



Australian Government

AusAID



15 November 2011

Dr Kathleen Dermody
Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committees on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Dr Dermody

I am writing to advise you that information regarding funding by the Australia Agency for International Development (AusAID) for a Marie Stopes International (MSI) Australia reproductive health project in Burma was inadvertently omitted from answers to questions on notice from a member of the Senate Standing Committees on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade. I apologise for these omissions and wish to correct the record.

During the Budget Estimates hearing on 2 June 2009, AusAID advised, in response to a question from Senator Boswell, that funding had been provided to MSI Australia to support activities in Burma. However in responding to two subsequent questions on notice several months later, AusAID did not include information on these activities. The error occurred as the Burma country desk misunderstood the scope of an internal request for information to report on this issue. AusAID has checked its records and confirms that this error is restricted to this one instance.

To ensure that the Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade has all relevant information, a table listing AusAID funding managed by the AusAID Burma country program to MSI Australia for reproductive health in Burma is provided below:

Country	Organisation to which funding is provided	Reproductive health activities provided by organisation	AusAID funding	
			Year	Amount
Burma	Marie Stopes International Australia	Education, provision of contraceptives, post-abortion care, treatment of sexually transmissible infections, voluntary counselling and testing services for sexually transmissible infections, maternal care	2007-08	\$356,768.11
			2008-09	\$252,312.71
			2009-10	\$512,613.44
			2010-11	\$403,432.00
			2011-12	\$399,349.68 ¹

¹ Forecast expenditure for 2011-12

The information summarised above ought to have been incorporated into AusAID's responses to two separate questions from Senator Boswell, as follows:

1. In a written question on notice following the Budget Supplementary Estimates of 18 October 2009 Senator Boswell asked (question 15)

Please provide details of all family planning components that AusAID money has funded (including breakdown by the name of country, name of the organisation that the money is going to and what services that organisation provides).

The following information was omitted from AusAID's answer

Country	Organisation to which funding is provided	Family planning activities provided by that organisation in 2009-10
Burma	Marie Stopes International Australia	Education, provision of contraceptives, post-abortion care

2. In a written question on notice following the Additional Estimates of 11 February 2010 Senator Boswell asked (question 7)

In answer to a question on notice last Senate Estimates AusAID provided a breakdown by name of country and name of organisation that money is going to. Could AusAID please provide details of how much money is given to each organisation for the family planning?

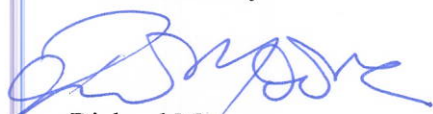
The following information was omitted from AusAID's answer

Family planning activities as at November 2009			
Country	Organisation to which funding is provided	Family planning activities provided by that organisation in 2009-10	Funding estimate for financial year (FY) 2009-10 as at November 2009
Burma	Marie Stopes International Australia	Education, provision of contraceptives, post-abortion care	\$512,613.44

I can assure members of the Committees the MSI Australia activities are fully consistent with AusAID's Family Planning Guiding Principles. The decision to provide funding reflects the poor reproductive health services available in Burma.

I would be grateful if you could forward this information to Committee members, along with my apologies for the oversight in not reporting on the MSI Australia activity.

Yours sincerely



Richard Moore
First Assistant Director General, Asia