



29 January 2019

The Hon Josh Frydenberg MP  
Treasurer  
[prebudgetsubs@treasury.gov.au](mailto:prebudgetsubs@treasury.gov.au)

Dear Treasurer

### **2019-2020 Federal Budget Submission**

Global Citizen is an Australian-grown international advocacy organisation dedicated to ending extreme poverty by 2030.

Over the last thirty years, the number of people living in extreme poverty has halved. While this is more progress than the previous century, 736 million people still live on less than \$1.90 a day, suffering from the effects of deprivation, lack of education, preventable disease, gender inequality and conflict.

Tackling extreme poverty in its current form presents at least a USD \$260 billion a year external financing challenge, however current Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) contributions by OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) members covers only USD \$146.6 billion. For overseas aid, this equates to at least a \$110 billion a year shortfall, which can be achieved if all DAC members contribute 0.7% of GNI.

The effective use of aid, fair trade and good governance are essential to reaching a sustainable solution. Aid is not a handout but a critical investment in healthy and educated communities who can fully participate in a sustainable economy.

Australia has a long and proud history of helping to improve the lives of people in some of the poorest countries in the world. However, over recent years, Australia's aid program has been significantly reduced by more than \$11 billion by successive governments. We currently give 0.22% of gross national income - the lowest since record keeping began in 1960.

We are calling for the government to urgently halt the decline of ODA and make a new long-term commitment to steadily increase the foreign aid budget towards the ultimate goal of 0.7% of GNI. The Government has long argued that as soon as the budget returns to surplus, that it would look to increase ODA. This is not only the right thing to do but critical for Australia's role in the region and foreign policy agenda.

2019 is a critical year for the delivery of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with many programs undertaking global replenishments, of which Australia's contribution to these will be critical:

1. Disease knows no border. We must invest in critical health and vaccine programs to save lives and tackle preventable diseases:
  - a. Increase Australia's investment by 15% to the Global Fund for HIV Aids, TB and Malaria during the global replenishment in October 2019.
  - b. Pledge more than \$250 million (previous contribution 2016-2020) to Gavi the Vaccine Alliance replenishment in 2020.
  - c. New commitments to the Global Polio Eradication Initiative over the forward estimates to ensure one last push to eradicate this disease once and for all.
2. Renew funding to UNFPA Supplies, the UN Population Fund's flagship programme dedicated to expanding access to family planning for women and adolescent girls. The fund currently faces a USD \$350 million funding gap, and without additional resources, will be forced to cut services and reduce the number of women and girls it can reach in 46 high-need countries.
3. Increase Australia's contribution to the Global Partnership for Education from \$90 million to \$200 million and make a new commitment in 2021 as part of the next replenishment period.
4. \$30 million in new funding for the Education Cannot Wait Fund to ensure children affected by conflict or crisis receive critical education services.

We are calling on the Government to lead by example and make a real impact in our region by investing in smart innovation, health, education, clean water and basic sanitation and the empowerment of girls and women programs.

Australia's aid program is critical to ending extreme poverty and it is in Australia's national interest to create a safe and secure region. That's why we need a long-term bipartisan agreement to restore Australia's aid budget and see our contribution lifted to 0.7% of GNI.

If you require further information or wish to discuss, please do not hesitate to contact me on 0402 206 771 or via email at [sarah.meredith@globalcitizen.org](mailto:sarah.meredith@globalcitizen.org).

Yours sincerely,



**Sarah Meredith**  
**Country Director (Australia)**