



# FOR A GENEROUS AUSTRALIA ENDING EXTREME POVERTY

*The Greens' plan to meet our international obligations on global poverty*

In 2000, Australia signed up for the Millennium Development Goals to halve extreme poverty. Now Labor and Tony Abbott treat foreign aid as a fund for their own domestic policies. Only the Greens care about a generous and effective foreign aid program.

In their refusal to properly tax mining and banking billionaires to fund Australia's future, Tony Abbott and Labor have increasingly gouged our foreign aid budget to pay for their policies. Even more galling is that the government is counting the costs of their dark and cruel offshore immigration detention centres towards its foreign aid 'Millennium Development Goals'.

Since we signed up to support the very poorest in our world, the Labor government has watered down the aspirations of the target five times.<sup>i</sup> Every time they push the target back or backload funding, it makes the original target so much harder to achieve. Each time Labor has done this, the Opposition locks in right behind those diluted targets.

Only the Greens are committed to meeting our international obligations under the Millennium Development Goals to spend 0.7% of our Gross National Income (GNI) on effective foreign aid by 2020.

## > DELIVERY FROM POVERTY

To ensure Australia upholds the commitments it made to the United Nations in 2000, the Greens will:

- **Increase our Official Development to 0.5% of Gross National Income in 2015-16 to be on track to reach 0.7% of GNI by 2020-21.**
- **Commit the \$4.9 billion required over the forward estimates to meet this responsibility and oppose the Government's most recent \$880 million cuts.**
- **Establish an Office of Aid Effectiveness to ensure that our money is spent in an effective, meaningful way.**

Our policy has been independently costed by the Parliamentary Budget Office.

## > OFFICE FOR AID EFFECTIVENESS

The Greens recently introduced a proposal into Parliament that sets binding annual targets for aid funding. We also propose an *independent* Office for Aid Effectiveness to monitor programs

and ensure that our money is spent in an effective, meaningful way, not simply advancing our own political or commercial interests abroad. We will provide \$0.5 million to establish the Office with its operation funding diverted from the current Office of Development Effectiveness within AusAid.

## > THE CASE FOR AUSTRALIAN AID

Good aid, spent well has halved the number of people living in extreme poverty from 1990 to 2010. But there are still 1.2 billion people living on less than \$2 per day<sup>ii</sup>. As a wealthy country Australia has an ethical duty to help bring that number of people down to zero.

Australia currently ranks 13 out of 24 donor nations in terms of proportional aid giving. We spend only 0.37% of GNI on foreign aid, with .34% going overseas.<sup>iii</sup> We are in fact the third largest recipients of our own aid funding with the 2012 diversion of \$375 million to pay for our cruel detention of asylum seekers.<sup>iv</sup>

Spending projections from the government have us staying at 0.4%. The United Kingdom under conservative leader David Cameron has kept the 0.7% Millennium Development Goal despite being battered by recession. We have weathered the financial storm, yet we are a nation wriggling out of our obligations. These are promises that Australia made to the international community and to the families who are forced to do whatever they can to scrape together a plan for survival each and every day.

<sup>i</sup> Development Policy Centre <http://devpolicy.org/foreign-aid-in-the-august-statement-20130805-2/>

<sup>ii</sup> World Bank Group poverty data, April 2013. <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTPOVERTY/EXTPA/0,contentMDK:20040961~menuPK:435040~pagePK:148956~piPK:216618~theSitePK:430367~isCURL:Y,00.html>

<sup>iii</sup> Australian Council for International Development. *Federal Budget Analysis 2013. Australia Aid: Investing in the Future*. 14/5/2013 <http://www.acfid.asn.au/resources-publications/files/2013-2014-federal-budget-analysis>

<sup>iv</sup> Budget 2013-14. Ministerial Budget Statement for AusAID (the 'Blue Book') p12 & p146. <http://www.ausaid.gov.au/Budgets/Pages/budget13default.aspx>