a culture where families needed at least one son.⁶ The practice of killing or abandoning baby girls in China is well-documented and ongoing.⁷ A recent documentary about gendercide interviewed rural Indian women who cheerfully describe their method for killing newborn girls by suffocation or strangulation. One woman explained that she and her husband could only keep a baby if it were male. Because they kept having girls, she had strangled eight daughters.⁸

Though the numbers of baby girls killed are highest in India and China, evidence of gendercide is also well-established in Vietnam, Singapore, Taiwan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Turkey, Syria, Iran, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, Albania, Romania, Montenegro, Kosovo, Macedonia, Egypt,

³ Girls who survive infancy are often subject to inequitable distribution of family resources, which accounts for much higher mortality rates among pre-pubescent girls through malnutrition or neglect. (Beverly Hill, *Gendercide Awareness Video: The Basic Facts*. Retrieved from <http://www.gendap.org/faq.html>.)

⁴ Amartya Sen, "More Than 100 Million Women are Missing," *The New York Review of Books*, December 20, 1990. See <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/1990/12/20/more-than-100-million-women-are-missing/>

⁵ Girls who survive infancy are often subject to inequitable distribution of family resources, which accounts for much higher mortality rates among pre-pubescent girls through malnutrition or neglect. (Beverly Hill, *Gendercide Awareness Video: The Basic Facts*. Retrieved from <http://www.gendap.org/faq.html>). The consequent skewed sex ratios in the adult population produce further disadvantage for women. Sex trafficking and prostitution is worst where sex ratios are the most skewed. (Nicholas D. Kristof, Sheryl WuDunn, *Half the Sky: Turning Oppression into Opportunity for Women Worldwide*, 2010, pp. xi–60). Female morality in childbirth is another indirect consequence of skewed sex ratios. When men significantly outnumber the women available as brides, these men look to marry younger women with the result that girls in these societies are often married before puberty and pressed into child bearing by their much older husbands and in-laws. Because these girls are having babies before their bodies are ready, and because insufficient resources in these countries are directed towards women's health, the rates of maternal death also increase. Every year 275,000 women die in childbirth or from childbirth complications which would be preventable with surgical intervention (Beverly Hill, op cit.).

⁶ Avraham Ebenstein, "The Missing Girls of China and the Unintended Consequences of the One-Child Policy", *Journal of Human Resources*, vol. 45, 2010, pp.87–115. Available from: <http://jhr.uwpress.org/content/45/1/87.full.pdf+html?sid=ce07986c-a2d1-4b12-bb1b-7ddcdbc80df1>

⁷ See, for example, Hannah Strange, "Baby dies after mother throws it from China building", *The Telegraph*, 31 October, 2016. Retrieved from <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/china/10174363/Baby-dies-after-mother-throws-it-from-China-building.html>

⁸ See: <http://www.itsagirlmovie.com/en/>

Tunisia, Algeria and throughout Sub-Saharan Africa.⁹ Gendercide is also occurring in Australia, and continues to be of concern in many countries which receive Australian Aid.¹⁰ By 2010, it was estimated that 126 million women were missing worldwide and that a further 3.5 million women die every year through gendercide.¹¹

The skewed sex ratios that result from gendercide have secondary negative effects for the lives of women in these communities. Sex trafficking and prostitution are worst where sex ratios are the most skewed.¹² Female mortality in childbirth is another indirect consequence of skewed sex ratios. When men significantly outnumber the women available as brides, these men look to marry younger women with the result that girls in these societies are often married before puberty and pressed into child bearing by their much older husbands and in-laws. Because these girls are having babies before their bodies are ready, and because insufficient resources in these countries are directed towards women's health, the rates of maternal death also increase. Every year 275,000 women die in childbirth or from childbirth complications which would be preventable with surgical intervention.¹³

As a result of the paucity of women to marry, many men in these societies remain single throughout their lives. In China, these men are called 'the bare branches' on the family tree. Historically, such groups of unattached men, with no stake in society and no families to provide for have been a source of social and political instability. Often working as itinerant labourers, drawn from the lower socioeconomic classes and without financial obligations to provide for children, these men are most likely to riot in times of economic downturn, to form gangs and attempt to improve their situation through violent and criminal behaviour.¹⁴ Large numbers of unattached men as seen as a significant risk factor for social and political unrest. Apart from its negative effects on women, the practice of gendercide can be seen also to be incompatible with Australia's stated aim in providing foreign aid of supporting "a more prosperous, peaceful and stable region."

The solutions to the problems that contribute to and result from gendercide and gender inequality more broadly are not simple or short-term. At a minimum, Australia's foreign policy can aim to avoid contributing to these problems further. Arguably, our current support for programs that provide for abortion services is inconsistent with our stated objective to support our neighbours. The availability of prenatal screening in Asia from the mid-1980s is known to have contributed to the use of sex-selective abortion to kill less-valued daughters before they are born. Although sex-selective abortion is illegal throughout Asia, the ratio of male births to female births demonstrates that abortion services

⁹ Klasen and Wink, "[Missing Women: A Review of the Debates and an Analysis of Recent Trends](#)", 2002, p. 19. For data concerning the United States, see Douglas Almond and Lena Edlund, "[Son-biased sex ratio in the 2000 United States Census](#)," in Proceedings of the National Academy of Science (PNAS), April 15, 2008, vol. 105/15, pp. 5681–5682.

¹⁰ Pallavi Jain, "SBS Radio investigation on skewed sex ratios at birth in some communities in Australia", *SBS Radio*, 30 May 2015. Available at <http://www.sbs.com.au/radio/storystream/news-its-girl-still-unwelcome-some-cultures-australia>

¹¹ John Bongaarts and Christophe Z. Guilmoto, "How Many More Missing Women? Excess Female Mortality and Prenatal Sex Selection, 1970–2050," *Population and Development Review* 41(2): 241–269 (JUNE 2015), p. 245.

¹² Nicholas D. Kristof, Sheryl WuDunn, *Half the Sky: Turning Oppression into Opportunity for Women Worldwide*, 2010, pp. xi–60.

¹³ Beverley Hill, op cit.

¹⁴ "Bare branches, redundant males: The marriage squeeze in India and China", *The Economist*, 18 April 2015. Available at: <http://www.economist.com/news/asia/21648715-distorted-sex-ratios-birth-generation-ago-are-changing-marriage-and-damaging-societies-asias>. See also Valerie M. Hudson and Andrea M. Den Boer, 'Bare Branches' and Danger in Asia', *Washington Post*, July 4, 2004. Available at: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A24761-2004Jul2.html>

are being used in this way.¹⁵ ACL opposes Australia's funding of foreign abortions as a matter of principle but this becomes particularly concerning when it can be demonstrated that such services are being used for the purposes of sex-selection, which operates directly counter to our aim to support stability and human flourishing through our foreign aid programs.

Concern about the involvement of multi-national NGOs in forced abortion programs

There is further reason to be concerned that many of the international NGOs through which foreign aid has historically been delivered, have their own agenda, making them inappropriate trustees of Australian Aid money. For example, the question of whether, and to what extent, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), funded by the US, has been involved in the sterilisation and forced abortion programs that support China's brutal one-child policy has been a political hot potato for successive US administrations. While Democrat administrations refuse to acknowledge this involvement (presumably to safe guard trade agreements with China), they have had to ignore overwhelming evidence to do so.¹⁶ By funding UNFPA, the US government has become complicit in "the most egregious, vicious attack on women" in human history:

*Unlike Presidents Reagan, Bush, and Bush, Mr. Obama thus far has provided \$227 million in taxpayer funds to the UNFPA, an organization that supports, plans, implements, defends, and whitewashes the Chinese government's brutal program.*¹⁷

Not only does the UNFPA consistently praise China's population control program, it has urged other countries, notably in Africa, to embrace similar "population control" measures.¹⁸

If the purpose of Australia's foreign aid money is to benefit women, it must be recognised that the provision of abortion services is inherently incompatible with this aim. Women, particularly, women in societies where gender inequality is endemic, cannot be assumed to be availing themselves of abortion services as an expression of their independent autonomy. The potential for coerced abortion and sex-selective abortion is obvious and Australia should avoid any association with (let alone support for) programs that so materially damage women and girls.

Even in developed countries, where abortion has been presented as an essential element of the women's rights movement, there is an increasing awareness that the availability of this 'choice' effects economically disadvantaged women from minority ethnic groups disproportionately. In the US, for example, 75% of Planned Parenthood Federation of America (PPFA) clinics are located in low-income areas with majority African American and Hispanic populations. 36% of all pregnancies to African American mothers end in abortion.¹⁹ Though PPFA has presented its activities as a 'service to the poor', the counter-narrative of African American activists has re-framed this activity as a 'black

¹⁵ Valerie M. Hudson and Andrea M. Den Boer, 'Bare Branches' and Danger in Asia', *Washington Post*, July 4, 2004. Available at: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A24761-2004Jul2.html>

¹⁶ For example, see "Full Report on UNFPA's Involvement in China", *Population Research Institute*, 12 December 2001. Available at: <https://www.pop.org/content/full-report-unfpas-involvement-china#introduction>

¹⁷ US Congressman Chris Smith, "China's One-Child Policy: Massive Crimes against Women, Supported by the Obama Administration", *The Witherspoon Institute*, October 20th, 2014. Available at: <http://www.thepublicdiscourse.com/2014/10/13942/>

¹⁸ US Congressman Chris Smith, "China's One-Child Policy: Massive Crimes against Women, Supported by the Obama Administration", *The Witherspoon Institute*, October 20th, 2014. Available at: <http://www.thepublicdiscourse.com/2014/10/13942/>

¹⁹ "Ben Carson Drops Truth Bomb On Planned Parenthood", *CNN*, 16 August 2015. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=08dt3dghvqs>

genocide'. Effecting a reduction in the black population of America was one of the stated aims of PPFA's founder, Margaret Sanger. Widely credited with founding the modern birth control movement, Sanger was a noted eugenicist who emphasised the importance of purifying the human gene pool by (among other means) reducing the black population of America, who she described as "human weeds".²⁰

In recent decades, the influence of pro-abortion programs has grown internationally, through the collaboration of multi-national NGOs including International Planned Parenthood Federation (formed by PPFA in collaboration with other organisations), the World Health Organisation (WHO), UNFPA and United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO).²¹ This is now a multi-billion dollar industry and supported by the promotion of comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) programs which serves to increase the demand for these services and thus, grow the customer base for these organisations. CSE will be discussed in greater detail below.

Australia's recent commitment of \$9.5 million in funding for the SPRINT program, to be administered through International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), exemplifies the type of financial involvement with ethically dubious organisations of which Australia ought to be highly wary. If Australia aims to help women and children in our region, the means of delivering this aid ought to be the subject of rigorous scrutiny and there are several reasons to believe that IPPF's goals may not align with those stated by DFAT and supported by the wider Australian community.

IPPF was founded in 1952 by PPFA in collaboration with other organisations. Sanger served as President of IPPF from 1952–1959. The two organisations are closely connected organisationally as well as financially and ideologically. IPPF now administers 148 Member Associations, which operate in different countries throughout the world, delivering the same suite of services endorsed and envisaged by Sanger. SPRINT operates to deliver sexual and reproductive health services to areas affected by crisis, particularly in the East, South East Asia, Oceania and Africa. Where no Member Association exists, IPPF can create one to deliver the suite of sexual and reproductive services encompassed in SPRINT. Thus, by funding the SPRINT, Australia is supporting the growth and expansion of IPPF worldwide and the advance of IPPF's pro-abortion policies in crisis-prone, post-crisis and developing countries. In 2014, approximately 3.8 million abortion-related services were provided by all IPPF Member Associations – an increase of 28% from 2013.²²

Although Minister Bishop has offered assurances that SPRINT money will not be used to fund sex-selective abortions, it is arguably impossible to ensure that this stipulation is observed in practice. The support of the UNFPA in China's one-child policy which, apart from the trauma to women in the course of implementation, has resulted in the long-term negative impact of skewing sex ratios dramatically, indicates the dangers of entrusting foreign aid to organisations that support abortion and whose ideological roots are grounded in beliefs that affirm the reduction of certain racial groups as beneficial.

The ethical framework of pro-abortion organisations has been further called into question by recent revelations in the US concerning the involvement of PPFA (a member association of IPPF) in a black-market trade in foetal tissue. When information about this activity came to the public attention in 2015, PPFA claimed that it has only been recouping the 'service cost' of allowing contractors access to

²⁰ "Exposing Margaret Sanger: The Racist Roots of Planned Parenthood", *CBN News*, 5 December 2016. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t8FTm553t8o>.

²¹ See, for example, "Youth and Comprehensive Sexuality Education", *United Nations Youth*. Available at: <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/documents/youth/fact-sheets/youth-sexuality-education.pdf>

²² Financial Statements for IPPF for 2014, p. 5. Available here: http://www.ippf.org/sites/default/files/financialreport_2014-2015.pdf

their facilities to process orders for foetal body parts and that they offer this as a ‘service’ to women who want to donate the ‘results of their abortion’ for research purposes.

However, examination of the extensive footage taken by an undercover journalist over a three-year period has revealed that PPFA:

- 1) profits by its trade in foetal tissue – “keeping its bottom-line healthy”
- 2) changes the abortion procedure in order to obtain a more intact specimen.
- 3) accommodates the requirements of their customers for uncontaminated foetal tissue by withholding foeticidal agents (such as digoxin). This increases the likelihood that aborted infants are born alive during late second trimester abortions and killed or left to die subsequently.
- 4) has contravened important ethical considerations in the procedures necessary to obtain the consent of women donating their babies to research. Particular concerns relate to the fact that the interviewing clinician has a financial interest in influencing the woman to provide that consent.²³

The Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) document *Family Planning and the Aid Program*, outlines certain principles to which organisations receiving Australian foreign aid are expected adhere. These principles place a gestational term limit on abortion of up to 20 weeks.²⁴ However, the way in which a Member Association of IPPF seems to have ignored legal and ethical obstacles to the trade in baby body parts in the USA (where regulations could be expected to be relatively easy to enforce) naturally raises concerns about how Australia’s aid money will be used in the hands of other IPPF Member Associations in the developing countries (where practical impediments to the supervision and regulation of abortion practices are considerably greater).

Comprehensive sexuality education

A related concern relates to the involvement of IPPF and other large international NGOs in the promotion of comprehensive sexuality education and the use of foreign aid programs to impose a radical agenda for social change upon economically vulnerable countries at the expense of the religious or traditional values of the communities in which these programs operate. IPPF, its international member associations, Marie Stopes International, CEDAW, UNESCO, UNFPA and UN treaty monitoring bodies and the UN Committee on the rights of the Child and the World Association for Sexual Health (WAS), are among those who advocate for ‘sexual rights’ and comprehensive sexuality education.²⁵ Many aid workers involved in development initiatives for poverty-stricken communities have expressed surprise that the usual priorities of development work – such as the

²³ Report of the US House of Representatives Select Investigative Panel of the Energy and Commerce Committee, 30 December 2016. Available here: https://energycommerce.house.gov/sites/republicans.energycommerce.house.gov/files/114/Analysis/20161230Select_Panel_Final_Report.pdf

²⁴ *Family Planning and the Aid Program: guiding principles*, The Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2009, p. 4. Available here: <http://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/Documents/fam-plan-principles.pdf>

²⁵ *Sexual rights: an IPPF declaration*. Available at: http://www.ippf.org/sites/default/files/sexualrightsippfdeclaration_1.pdf

provision of clean water, housing and electricity – are increasingly being put aside and funding instead directed instead toward comprehensive sexuality education.²⁶

IPPF, its affiliates and UNESCO have advanced the argument that comprehensive sexuality education is essential to empower youth in developing countries. The research basis for these assertions is dubious. On the other hand, the short-and long-term financial benefits to the organisations delivering these programs, and the political advantage to radical feminists and LGBTI rights organisations, is quite apparent. The IPPF's *Framework for Comprehensive Sexuality Education*, designed to be used to build partnerships with like-minded organisations, sets out some of the essential elements of comprehensive sexuality education:

Our approach includes an emphasis on sexual expression, sexual fulfilment and pleasure. This represents a shift away from methodologies that focus exclusively on the reproductive aspects of adolescent sexuality ... IPPF strongly discourages sexuality education programmes that focus solely on abstinence ... IPPF believes that sexual taboos as a result of culture and religion are not insurmountable barriers to broadening the scope of sexuality education.²⁷

One concerning example of IPPF's promotion of high-risk sexual behaviour to vulnerable teenagers can be found in their brochure *Healthy, Happy and Hot*.²⁸ This brochure is designed to support HIV positive youth. It teaches them about sexual pleasure through masturbation, with same sex partners and even if they are drunk. It also advises youth that they have the right not to disclose their HIV status to a sexual partner if they do not feel comfortable. If they decide with their partner not to wear a condom, that is their decision. This advice is seen as directly counter to the efforts of many African countries, for example, to contend with the enormous health problems represented by the spread of AID/HIV in their communities. Such advice represents a death sentence to the very individuals these organisations propose to support.²⁹

The promotion of risky sexual practices and the encouragement of early sexual activity which comprehensive sexuality education programs envisage will inevitably increase the demand for sexual and reproductive health counselling, abortion services, contraception, including emergency contraception, STI and HIV counselling and prevention services and transgender hormone services. These are all core business for IPPF and its affiliates. For these organisations, the promotion of 'sexual rights' therefore represents the expansion of a multi-billion dollar industry.

The exploitative nature of these programs and the aggressive ideological agenda that informs them is well recognised by those countries that have succeeded in resisting their introduction. Philippa Davies, Jamaican Coalition for a Healthy Society, has described the recent pressure brought to bear on the Jamaican government to accept the introduction of a sexuality rights campaign. An exploratory visit in 2015 from the US special envoy for LGBT rights, Mr Randy Berry, and a senior LGBT co-ordinator for USAID, Mr Todd Larkin, aimed to assess and encourage political receptivity to sexuality rights programs in Jamaica. The Jamaican government sent a clear message in response to the effect that

²⁶ See for example, an interview with Katharina Rottweiler, Director of International Relations and Strategy, Red Familia (Mexico) to this effect. "The War on Children: The Comprehensive Sexuality Education Agenda", Family Watch International. Available at: <http://www.comprehensivesexualityeducation.org/film/>

²⁷ IPPF Framework for Comprehensive Sexuality Education, January 2010, p. 4. Available at: http://www.ippf.org/sites/default/files/ippf_framework_for_comprehensive_sexuality_education.pdf

²⁸ *Healthy, Happy and Hot: a young person's guide to their rights, sexuality and living with HIV*. Available at: http://www.ippf.org/sites/default/files/healthy_happy_hot.pdf

²⁹ "The War on Children: The Comprehensive Sexuality Education Agenda", Family Watch International. Available at: <http://www.comprehensivesexualityeducation.org/film/>

would not be pressured into changing their values and their culture which protects the family. Pointing to the \$12 billion per annum that the US spends annually on treating HIV infection, Jamaica said it simply could not afford the health problems that such a program would create. Nigeria was told that foreign aid would be denied if they did not give in to radical sexual agenda and accept comprehensive sexuality education. Nauru complained to the UN about similar attempts by the UNFPA to discredit its permanent mission to the UN and to pressure Nauru to change its position on sexuality health and comprehensive sexuality education.³⁰

In Europe, the European Parliament has withstood pressure to mandate comprehensive sexuality education throughout the EU, stating instead that:

*The formulation and implementation of policies on sexual and reproductive health and rights and on sex education in schools is a competence of the member states.*³¹

Developing countries who rely on foreign aid are less able to resist the imposition of ideas that may be entirely unwelcome and incompatible with traditional values. There is good reason for them to complain that this vulnerability is being exploited.

Australia must guard against the misuse of its aid

ACL is aware that LGBTI groups have become increasingly vocal in DFAT public consultations, even advocating for the revision of Australia's foreign-aid policy to defund foreign aid organisations that do not support the LGBTI agenda. Such a policy would result in Australia withholding aid even in disaster situations if only a Christian organisation, for example, were available to deliver that aid. (This would be the case, for example in the Nuba mountains of Sudan, where Samaritan's Purse is the only organisation with an established presence).

It seems almost incredible that advocates for LGBTI rights would prioritise the advance of their political cause above compassion for the vulnerable. Such arguments serve to underscore the need for Australia's aid to be strongly grounded in genuine compassion to alleviate the suffering of the disadvantaged and to guard against the misuse of aid to advance political or ideological agendas. If genuine compassion is our aim, Australia must eschew funding programs that promote abortion and comprehensive sexuality education. We must prioritise programs that place genuine improvement in the living conditions and economic opportunities of those in receipt of our help above the pursuit of the political goals of minority ideological interest groups.

NGOs that use foreign aid money to drive social change in contravention of the religious or traditional values of the communities in which they work are open to accusations of cultural imperialism. In a recent speech entitled *The Dictatorship of the Wealthy Donor*, Obianuju Ekeocha, President of Culture of Life Africa, makes exactly this point:

Many countries in the West, including Canada and the Netherlands have decided to come together to raise funds. Not funds for food in Africa. Not funds for water in Africa. Not funds that the Africans can use as they want. Instead, they are gathering together to raise millions of dollars that they are dedicating to the so

³⁰ "The War on Children: The Comprehensive Sexuality Education Agenda", Family Watch International. Available at: <http://www.comprehensivesexualityeducation.org/film/>

³¹ "MEPs say sexual and reproductive health and rights are a matter for member states", Media Release, European Parliament News, 10 December 2013. Available at: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/20131206IPR30024/meps-say-sexual-and-reproductive-health-and-rights-are-matter-for-member-states>

called safe abortion. What is actually most disheartening is that these western countries have not even thought of asking the Africans what they want or how they feel.

According to the evidence Mrs Obianuju presents, the vast majority in many African countries do not find abortion acceptable under any circumstances:

This is the new colonialism. This is cultural imperialism. This is the dictatorship of the wealthy donor ... What we are asking for is safe delivery of African babies.³²

It is possible and desirable that support from Australia for development in our region should be unencumbered by any association with such programs or with the agendas that inform them. Australians expect that our foreign aid money is given for the benefit of our neighbours, not to facilitate their exploitation by NGOs or ideological interest groups.

ACL respectfully submits that:

- **Australia needs to use the framework provided by the MDGs to guide the direction of our foreign aid, establishing our foreign aid budget as 0.7 per cent of GDI in accordance with our commitments.**
- **the promotion of comprehensive sexuality education programs, advocacy for ‘sexual rights’ and the provision of abortion services should form no part of Australia’s foreign aid budget**



Lyle Shelton
Managing Director
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³² Obianuju Ekeocha, “The Dictatorship of the Wealthy Donor”, Culture of Life Africa. Available: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lsOwsIxJcLo&feature=youtu.be>