

Question on notice no. 82

Portfolio question number: 82

2021-22 Additional estimates

Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee, Foreign Affairs and Trade Portfolio

Senator the Hon. Penny Wong: asked the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade on 16 February 2022—

- (1) What percentage (and \$ figure) of aid in 2020-2021 was coded as "principle" against the OECD DAC Gender Equality Marker?
- (2) What percentage (and \$ figure) of aid in 2020-2021 was coded as "significant" against the OECD DAC Gender Equality Marker?
- (3) Can you confirm that DFAT does not have any targets in place in terms of a minimum spend or minimum number of projects in the aid program that address gender issues?
 - (a) Is the Department contemplating any sort of similar target?
 - (b) Do you know if any other countries have set similar performance targets?
- (4) What strategies does DFAT have in place to improve performance against this measure?
- (5) What is the 2021-22 DFAT budget for technical gender equality staff?

Answer —

Answer attached

QUESTION ON NOTICE / Written

082 – Additional Estimates

Topic: Aid Funding Gender Reporting

Senator Penny Wong

Question

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- (2) What percentage (and \$ figure) of aid in 2020-2021 was coded as “significant” against the OECD DAC Gender Equality Marker?
- (3) Can you confirm that DFAT does not have any targets in place in terms of a minimum spend or minimum number of projects in the aid program that address gender issues?
 - (a) Is the Department contemplating any sort of similar target?
 - (b) Do you know if any other countries have set similar performance targets?
- (4) What strategies does DFAT have in place to improve performance against this measure?
- (5) What is the 2021-22 DFAT budget for technical gender equality staff?

Answer

1. \$230 million (6.9 per cent of Australia’s \$4 billion Official Development Assistance budget) was coded as “principal” against the OECD DAC Gender Equality Marker in the 2020-21 financial year.
2. \$1.266 billion (37.9 per cent of the \$4 billion Official Development Assistance budget) was coded as “significant” against the OECD DAC Gender Equality Marker in the 2020-21 financial year.
3. Yes. The current performance framework does not include any targets. The DFAT Annual Report includes data on the percentage of aid that is rated as ‘effective’ in promoting gender equality.
 - a) No.
 - b) Countries take a range of approaches to assessing performance and expenditure. The OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) publishes expenditure data for all OECD DAC member countries, including Australia, and provides an analysis of the percentage of aid that is coded as principle and significant with the OECD DAC Gender Equality Marker. This allows comparative analysis.
4. DFAT has a range of strategies to improve gender equality performance. The Department provides training to DFAT staff on gender equality programming, advocacy and linkages with Australia’s foreign policy. There are formal guidance materials for staff and partners, including

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a *Good Practice Note* which integrates gender equality and women's empowerment throughout the development program from early concepts, design of projects and implementation and evaluation of these projects. The *Good Practice Note* also sets out DFAT's strategic objectives for gender equality and women's empowerment, and the performance framework for measuring progress.

In addition to staff training and guidance material, the Department calls on expert staff who provide advice and support on program design, review and evaluation. The Department is also currently tendering for a new specialist Support Unit for Gender Equality to help staff address gender equality through the development program.

5. Staff with gender equality expertise work in many levels of Australia's development program. In addition to the Gender Equality Branch of the Department's Multilateral Policy Division, there are staff with gender expertise within the Pacific Gender Section in the Office of the Pacific, and within many contracted programs.