

Overseas Development Assistance

HIGHLIGHTS

Labour will:

- Ensure the central objective of the development programme is the elimination of poverty
- Ensure the primary focus of Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade's Pacific Division is on its development programme
- Work cooperatively with the NGO sector (in New Zealand and overseas) and with governments in assisted countries to ensure development programmes best implement the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals.

Labour's approach

Eliminate poverty and sustainable development

Labour has long promoted effective overseas development assistance aimed at the elimination of poverty, including via support for human development through adequate and accessible education and health services, and sustainable economic development.

The National government's approach has been to place primary emphasis on physical infrastructure. This has taken the focus off poverty elimination, except where it can be achieved through economic development. This undervalues the importance of social development and access to quality education and health services as legitimate, if not paramount, means of achieving the sustainable development goals.

Labour will

- Ensure the central objective of the development programme is the elimination of poverty
- Continue to prioritise the Pacific region, while playing our part globally to help developing countries
- Ensure that New Zealand's development assistance projects are consistent with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and update reporting to encourage alignment and ensure accountability
- Ensure the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade reports on progress towards the sustainable development goals in assisted countries
- Complete the review of the Partnerships for International Development Fund (NZPFID), including whether, in light of the SDGs, it unduly focuses on economic development at the cost of building capacity via social development investments.

Partnerships

Strong partnerships are needed to achieve international best practice in the delivery of our ODA contribution. Localisation of delivery of aid funded services will be encouraged, including devolution brokered by NZ NGOs.

ODA policy for the Pacific must account for the need to address climate change mitigation and adaptation. New Zealand has a special responsibility to assist on both fronts.

High birth rates in parts of the Pacific are compounding some challenges. Greater priority will be given to addressing the underlying causes, including health and educational services for women. Reciprocity from local people, NGOs and governments will be encouraged.

Labour will

- Work hard to build and strengthen relationships with (and between) the non-governmental aid sector, recipient country governments, in-country organisations, and the private sector to help each sector to play its part to the best of its ability
- Review and simplify the NZ Disaster Response Partnership (NZDRP) criteria and mechanisms with a goal of enabling international NGOs to get on the ground more quickly.
- Foster the important role of the diaspora of Pacific Island residents in New Zealand to support development in the Pacific

Increased levels of aid

It is important to gain support from the public and politicians across the political spectrum for increased levels of ODA.

Labour will

- Investigate the establishment of a political volunteers programme, to enhance linkages between MPs from all parties and the aid programme, with a view to rebuilding an enduring multi-party commitment to increases in ODA.
- Engender greater public support, including via publishing success stories and by supporting development education in New Zealand.

Aid efforts require money. It is important that New Zealand keeps faith with our longstanding international commitment to the target of 0.7% of Gross National Income allocated to overseas development. It is a core part of our global citizen commitments.

Labour will

- Lift our ODA budget every year to make steady and annual progress towards the 0.7% of Gross National Income goal
- Give aid and development its own Budget allocation, that is, a Vote Overseas Development Assistance
- Have a Cabinet Minister responsible for Overseas Development Assistance, with the Minister receiving a direct line of advice from the head of the Pacific Division of MFAT.

