

# Direct Aid Program – Background

## **What is the Direct Aid Program?**

The Direct Aid Program (DAP) is a flexible small grants program funded by the Australian Government and managed through the Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade (DFAT) overseas posts. The program aims to support projects with a strong development focus that complement Australia's broader aid program which contributes to sustainable economic growth and poverty reduction. DAP projects should promote a distinctive and positive image of Australia.

## **Who can Apply?**

DAP is available on a not-for-profit basis to individuals, community groups, NGOs and other entities engaged in development activities in countries that are eligible for official development assistance (ODA).

## **What activities are eligible for DAP Support?**

DAP activities should primarily be aimed at achieving practical and tangible outcomes of high development impact. DAP is able to fund activities that have a direct, practical and immediate impact, including capacity building programs in the areas of governance and human rights engagement. We will favourably consider projects:

- that improve the livelihood of communities;
- are sustainable and have lasting development impacts.
- promoting women's empowerment, indigenous groups and vulnerable minority groups;
- that focus on climate change and environmental protection;
- that have the support of a trustworthy referee;
- where the community makes a contribution to, or is involved in, the implementation of the project; and
- where other donors also support the project.

We will generally NOT fund the following:

- cash grants or micro-credit schemes or projects that involve the return of money
- commercial ventures
- purchase of major assets, e.g. vehicles
- Australian or overseas study tours
- International travel
- Sponsorship of major sporting tournaments or cultural displays that do not have a clear developmental benefit
- staff salaries
- routine, recurring running costs and administrative expenses including office rental and utility costs, spare parts, routine maintenance

Projects should be self-contained, with finite timelines. Activities in which the recipient community themselves makes a significant contribution in terms of labour, materials or cash are particularly well-received. Projects that might act as a catalyst for additional development of the community or a model for similar developments elsewhere will also be welcomed. There is no minimum amount that a single DAP project can receive but the maximum is AUD60,000 over the life of the project. Activities may run up to a maximum of two years.

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Proposals must be clearly defined with specific outputs. Proposals will be approved or rejected on the basis of:

- the costs and the development benefits of the proposal
  - achievable and sustainable outcomes
  - soundness of the project's objectives and design
  - the practicability of the proposed implementation arrangements, and
  - whether the project conforms with the objectives of the Direct Aid Program
1. DAP building and construction related projects should meet or exceed Australian standards wherever reasonably practicable to do so. Departure from Australian WHS standards on the basis that meeting such standards is not “reasonably practicable” should only be accepted where it is defensible to do so, supported by a clear, persuasive and documented explanation. In such cases, the project should meet the highest standard that is reasonably practicable, with hazard mitigation measures supported by a hazard identification and risk assessment report identifying the residual risks of injury and illness to any workers or third parties, and proposed mitigation strategy.
  2. If the project involves working with children, the organisation must have a current child protection policy or code of conduct to be eligible. For information on child protection policy, see <https://www.dfat.gov.au/international-relations/themes/child-protection/Pages/childprotection>
  3. Recipients of DAP funding must ensure that no support or resources are provided to any entity subject to sanctions (by the United Nations Security Council or the Australian Government).
  4. Recipients of DAP funding must ensure that the work conducted in relation to this project is undertaken in a safe manner and complies with all applicable local laws, standards and policies that relate to health and safety.